

# THE HOPE LAID UP IN HEAVEN

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“For the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven, of which you heard before in the Word of the Truth of the Gospel.”  
Colossians 1:5.*

THREE Divine Graces should be always conspicuous in Christians—faith, love and hope. They are each mentioned by Paul in the opening verses of the Epistle from which our text is taken. These lovely Graces should be so conspicuous in every Believer as to be spoken of and, consequently, heard of even by those who have never seen us. These flowers should yield so sweet a perfume that their fragrance may be perceived by those who have never gazed upon them. So was it with the saints at Colosse. Paul says, “We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love which you have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven.”

May our characters be such as can be reported of without causing us to blush—but that can never be the case if these essential virtues are absent. If these things are in us and abound, we shall not be barren or unfruitful. But if they are lacking, we are as withered branches. We should, therefore, be rich in faith, which is the root of every Grace and, to this end, we should daily pray, “Lord, increase our faith.” We should strive to be full even to overflowing with love, which is of God and makes us like unto God. And we should also abound in hope, even that heavenly hope which causes a man to purify himself in readiness for the inheritance above. See to it that neither of these three Divine Sisters are strangers to your souls, but let Faith, Hope and Love take up their abode in your hearts!

Note, however, the special character of each of these Graces as it exists in the Christian. It is not every faith and love and hope that will serve our turn, for of all precious things there are counterfeits! There is a kind of faith in all men, but ours is faith in Christ Jesus, faith in Him whom the world rejects, whose Cross is a stumbling block and whose doctrine is an offense. We have faith in the Man of Nazareth who is also the Son of God. We have faith in Him who, having made atonement by His own blood once and for all, is now exalted at His Father's right hand. Our confidence is not placed in ourselves, nor in any human priest nor in the traditions of our fathers, nor in the teachings of human wisdom, but ONLY in Christ Jesus. This is the faith of God's elect.

The love of Christians, too, is also special, for while a Christian man is moved by universal benevolence and desires to do good unto *all* men, yet he has a special love unto all the saints and these the world loves not be-

cause it loves not their Lord. The true Believer loves the persecuted, the misrepresented and despised people of God for Christ's sake. He loves them all, even though he may think some of them to be mistaken in minor matters. He has love to the babies in Grace as well as to the grown saints—and love even to those saints whose infirmities are more manifest than their virtues! He loves them not for their station, or for their natural amiability, but because *Jesus* loves them and because they love Jesus. You see the *faith* is in Christ Jesus, but the *love* extends beyond Christ, Himself, to all those who are in union with Him.

Hope takes a still wider sweep and includes the eternal future in its circuit. Thus do our Graces increase in range as well as in number. Our hope, too, upon which we are to speak this morning, is special, because it is a hope which is laid up for us in Heaven. It is a hope, therefore, which the worldling cares not one whit about! *He* hopes that tomorrow may be as this day and yet more abundant, but he cares nothing for the land where time has ceased to flow. He hopes for riches or he hopes for fame—he hopes for long life and prosperity—he hopes for pleasure and domestic peace. The whole range of *his* hope is within the compass of his eyes!

But our hope has passed beyond the sphere of sight, according to the word of the Apostle, “What a man sees, why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for what we see not, then do we, with patience, wait for it.” Ours is a hope which demands nothing of time or earth, but seeks its all in the *world to come!* It is of *this* hope that we are about to speak. May the Holy Spirit lead us into a profitable meditation upon it. The connection of our text seems to be this—the Apostle so much rejoiced when he saw the saints at Colosse possessing faith, love and hope, that he thanked God and prayed about them. He saw these seals of God upon them—these three tokens that they were a really converted people—and his heart was glad!

All the faithful ministers of Christ rejoice to see their people adorned with the jewels of faith, love and hope, for these are their ornaments for the *present* and their *preparation* for the future. This I believe to be the connection, but yet from the form of the language it is clear that the Apostle intended to state that their love to the saints was very much produced in them by the hope which was laid up in Heaven. You notice the word, “for,” which stands there—“The love which you have to all the saints for,” or on account of, or because of, “the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven.” There can be no doubt that the hope of Heaven tends greatly to foster love to all the saints of God! We have a common hope—let us have a common affection! We are on our way to God—let us march in loving company! We are to be one in Heaven—let us be one on earth! One is our Master, one is our service, one is our way and one is our end—let us be knit together as one man!

We all expect to see our Well-Beloved face to face and to be like He. Why should we not, even now, love all those in whom there is anything of Christ? Brethren, we are to live together forever in Heaven—it is a pity we should quarrel! We are forever to be with Jesus Christ, partakers of the same joy, of the same glory and of the same love—why should we be scant

in our love to each other? On the way to Canaan we have to fight the same enemy, to publish the same testimony, to bear the same trials, and to fly to the same Helper—therefore let us love one another! It were not difficult to show that the hope which is laid up in Heaven should be productive of love among the saints on earth.

This connection of my text with the clause immediately before it does not at all prevent its being regarded in the sense which I first mentioned, namely, that it was a subject for joy with the Apostle that the Colossians had faith, love and hope, for he would rejoice, none the less, because their faith was fostered by their hope. It commends these sweet Graces, that they are so wonderfully intertwined with each other and dependent upon one another. There would be no love to the saints if there were not faith in Christ Jesus! And if there were not faith in Christ Jesus there would be no hope laid up in Heaven! If we had no love, it would be certain that we had no true faith. And if we had no hope, faith would be assuredly absent.

If we entertain one of the Graces we must receive her sisters, for they cannot be separated. Here are three brilliants set in the same golden setting and none must break the precious jewel. “Now abides faith, hope and love, these three,” and blessed is he who has them abiding in his own heart! Now we will let faith and love stand by for a little while and we will talk about *hope*, the hope mentioned in our text; the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven. First, it is a very marvelous hope. Secondly, it is a very secure hope. And thirdly, it is a very powerfully influential hope. May the Holy Spirit bless these three thoughts to us all.

**I.** First, then, we speak of our hope which is laid up for us in Heaven as A VERY MARVELOUS HOPE and it is so if we only consider that it is a great act of Grace that sinners should have a hope at all! That when man had broken his Maker’s Law there should remain a hope for him is a thought which should make our hearts leap with gratitude! Do you not recollect when you felt it to be so? When sin lay heavily upon your conscience, Satan came and wrote over the lintel of your door, “NO HOPE,” and the grim sentence would have stood there to this day had not a loving hand taken the hyssop and, by a sprinkling of precious blood, removed the black inscription. “Remember that at that time you were without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world.”

That was our condition once and it is a marvelous thing that it should be thoroughly changed and that assurance should have taken the place of despair! In our carnal estate many false hopes, like will-o’-the-wisps, danced before us, deceived us and led us into bogs of presumption and error—we had no hope. This is a dreadful condition for a man to be in! It is, indeed, the very worst of all. Never is the storm so terrible as when in the howling of the winds the man distinctly hears the words, “No hope.” Yet into the thick darkness of NO HOPE we once steered our course and each time we tried to rely upon good works, outward ceremonies and good resolutions, we were disappointed anew and the words rung into our souls with dread monotony, “No hope, no hope,” until we wished we could lie down and die!

Now, though we are sinners, we have a hope! Ever since by faith we looked to Jesus on the Cross, a hope full of glory has taken possession of our hearts! Is not this a marvelous thing? More marvelous still, is it that our hope should venture to be associated with Heaven! Can there be Heaven for such as we are? It seems almost presumptuous for a sinner who so richly deserves Hell even to lift up his eyes towards Heaven. He might have some hope of “purgatory” if there were such a region, but a hope of *Heaven*—is not that too much? Yet, Brothers and Sisters, we have no fear of Hell or of “purgatory” now—we expect to taste the joys laid up in Heaven! There is no “purgatory” for *anyone* and there is no Hell for saints—Heaven awaits all believers in Jesus. Our hope is full of glory, for it has to do with the Glory of Christ, whom we hope to behold. Do you expect then, you who were black with lust, that you shall sit among the *angels*? “Yes, that we do,” says the Believer, “and *nearer* to the Throne than they!”

And you who have plunged into every form of uncleanness, do you expect to see God, for none but the pure in heart can behold Him? “Yes, that we do,” say they, “and not only to see Him, but to be like His Son, when we see Him as He is.” What a Divine hope is this! Not that we shall sit down on Heaven’s doorsteps and hear stray notes of the songs within, but that we shall *sing* with the happy choir! Not that we shall have an occasional glance within the gates of pearl and feel our hearts hankering after the unutterable joys within the sacred enclosure, but we shall actually and personally enter into the halls of the palace and see the King in His beauty in the land which is very far off! This is a brave hope, is it not? Why, she aspires to all that the best of saints have received! She looks for the same vision of Glory, the same ecstasy of delight—she even aspires to sit upon the Throne of Christ, according to the promise, “To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me on my Throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on His Throne.”

Hope reckons to be among the overcomers and to partake in their enthronement! This is marvelous hope for a struggling Believer to entertain! Yet it is *not* presumption, but confidence warranted by the Word of God! Is it not a miracle of love that such poor creatures as ourselves should be enabled thus to hope in God? This hope is the more marvelous because it is so substantial. In our text the Apostle scarcely seems to be speaking of the Grace of hope, since that can hardly be said to be laid up in Heaven, but dwells in our bosoms. He rather speaks of the objective of hope and yet it is clear that in his mind the Grace of hope as well as the objective must have been intended, because that which is laid up in Heaven is not a hope except to those who hope for it! It is clear that no man has a hope laid up in Heaven unless he has hope within himself.

The truth is that the two things—the Grace of hope and its objective—are here mentioned under one term, which may be intended to teach us that when hope is worked in the heart by the Holy Spirit, it is the thing hoped for, even as faith is the thing believed, because it realizes and secures it. Just as faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, so is hope the substance of the thing it expects

and the evidence of the thing it cannot see. Paul, in this case, as in many others, uses language rather according to the theological sense which he would convey than according to the classical usage of the Greek tongue. The words of a heathen people must be somewhat strained from their former use if they are to express Divine Truth and Paul does thus stretch them to their utmost length in this case.

The hope of the true Believer is so substantial that Paul even speaks of it as though it were the thing itself and were laid up in Heaven! Many a man has a hope of wealth, but that hope is a different thing from being wealthy. There is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip, says the old proverb, and how true it is! A man may have a hope of old age, yet he may never reach even middle life, and thus it is clear that the hope of long life is not, in itself, longevity. But he that has the Divine hope which grows out of faith and love has a hope which shall never be disappointed, so that the Apostle speaks of it as being identical with the thing hoped for and describes it as laid up in Heaven! What a marvelous hope is this which long before its realization is treated as a matter of actual attainment and spoken of as a treasure reserved in the coffers of Heaven!

One marvelous point about our hope is this—it is the subject of Divine Revelation. No one could ever have invented this hope—it is so glorious as to baffle imagination! The prince of dreamers could never have dreamed it, nor the master of the art of logic have inferred it by reason. Imagination and understanding are both left on the ground, while the Bible idea of Heaven soars upward like a strong-winged angel. The eternal hope had to be *revealed* to us—we should never have known it, otherwise, for the Apostle says, “Of which you heard before in the Word of the Truth of the Gospel.” That a sinful man should have a hope of enjoying the perfect bliss of Paradise is a thing not to be thought of, were it not that the Lord has promised it!

I say again, imagination's utmost stretch could never had reached to this and neither could we have had the presumption to suppose that such a bliss could be in store for men so unworthy and undeserving had we not been assured thereof by the Word of God! But now the Word of God has opened a window in Heaven and bid us look therein and hope for the time when we shall drink of its living fountains of waters and go no more out forever. This is marvelous and it is even more marvelous to think that this hope came to us simply by *hearing*. “Of which you heard before in the Word of the truth of the Gospel.” “Faith comes by hearing” and hope comes by faith—and so the Divine hope of being in Heaven came to us by hearing—not by working, not by deserving, not by penance and sacrifice, but simply by listening diligently unto the Divine Word and believing unto life!

We heard that the pierced hands of Jesus had opened the kingdom of Heaven to all Believers and we believed and saw a way of entrance into the holiest by His blood! We heard that God had prepared, for them that love Him, joys indescribable and we believed the message, trusting in His Son. Our confidence is in the Word which we have heard, for it is written, “Hear and your soul shall live.” And we find that by hearing, our confidence is

strengthened and our heart filled with inward assurance and joyful expectation—therefore do we love the Word of God more and more! Will we not prize to the uttermost that sacred Word which has brought us such a hope? Yes, that we will—till we exchange hearing for seeing—and the message of Jesus for Jesus, Himself! We will always lend a willing ear to the testimony of Jesus!

This hope is marvelous, once more, because the substance of it is most extraordinary. Brothers and Sisters, what is the hope which is laid up for us in Heaven? It would need many a sermon to bring out all the phases of delight which belong to that hope! It is the hope of victory, for we shall overcome every foe and Satan shall be trod under our feet. A palm of victory is prepared for our hands and a crown for our heads. Our life struggle shall not end in defeat, but in complete and eternal triumph, for we shall overcome through the blood of the Lamb! Nor do we hope for only victory—but in our own persons we shall possess *perfection*. We shall one day cast off the slough of sin and shall be seen in the beauty of our newborn life. Truly, “it does not yet appear what we shall be,” but when we think of the matchless Character of our Lord Jesus, we are overjoyed by the assurance that “we shall be like He.”

What an honor and a bliss for the younger Brethren to be like the Firstborn! To what higher honor could God Himself exalt us? I know not of anything which could surpass this! Oh, matchless joy to be as holy, harmless and undefiled as our own beloved Lord! How delightful to have no propensity to sin remaining in us nor trace of its ever having been there! How blissful to perceive that our holy desires and aspirations have no weakness or defect remaining in them! Our nature will be perfect and fully developed in all its sinless excellence! We shall love God as we do now, but oh how much more intensely! We shall rejoice in God as we do now, but oh what depth there will be in that joy! We shall delight to serve Him as we do now, but there will, then, be no coldness of heart, no languor of spirit, no temptation to turn aside.

Our service will be as perfect as that of angels! Then shall we say to ourselves without fear of any inward failure, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.” There will be no recreant affection then! No erring judgment, no straying passion, no rebellious lust! There will remain nothing which can defile, or weaken, or distract! We shall be perfect, altogether perfect. This is our hope—victory over evil and perfection in all that is good! If this were *all* our hope it would be marvelous, but there is more to be unfolded. We expect to enjoy security, also, from every danger. As there will be no evil in us, so there will be none around us or about us to cause us alarm. No temporal evil such as pain, bereavement, sorrow, labor, or reproach shall come near us!

All will be security, peace, rest, and enjoyment. No mental evil will intrude upon us in Heaven. No doubts, no staggering difficulties, no fears, no bewilderments will cause us distress. Here we see through a glass darkly and we know in part—but there we shall see face to face and know even as we are known! Oh, to be free from mental trouble! What a relief will this be to many a doubting Thomas! This is a marvelous hope! And

then no spiritual enemy will assail us. No world, no flesh, no devil will mar our rest above. What will you make out of it, you tried ones? Your Sabbaths are very sweet now on earth, but when they are over, you have to return to yon cold world again. But there your Sabbath shall never end and your separation from the wicked will be complete!

It will be a strange sensation for you to find no Monday morning, no care to be renewed, no toil to be encountered, no harness to be buckled on afresh! But above all, no *sin* to be dreaded, no temptation to be escaped! Heaven is so peaceful that the storms of earth are unknown there. The stirrings of the flesh are never felt and the howls of the dogs of Hell are never heard. All is peace and purity there—perfection and security forever! With this security will come perfect rest—“Yes, says the Spirit, for they rest from their labors.” Heavenly rest is quite consistent with continual service, for, like the angels, we shall rest on the wing and find it rest to serve God day and night. But there you shall not toil till the sweat dampens your face, neither shall the sun burn you, nor any heat! No weary limb nor fevered brain shall follow upon the blessed service of Heaven.

Heaven is a paradise of pleasure and a palace of glory! It is a garden of supreme delights and a mansion of abiding love! It is an everlasting Sabbatismos, a rest which never can be broken, which evermore remains for the people of God! It is a kingdom where all are kings, an inheritance where all are heirs! My soul pants for it! Is not this a charming hope? Did I not say well when I declared it to be marvelous? Nor is this all, Brothers and Sisters, for we expect to enjoy in Heaven a happiness beyond compare! Eye has not seen it, nor ear heard it, nor has the heart conceived it—it surpasses all carnal joy! We know a little of it, for the Lord has revealed it unto us by the Spirit, who searches all things, even the deep things of God. Yet what we know is but a mere taste of the marriage feast—enough to make us long for more, but by no means sufficient to give us a complete idea of the whole banquet!

If it is so sweet to preach about Christ, what must it be to see Him and be with Him? If it is so delightful to be ravished by the music of His name, what must it be to lie in His bosom? Why, if these few clusters of Eshcol which are, now and then, brought to us are so sweet, what will it be to abide in the vineyard where *all* the clusters grow? If that one bucketful from the well of Bethlehem tasted so sweetly that we scarcely dared to drink it, but poured it out before the Lord as a thank-offering, what a joy will it be to drink at the wellhead without stint forever! O to be eternally at the right hand of God where there are pleasures forevermore! This is our hope and yet there is more, for we have the hope of everlasting fellowship with Christ! I would give 10,000 worlds, if I had them, to have *one* glimpse of that dear face which was marred with sorrow for my sake!

But to sit at my Lord's feet and look up into His countenance and hear His voice, and never, never grieve Him, but to participate in all His triumphs and glories forever and forever—what a Heaven will this be! Then shall we have fellowship with all His saints in whom He is glorified and by whom His image is reflected. And thus shall we behold fresh displays of

His power and beams of His love. Is not this surpassing bliss? Said I not well when I declared that ours is a marvelous hope? Had I eloquence and could pile on good words—and could a poet assist me with his sweetest song—to tell of the bliss and joy of the eternal world, yet must preacher and poet both confess their inability to describe the Glory to be revealed in us! The noblest intellect and the sweetest speech could not convey to you so much as a thousandth part of the bliss of Heaven!

There I leave the first head. It is a very marvelous hope!

**II.** Secondly, let us remark that IT IS A MOST SECURE HOPE. It is so according to the text, because it is laid up or secured. The recent calamities which have occurred in connection with the Glasgow City Bank will make businessmen very careful where they lay up their treasures, but no one can entertain any fear of the safety of that which God Himself takes under His charge! If your hope is laid up with Him it becomes sinful to doubt its security. It is “laid up,” the text says, and this means that it is hidden in a safe place like a treasure which is well secured.

We find it hard to lay up our valuables safely in this world because thieves break through and steal. The iron safe, the strong room and all sorts of inventions are employed to preserve them from felonious grips, but when God becomes the Guardian of our treasure, He lays it up where none can touch it and neither man nor devil can steal it. Our hope is laid up just as crowns and wreaths were laid up at the Grecian games for those who won them—no one could snatch them away from their rightful owners. The rewards were safely retained for the winners, to be distributed when the contest was over. You see not as yet your hope, Beloved, but it is laid up—it is hidden with Christ in God and made as safe as the Throne of God Himself.

Notice the next word, it is laid up, “for you.” It is something to have your hope laid up, but it is much better to have it laid up for yourself. “Laid up for you.” That is, for you whose faith is in Christ Jesus and who have love to all the saints. There is a crown in Heaven which will never be worn by any head but yours! There is a harp in Glory that will never be touched by any fingers but yours. Make no mistake about it, it is laid up for you in Heaven! It is “reserved in Heaven for you who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.” “For *you*”—“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Lay the stress there and get honey out of it. “Laid up for *you*.”

Where is it laid up? The next word tells us. “Laid up for you in Heaven,” “where,” says the Savior as though He were expounding the text, “neither moth nor rust does corrupt.” This means that no process of decay will cause your treasure to become stale and worn out! No secret moth will eat the garments of Heaven’s courtiers and no rust will tarnish the brightness of their crowns. Our Lord adds, “Nor do thieves break through nor steal.” We cannot imagine a burglar’s breaking through the walls of Heaven! We could not imagine Satan himself undermining the bastions of the New Jerusalem, or leaping over the bulwarks which guard the city of the Great King! If your hope is laid up in Heaven it must be perfectly safe.

If your hope lies in the bank, it may break—if it lies in an empire, it may melt away. If it lies in an estate, the title-deeds may be questioned; if it lies in any human creature, death may bereave you. If it lies in yourself, it is altogether deceitful! But if your hope is laid up in Heaven, how secure it is! Be glad and bless the Lord. To show how secure is our hope, the Apostle tells us that we have an indisputable certificate and guarantee for it. He says, “We heard of it in the Word of the Truth of the Gospel.” Notice these three emphatic words—“In the Word of the Truth of the Gospel.” First, “In the Word.” What word is that? Man’s word? Man’s words are so much wind! But this is *God’s Word*, the same Word that made Heaven and earth! A Word of power which cannot fail and of Truth which cannot lie.

You first hear of this blessed hope through the Word of God and that Word is the best of evidence. You know how a person will say, “My word for it?”—Here you have God’s Word for it! We take a good man’s word freely and will we not take God’s Word much more readily? You have the Word of God for the sure hope that believers in Christ Jesus shall be blessed forever—is not this security enough? Our text goes on to say, “the Word of the Truth.” So, then, it is not a word of guess, conjecture, or of probable inference, but of Infallible Truth! My Brothers of the modern school, my wise Brothers, have a word of excogitation, outcome and development—but the word the Apostle preached was “the Word of the Truth”—something positive, dogmatic and certain!

Ugly as the word may sound, the Lord grant that we may never be ashamed of the thing called *dogmatism*, nowadays, which is none other than faith in God’s Truth! We believe the Word of God not only to be true, but to be “the Word of the Truth.” “Let God be true and every man a liar.” There may be other true things in the world, but God’s Word is the *essence* of Truth, the Truth beyond all things else that may be true, for He has said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall never pass away.” The Apostle says in another place, “All flesh is as grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower thereof falls away; but the Word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.”

Note the next word, “The Word of the Truth of the Gospel,” or of the Good News. That is to say, the sum and substance of the Good News is to be found in this glorious hope! If you extract the essence of the Gospel and get the Truth of God, which is the central germ of the glad tidings, you come at that blessed hope most sure and steadfast which enters into that within the veil. Now, then, before your God-created hope can fail, the Word of God will have to be broken! But the Word of God cannot be broken! The Truth of God will have to fail, but the Truth of God abides forever and is by force of its own Nature eternal! And the Gospel will have to be disproved, but that cannot be, since the Glory of God is made to hang upon it!

You have heard it, then, “in the Word of the Truth of the Gospel.” What better assurance do you need? Hold to it and rejoice in it and you shall never be ashamed of your hope!

**III.** I close by saying that IT IS A MOST POWERFULLY INFLUENTIAL HOPE. Brothers and Sisters, I have already said to you that this hope is the parent and nurse of love because the text says, "The love which you have to all the saints for the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven." Now, that is no trifling fountain of action which leads believing hearts to love, since love is always a working Grace! Oh, for more love in this distracted world! Whatever in this world promotes Christian love is to be admired and, since the hope that we shall be forever together before the Throne of God lifts us above the little disagreements of society and makes us affectionate to each other, it is a thing to cultivate with care.

Love is one part of the powerful operation of hope upon ourselves, but hopefulness affects others, also. Where the hopefulness of saints is conspicuous, it leads ministers and gracious people to give thanks to God. Paul says, "We give thanks to God and the Father, praying always for you since we heard of your hope." I do not know a greater delight that a minister can have than the thought of all his people entering the bliss of Heaven and of his meeting them all there! We hardly have time to know each other here below. We have loved each other in the Lord and we have strived together in the service of God—and some of us are old fellow-soldiers. Now, after many years of Christian warfare, how pleasant it will be to dwell together above the world without end!

Some have gone home whom we dearly loved and would almost have detained if we could. And there are others among us who in the order of Nature will soon be translated—happy are we because we cannot long be separated! The age of some among us prophesies their speedy departure and foreshadows that they will soon go over to the majority—but it is a most blessed reflection that all of us who are in Christ shall meet together above. We shall have ample room and space enough for fellowship when we have reached eternity—and what will our joy be then! Perhaps some of you will say to me when we converse in heavenly language— "You remember talking to us concerning the blessed hope on that fine Lord's-Day morning, but you did not know much about it! We said then, 'The half has not been told us,' but now we perceive you did not tell us the one-hundredth part! Still we were glad to share in the joy of what little we did know and in the blessed hope of knowing so much more." Oh yes, dear Friends, because the hope of Heaven in us helps to make other people thank God on our account, it is a sweet Grace and mightily influential—and the more we have of it the better!

Moreover, hearing of their hope led the Apostle to pray and, if you will follow me in reading the words which succeed the text, you will see what he desired for his friends at Colosse. In the ninth verse you will see what he prayed for. He says, "For this cause we, also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Having believed in Jesus and loving His people, you are going to Heaven and so Paul says, "I desire that you be filled with the knowledge of His will," and well may he so desire, since to do that will is the joy and business of Heaven! Is not our prayer, "Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven"?

Brethren, let us learn the will of the Lord *now* and so be educated for the skies!

Here we are to go through our apprenticeship that we may be able to take up our freedom as citizens of the New Jerusalem. Here we are at school, preparing to take our degree above, among the instructed saints of God! Are we to enter Heaven ignorant of what the will of the Lord is? Surely we ought to know something of the ways of the place and something of the rules of the court! This part of our life below is intended to be a prelude to our life above—a preparation for perfection! Here below we undergo the tuning of the instruments. It is not meet that there should be discordant scrapings and screwing of strings in Heaven! No, let us do all that here! Let us have our harps tuned below so that when we reach the orchestra of the skies we may take our right place and drop into the right note directly. A good hope should make you eager to know the will of the Lord! It should purify you even as Christ is pure and make you anxious to begin the perfect service of Heaven while yet you linger below!

Then the Apostle prays, “that you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.” Is it not fit that you who are to rise to Enoch’s Heaven should walk as he did and have this testimony that you please God? You are going to dwell at God’s right hand where there are pleasures forevermore—would you not wish to do all you can to please your Lord before you see Him? You are a son or daughter of a King! You have not put on your glittering array as yet—your crown is not yet on your head—but surely you wish to behave yourself as becomes one who is foreordained for so much honor and glory! If a son is in a distant country and is coming home, he begins to think, “What can I take home? What can I do to please the beloved father whom I am soon to see?” Begin, Beloved, to see what you can do to please God because you are so soon to enter into His pleasure and dwell with those that wear white robes, “for they are worthy”!

Next he says, “Being fruitful in every good work.” Why, if there is to be such a rich reward of Grace, let us bear all the gracious fruit we can! And if the time of working is so soon to be over, let us be instant in every holy labor while yet the season is with us! Who wants to go into Heaven empty-handed? Who wishes to spend the time of his sojourning here in idleness? Oh no! Let us seek to be fruitful to the Glory of God that so we may have an abundant entrance into the kingdom! The Apostle further adds, “Increasing in the knowledge of God.” If I am going to dwell with God, let me know something of Him. Let me search His Word and see how He has revealed Himself. Let me endeavor to have fellowship with Him and His Son, Jesus, that I may know Him. How can I enter Heaven as a total stranger to Him who is the King of it? Is not the knowledge of God as necessary as it is desirable?

Those who have a good hope of Heaven will not rest without knowing the Lord, from the least even to the greatest of them. If anyone were to make you a present of a great estate, no matter in what country it might be situated, you would feel an interest in the land and its neighborhood—and before nightfall you would be found enquiring about the place! No matter how rustic the neighborhood or remote the locality, you would set

your thoughts towards it if you knew the estate to be yours. As a usual thing, one of the driest documents in all the world is a rich man's will. If you have ever heard one read you will know how it proses on and on in that rigmarole fashion dear to lawyers! But if you are present when it is read to the family, please notice how, "my son John's" eyes clear up when it comes to the clause which concerns himself and how even the aged countenance of "my faithful servant Jane" brightens when her small legacy is mentioned! Everyone is on the alert when his own interests are affected. Even so, he that has a hope in Heaven and an interest in Christ's great Testament will, at once, take an interest in Divine things and will desire to increase in the knowledge of God.

Once again, the Apostle says, "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." A hope of Heaven is a mighty strengthener for bearing the ills of life and the persecutions of the adversary. "It will soon be over," says a man who looks for Heaven and, therefore, he is not over-weighted with grief. "It is an ill lodging," said the traveler, "but I shall be away in the morning." Well may we be strengthened with all might by the hope of Heaven! It is but reason that the exceeding weight of Heaven should cast into the shade this light affliction which is but for a moment! You will say, "But have you not worked this part of the chapter into your subject without any guarantee?"

No. Here is my guarantee in the next verse—"Giving thanks unto the Father which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." I have been following the evident track of the Apostle's thoughts. The Lord gives us a hope of glory and then He gives us a meetness for it and that meetness is largely worked in us by the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of our hope. Cultivate, then, your hope, dear Brothers and Sisters! Make it to shine so plainly in you that your minister may hear of your hopefulness and joy! Cause observers to take note of it because you speak of Heaven and act as though you really expected to go there! Make the *world* know that you have a hope of Heaven! Make worldlings feel that you are a believer in eternal Glory and that you hope to be where Jesus is!

Often surprise them as they see what they call your simplicity, but what is, in truth, only your *sincerity* while you treat as matter of fact the hope laid up for you in Heaven! The Lord grant it for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

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# SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE AND ITS PRACTICAL RESULTS

## NO. 1742

DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 30 1883,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“For this cause we, also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.”*  
*Colossians 1:9, 10.*

FOR the Church that was at Colosse, Paul gave hearty thanks to God for many most important blessings, especially for their faith, their love and their hope. It would be a very useful exercise to our hearts if we would often give thanks to God for the gifts and Graces which we discover in our Christian Brothers and Sisters. I am afraid we are more inclined to spy out their *faults* and to suppose that we deplore them, than we are to discern the work of the Holy Spirit in them and, from the bottom of our hearts, give thanks to God for them. Paul felt encouraged by what he saw in the Colossian Believers to pray to God to enrich them yet farther. It should be our desire that our best Brethren should be better and that those who are most like Jesus should be still more completely conformed to His image.

We cannot more wisely show our love to our friends than by, first, acknowledging the Grace which is in them—and then by praying that God may give them more! Paul, as with an eagle eye, surveyed the Church at Colosse, which he loved so well, and he noted that it was somewhat lacking in knowledge. The Colossian brotherhood differed considerably from the Church at Corinth which abounded in talent and was enriched with all knowledge. The Colossians had fewer gifted Brethren among them who could act as teachers and, though this was no fault of theirs, it impoverished them in the matter of knowledge—and as Paul would not have them be behind in any desirable attainment—he, therefore, prayed for them that they might be filled with knowledge in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

If you read this Epistle through, you will observe that Paul frequently alludes to knowledge and wisdom. To the point in which he judged the Church to be deficient, he turned his prayerful attention. He would not have them ignorant. He knew that spiritual ignorance is the constant source of error, instability and sorrow—and, therefore, he desired that they might be soundly taught in the things of God. Not that they were destitute of *saving* knowledge, for he says in the 6<sup>th</sup> verse that they “knew the Grace of God in truth,” and that they had brought forth fruits meet for salvation. But saving knowledge, though it is the most essential attainment, is not the *only* knowledge which a Christian should seek after. He should long to be *useful* as well as to be safe.

Being himself delivered out of darkness, Paul strives to bring others into the marvelous light of Grace. Paul would have his Brethren thoroughly furnished for sacred service, knowing the will of the Lord, themselves, and able to teach others. He desired for them that they might possess *comforting*

knowledge, *strengthening* knowledge, *edifying* knowledge, *sanctifying* knowledge, *directing* knowledge—so that they might be ready for all the trials, duties and labors of life. Upon this subject I am led to make four observations and to enlarge upon each of them. May the Holy Spirit, by this discourse, build us up in the knowledge of God.

I. My first subject is THE GREAT VALUE OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER, for as soon as Paul felt his heart burning with love to the saints at Colosse and had heard of the work of the Spirit among them, he began to show His love by lifting up His heart in prayer for them. He did that for them which He knew would bless them. Notice that intercessory prayer is a very important part of the work of Christians for one another. We are not sent into the world to live unto ourselves, but we are members of one body—and each member is expected to contribute to the health and the comfort of the whole. It is true we cannot all preach, but we can all pray! We cannot all distribute alms from our substance, but we can all offer prayer from our hearts!

In temporal things we may not be able to enrich the Church for lack of substance, but if we fail to bless the Church by our prayers, it will be for lack of Divine Grace. Whatever you fail in, dearly Beloved—and I pray that you may in nothing fall behind—yet do not fail in prayer for all the saints, that every blessing may abound towards them! Intercessory prayer is to be esteemed as an invaluable proof of love and as the creator of more love. The man who will truly pray for me will certainly readily forgive me if I offend him. He will relieve me if I am in need and He will be prepared to assist me if I am engaged in a service too hard for me. Give us your earnest prayers and we know that we live in your hearts! How sweet it is to be permitted thus to manifest our love to one another!

When our hands are palsied, we can still pray! When our eyes grow dim, we can still see to pray! When, by sickness, we are altogether laid aside, we can still pray! And when we meet with cases in which we are unable to help, and yet are moved with sympathy for a Brother or Sister, our sympathy can always find one open channel, for we can pray—and by prayer call in the aid of One whose help is effectual. Therefore, by your love to your Lord and to all those who are in Him, I beseech you abound in intercessory prayer as the Apostle did.

Intercessory prayer, again, is most valuable because it is an infallible means of obtaining the blessings which we desire for our friends. It is not in vain that we ask, for it is written, “Everyone that asks receives.” It is not in vain that we intercede for others, for the Lord delights to answer such petitions. The unselfish devotion which pleads as eagerly for others as for itself is so pleasing to the Lord that He puts great honor upon it. If we desire any blessing for our friends, our best course is to pray—even if we would have them to be filled with knowledge in all wisdom, our safest course is to pray that it may be so.

Of course, we must not forget to instruct them and to aid them in their studies as far as lies in our power, for every honest prayer supposes the use of all proper means. But the instruction which we offer will be of no service unless we first bring down the blessing of God upon it, that thereby our friends may be made willing to learn and may receive the Truth of God not as the word of man, but as from the Lord, Himself. None but *spiritual* teaching will nourish spiritual life. The Holy Spirit must teach Divine Truth to the heart, or it will never be truly known. Whatever you wisely desire for your friend, strive to get it for him, but hasten, first, to the Throne of Grace. If you would have your friend converted; if you would have him strengthened; if you would have him taught of God; if you would have

him quickened to a nobler life and elevated to a higher consecration, do him this great service—take his case before the Lord in prayer—and in so doing you have gone the wisest way to work to enrich him.

Note, Brothers and Sisters, for I am keeping to my text closely, that such intercessory prayer will be all the more valuable if it is our immediate resort. The Apostle says, “Since the day we heard it, we do not cease to pray for you.” He began to pray at once! Whenever you perceive the work of the Spirit in any heart, pray at once that the holy change may proceed with power. Whenever you discover any need in a Brother, begin on the day you hear of it to pray that his need may be supplied. There should be no delaying of prayer! “He gives twice who gives quickly” is a human proverb, but I believe that when we *prays* speedily we shall often find that God, in answering quickly, gives us a double blessing. Usually he who is the most diligent in the pursuit of them shall win worldly riches—and assuredly he shall be richest towards God who is most diligent in supplication. Linger not a minute! Speed on to the Mercy Seat. Now is the accepted time; the Lord waits to be gracious to you! The Lord indicates to you what your prayer shall be by the news, which you have just heard of your friend. Therefore, bring his case at once before the Throne of Grace. Divine Providence has brought the necessary subject for prayer under your notice; therefore begin to pray about it at once!

Our prayers will be all the more valuable if they are incessant as well as immediate. “We cease not,” said Paul, “to pray for you since the day we heard it.” “Oh,” says one, “was Paul *always* praying for the Colossians from the day he heard of their welfare? It may have been months and years! Did he never cease to pray?” I answer, he was always praying for them in the sense which he explains—he adds, “and to desire.” Now, desire is the essence of prayer. In fact, desire is the *kernel* of prayer. The vocal expressions which we call by the name of prayer are often but its shell—inward desire is the life, the heart, the reality of prayer! Though you cannot always be *speaking* in prayer, you can always be desiring in prayer. The miser is always desiring riches, though he is not always talking about his gold and silver. And the man who loves his fellow men and desires their profit is really always praying for their benefit, though he is not always lifting up his voice in supplication. “Since the day we heard it,” says Paul, “we do not cease to pray for you.”

The act of prayer is blessed, but the *habit* of prayer is more blessed—and the *spirit of prayer* is the most blessed of all—and it is *this* that we can continue for months and years. The act of prayer must, from force of circumstances, be sometimes stopped, but the habit of prayer should be fixed and unvarying. And the spirit of prayer, which is fervent desire, should be perpetual and abiding. We can hardly realize the value to the Church and to the world of that intercessory prayer which ceases not, day or night, but without fail ascends before the Lord from the whole company of the faithful, as the incense ascended from the altar!

Dear Friends, our intercessory prayer will be all the more precious if it is an intense expression unto God. I suppose that by the use of the word, “desire,” here, the Apostle not only explains how he continued to pray, but in what manner he prayed—with “desire.” Remember how our Lord puts it—“with desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” I wish we could always say, “with desire have I desired in prayer. I did not repeat a merely complimentary benediction upon my friends, but I pleaded for them as for my life. I importuned with God; I offered an effectual in-wrought prayer which rose from the depths of my heart to the heights of Heaven and obtained an audience with God.”

Fervency is a great essential for victorious prayer. God grant us to be importunate, for then we shall be invincible!

One more observation and I have done with this point. Intercessory prayer is increased in value when it is not from one person, alone, but is offered in intimate union with other saints. Paul says, “We, also,” not, “I, only,” but, “*we*, also, since the day we heard it, cease not.” If two of you agree as touching anything concerning the Kingdom of God, you have the blessing secured to you by a special promise of God. Remember how Abraham prayed for the cities of the plain, but succeeded not until Lot also added his supplication for Zoar? Then the little city was spared. I compare Abraham’s intercession to a ton weight of prayer, and poor Lot’s I can hardly reckon to have been more than half an ounce, but still that half-ounce turned the scale!

So here is Paul—and with him is youthful Timothy, who, compared with Paul, is meaningless! Yet Paul’s prayer is all the more effectual because Timothy’s prayer is joined with it. Our Lord sent out His servants by two and two, and it is well when they come back to Him in prayer two and two. I commend to you, Brothers and Sisters, the habit of frequent prayer together. When a Christian friend drops in, his visit will, perhaps, end in mere talk unless you secure its spiritual profit by at least a few minutes spent in united prayer. I frequently, during the day, when a friend comes in upon the Master’s business, say, “Let us pray before you go,” and I always find the request is welcomed. Such prayers do not occupy much time, but if they did, it might be well spent—such united supplications oil the wheels of life’s heavy wagon and cause it to move with less of that creaking which we too often hear. “I, alone” is certainly a good word in prayer, but, “we, also” is a better one! Let us link hands and intercede for our Brethren and the whole Church of God.

Thus have I expatiated upon the excellencies which increase the value of intercessory prayer. Use much this heavenly art. It is effectual for 10,000 ends. It turns every way to bless the Church. Brothers and Sisters, pray for us, pray for all saints, pray for all sinners and, by doing so you will be the benefactors of your age.

**II.** Our second observation from the text is this—we learn, here, **THE PRECIOUSNESS OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE**—for all this earnest, ceaseless prayer is offered for this end, “That you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” Here let us speak of the usefulness and blessedness of that spiritual knowledge for which the Apostle and his friend cried incessantly unto the Lord. First, consider the men for whom this knowledge is desired. They are saints and faithful Brethren, of whom we read that they “knew the Grace of God in truth,” and were, “bringing forth fruit” unto God. For those who already know the Lord we must not cease to pray. They are not beyond the need of our prayers while they are in this life.

We may pray for those who know nothing of the Lord, that He would open their blind eyes—but even those who have already been taught of God are in need of our supplications that they may learn yet more. We have great encouragement to pray that they may be filled with all knowledge, since the Lord has already done so much for them. We dare not say in this case that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, for a little knowledge of the things of God may suffice to save the soul, but more knowledge is a most desirable thing for those who have that little knowledge! Pray, therefore, for them. Let not your prayers plead only and altogether for the unconverted, but entreat for our young converts, that they may be further edified. It will be an ill day when we are so engaged in seeking lost sheep that we forget

the lambs! It would be very mischievous for us to neglect our work at home in order to carry on warfare with the adversary abroad.

No, let us daily cry to God in prayer that the stones lately quarried may be built up upon the one Foundation and embedded in the walls of the Church of God unto eternal glory! We desire life for the dead, health for the living and maturity for the healthy. For the deeper instruction of our younger Brothers and Sisters let us pray. Of this desirable knowledge, what is the measure? We desire for them, “that they may be *filled* with the knowledge of His will.” Filled—this is grand scholarship, to have the mind, heart and the whole of our manhood filled with knowledge! Paul would not have a Believer ignorant upon *any* point—he would have him *filled* with knowledge, for when a measure is full of wheat there is no room for chaff. True knowledge excludes error.

The men that go after false doctrine are usually those who know little of the Word of God. Being untaught, they are unstable, ready to be blown about with every wind of doctrine. If you leave empty spots in your minds unsaturated with holy teaching, they will be an invitation to the devil to enter in and dwell there. Fill up the soul and so shut out the enemy! Paul desired the Colossian saints to be filled—filled up to the brim with the knowledge of God’s will! Brethren, we would have you know all that you can know of God’s Truth! Rome flourishes by man’s ignorance, but the New Jerusalem rejoices in the Light of God! No knowledge of the revealed will of God can ever do you any harm if it is *sanctified*. Do not be afraid of what they call, “high doctrines,” or the, “deep things of God.” They tell us that those things are secrets and, therefore, we ought not to pry into them.

If they are secrets, there is no fear that anybody can pry into them! But the Truths of God revealed in the Word of God are no longer secrets, seeing that they are revealed to us by the Spirit of God—and as far as they are revealed, it should be our desire to understand them—so as to be filled with the knowledge of them. Let us try to know the Divine Truths of God more and more intimately. You know a man, for you pass him in the streets with a nod. You know another man far better, for you lodge in the same house with him. You know him best of all when you have shared his trouble, partaken in his joy and have, in fact, had fellowship with him by blending your two lives in one common stream of friendship. When you learn a spiritual Truth, endeavor to know it inside out—to know its foundation and building—to know it by the application of the Spirit to your own soul so that you are filled with it.

You may have knowledge in the brain, but it may not run into your spirit, so as to penetrate, permeate and saturate your spirit, till you are filled with it. Oh, to get the Gospel into one’s entire nature and to be like the water pots of Cana, filled up to the brim! Lord, fill Your poor children with the knowledge of Your will! This makes me notice what the matter of this knowledge is—“filled with the knowledge of His will.” What is that? It means the revealed will of God! Paul would have the Colossians know what the Lord has revealed, as far as human mind could grasp it, whether it were doctrine, precept, experience, or prophecy. How well it is to know the perceptive will of God! Our prayer should daily be, “Lord, what will You have me do?” Lord, teach me what is sin and what is righteousness, that I may discern things which are excellent. Whereas there are questions in the Church of God, itself, upon what the will of the Lord is, Lord help me not to care to know what is the will of this learned doctor, or what is the will of a certain assembly, but what is YOUR will!

“To the law and to the testimony”—this is our touchstone. Our desire is to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord’s will so as to do it without fail. Especially would we know the will of God as it con-

stitutes the Gospel, for Jesus says, “This is the will of Him that sent me, that everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life.” Oh, to know His will in that respect most clearly, so as to go and tell it out on all sides, that men may know the way of life and may be led into it by our word! Once more we read in 1 Thessalonians 4:3—“This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” Oh, to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord’s will till you know what sanctification *means* and exhibit it in your daily life! It is yours to teach men what God means by holiness! Your mission is not fulfilled and the will of God is not accomplished unless you are sanctified! This it is with which we need to be filled! Know anything, know everything that is worth knowing! “That the soul is without knowledge is not good.”

Never attempt to run side by side with the agnostic whose glory it is that he knows nothing. But let it be your delight to know all that can be learned out of the Book of the Lord, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Concentrate your faculties upon the will of God. Here dive into the deeps and climb up to the heights and be afraid of nothing! Ask the Holy Spirit to saturate you with His Truth, as Gideon’s fleece was wet with the dew of Heaven, as the golden pot was filled with manna, or as Jordan is filled in the time of harvest when it overflows all its banks!

Still we have not done, for we must now notice the *manner* as well as the matter of this knowledge—“in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” Wisdom is better than knowledge, for wisdom is knowledge rightly used. Knowledge may find room for folly, but wisdom casts it out. Knowledge may be the horse, but wisdom is the driver. When a man has knowledge, it is like the corn which is laid in the barn. But wisdom is the fine flour prepared for food. We need Christian people not only to know, but to *use* what they know! Happy is he who knows what to do at the right time! Many people are very knowing half an hour after it is too late—but to be filled with wisdom is to be able, at once, to apply knowledge rightly in difficult cases. Wisdom enables you to bring your knowledge practically to bear upon life, to separate between the precious and the vile, to deal with your fellow Christians in their different conditions—and to deal with sinners and those that are in need.

You need wisdom so to conduct your affairs that nothing therein shall scandalize the weak, or bring dishonor upon the name of Christ—mere knowledge will not suffice for this. Knowledge is the blade, wisdom is the full corn in the ear. Knowledge is the cloth, but wisdom is the garment. Knowledge is the timber, but wisdom has built her house. May all our knowledge be sanctified by Grace and attended with the guidance of the Spirit that we may become wise to know what the will of the Lord is. “All wisdom,” says the Apostle—many-handed wisdom, wisdom of all sorts, wisdom that will serve you in the shop, wisdom that will be useful in the counting-house, wisdom that will aid the Church of God and wisdom that will guide you if you are cast among the vilest of mankind. May you “be filled with knowledge in all wisdom.”

But that wisdom which operates on the outside must be attended by a spiritual understanding which is powerful within. I hardly know how to explain this—it is an inward knowledge of truth—the knowledge of the inward parts of things. It is a spiritual discernment, taste, experience and reception of the Truths of God, whereby the soul feeds upon them and takes them into herself. We know many men who know much but understand nothing. They accept implicitly what they are taught, but they have never considered it, weighed it, estimated it, found out the roots of it, or seen the heart of it. Oh, to have in the Church men full of spiritual understanding! These can say that they have tasted and handled the

good Word of Life and have proved and tested the Truth as it is in Jesus! You know how it was with the sacrifices of old—a man who was poor brought turtle-doves or pigeons—and of these we read of each bird, “The priest shall cleave it with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder.”

But a man who was rich in Israel brought a bullock or a sheep—and this offering was not only cleft down the middle, but further divided—the fat and the “inwards” are mentioned in detail. The poorer sacrifice represents the offering of the uninstructed—they have never rightly divided the Word of God and know not its fullness of meaning. But the man who is rich in Grace is comparable to him who brought his bullock, for he can enter into detail and see the secret meanings of the Word. There is a deep, which lies under, and he that is taught of the Lord shall find it. “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His Covenant.” And blessed are they that are taught of the Lord so as to read the mystery of His Grace! Here, then, is a grand petition for us.

To go back to our first head, let our intercessory prayers go up for all our Brothers and Sisters. Lord, teach them Your Word! Let them know Your Book from cover to cover, and let Your Truths revealed therein enter into them until they are filled to the brim! Then Lord, grant them the skill to use in daily life the knowledge which Your Spirit has imparted and may they more and more, in their inmost souls, be guided into all Your Truth, that they may comprehend with all saints what are the heights, and depths, and know the love of Christ which passes knowledge.

III. Now, thirdly, let us see in the text a lesson concerning THE PRACTICAL RESULT OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE. Paul prays for his friends “that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.” See, see the drift of his prayer?—“That you may *walk*.” Not that you might *talk*; not that you might sit down and meditate and enjoy yourselves, but, “that you might walk.” He aims at practical results! He desires that the saints may be instructed so that they may walk according to the best model. By walking worthy of the Lord Jesus, we do not understand in any sense that he expected them to possess such worthiness as to deserve to walk *with* the Lord—but he would have them live in a manner that should be in accordance with their communion with Christ.

You would not have a man walk with Christ through the streets, today, clothed in motley garments, or loathsome with filth—would you? No, if a man is a leper, Christ will heal him before He will walk with him! Let not a disciple walk so as to bring disgrace upon his Lord! When you walk with a king, you should be, yourself, royal in gait. When you commune with a prince, you should not act the clown. Dear Friends, may you know so much of Jesus that your lives shall become Christ-like, fit to be put side by side with the Character of Jesus, worthy of your perfect Lord! This is a high standard, is it not? It is always better to have a high standard than a low one, for you will never go beyond that which you set up as your model. If you set a low standard, you will fall below even that! It is an old proverb, “He that aims at the moon will shoot higher than he that aims at a bush.” It is well to have no lower standard than the desire to live, over again, the life of the Lord Jesus—a life of tenderness, a life of self-sacrifice, a life of generosity, a life of love, a life of honesty, a life of holy service—a life of close communion with God. Mix all virtues in due proportion and that is the life of Jesus towards which you must press forward with all your heart.

Next, the Apostle would have us get knowledge in order that we may so live as to be pleasing to our best Friend—“worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.” Is not that beautiful? To live so as to please God

in all respects! Some live to please themselves, while others to please their neighbors. Some live to please their wives; some to please their children, and some live as if they wished to please the devil! But *our* business is to please Him in all things whose servants we are. Without faith it is impossible to please Him—so away with unbelief! Without holiness no man shall see Him, much less please Him—therefore let us follow after holiness and may the Lord work it in us! “Unto all pleasing”—so that we may please God from the moment we rise in the morning to the time when we lie down! Yes, and please Him even when we are asleep! That we may eat and drink so as to please Him; that we may speak and think so as to please Him; that we may go or stay so as to please Him; that we may rejoice or suffer so as to please Him—“walking worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.”

Oh, blessed is the man whose life is pleasing to God in all respects! The Apostle Paul desires that we may be filled with knowledge to this very end. If I do not *know* the will of God, how can I *do* the will of God? At least, how can there be anything pleasing to God which is ignorantly done without an intent to do His will? I fear that many children of God grieve their heavenly Father through sins of ignorance—an ignorance in which they ought not to remain a single day! Be it clearly understood that sins of ignorance are truly sins. They have not about them the venom and the aggravation which are found in sins against the Light and knowledge of God, but they are still sins, for the measure of our duty is not *our* light, but the Law of God itself. If a man pleads that he follows his conscience, yet this will not excuse his wrongdoing if his conscience is an unenlightened conscience and he is content to keep it in the dark. You are to obey the will of the Lord—that will is the standard of the sanctuary.

Our conscience is often like a deficient weight and deceives us. It is ours to gather a clear knowledge of the Word of God, that we may prove what is that perfect and acceptable will of God. The law makes no allowance for errors committed through false weights. When a man says, “I thought my weights and measures were all right,” he is not, therefore, excused. The law deals with *facts*, not with men’s imaginations! The weights must actually be correct, or the penalty is exacted. So is it with conscience—it ought to be instructed in the knowledge of the Divine will—and if it is not, its faultiness affords no justification for evil. Hence the absolute necessity of knowledge in order to true holiness. God grant us Grace to know His will and then to *obey* it “unto all pleasing.”

Look at the text again—“That you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful.” Paul would have us producing the best fruit. Without knowledge, we cannot be fruitful—at least in the points where we are ignorant we must fail to bring forth fruit. Therefore he would have us to be taught well, that we may abundantly produce fruit unto God’s Glory. He says, “fruitful in every good work,” and this means much. He desires us to be as full of good works as we can be. Some are hindered in this because they do not know how to set about holy service. How can a man be fruitful as a preacher if he does not know what to preach? True, he may preach the elementary doctrine of the Cross, but even that he will be apt to set forth in a blundering manner. For certain, a man cannot teach what he does not know. The zealous, but untaught man, would be much more fruitful if he had a clearer understanding of Divine things.

In daily life, if in knowledge you are ignorant as to the things of God, you will be ready to become the prey of any false teacher who may chance to pick you up. In hundreds of ways, ignorance will make you run risks, lose opportunities of usefulness and fall into dangerous mistakes. Knowledge is food to the true heart and strengthens it for the Lord’s work. Oh, to have knowledge placed like good soil

around the roots of the soul, to fertilize the mind that thus the clusters of usefulness may be as large as those of Eschol—beautiful, plentiful, sweet and full. May our Lord, the King of Israel, to whom the vineyard belongs, receive an abundant reward for all His labor for the vines which He has planted!

There is another note in this verse, which I beg you to notice. Paul would have them cultivate a comprehensive variety of the best things. He says—“Fruitful in every good work.” Here is room and range enough—“in every good work.” Have you the ability to preach the Gospel? Preach it! Does a little child need comforting? Comfort it! Can you stand up and vindicate a glorious Truth of God before thousands? Do it! Does a poor saint need a bit of dinner from your table? Send it to her! Let works of obedience, testimony, zeal, charity, piety and philanthropy all be found in your life. Do not select only big things as your specialty, but also glorify the Lord in the littles—“fruitful in *every* good work.” You never saw in nature a tree which yielded all sorts of fruit and you never will.

I have seen a tree so grafted that it produced four kinds of fruit at one time, but I remarked that it was a poor business in reference to two of the varieties, for one of the grafts, more natural than the others to the parent stem, drew off most of the sap and flourished well, but robbed the other branches! The second sort of fruit managed to live pretty fairly, but not so well as it would have done on its own stem. As for the third and fourth, they were mere *attempts* at fruit of the smallest size. This tree was shown to me as a great curiosity—it is not likely that practical gardeners will be encouraged by the experiment! But what would you think of a tree upon which you saw grapes, figs, olives, apples and all other good fruits growing at one time? This is the type of what instructed Believers will become—they will produce all sorts of goodness and graciousness to the honor of their heavenly Father!

I have no doubt that you will naturally abound most in certain good works for which you have the largest capacity, but still, nothing ought to come amiss to you. In the great house of the Church we need servants who will not be simply cooks or housemaids, but general servants, maids of all work, prepared to do anything and everything! I have known persons in household employment in England who would not do a turn beyond their special work to save their masters’ lives! These are a sort of servants of whom the fewer the better! In India this is carried out to a ridiculous extreme. The Hindu water-bearer will not sweep the house, nor light a fire, nor brush your clothes—he will fetch water and nothing else! You must, therefore, have a servant for each separate thing, and then each man will do his own little bit—he will not go an inch beyond!

When we enter into Christ’s Church, we should come prepared to wash the saints’ feet, or bear their burdens, or bind up their wounds, or fight their foes, or act as steward, or shepherd, or nurse. It has been well said that if two angels in Heaven were summoned to serve the Lord and there were two works to be done, an empire to be ruled, or a crossing to be swept, neither angel would have a choice as to which should be appointed to him, but would gladly abide the will of the Lord. Let us be equally prepared for anything, for everything by which fruit can be produced for the Well-Beloved. Why is it that some are not fruitful in this comprehensive way? Because they are not filled with knowledge in all wisdom! When a man says, “You asked me to do the lowest work! Don’t you know that I am a man of remarkable ability who should have higher work to do?” I venture to assert that he is an ignorant man! Self-assertion is ignorance on horseback!

You have probably read of a certain renowned corporal in the American service a century ago. A general, as he rode along, saw a body of men endeavoring to lift timber. They were shorthanded and the

work lagged, but their famous corporal stood by ordering them about at a magnificent rate. The general passed and said, “Why don’t you lend them help and put your shoulder to it? “Why, Sir,” said the great little officer, “how can you think of such a thing? Do you know who I am? I am a corporal!” The general got off his horse, took off his coat, and helped move the timber—and by his judicious help the soldiers achieved their task. Then he turned to the high and mighty gentleman and said, “Mr. Corporal, next time you need a man to do such work as this, you can send for me—I am General Washington.”

Just so the Lord Jesus Christ, if He were here, would gladly do a thousand things which His poor little servants are too great to touch! I know you, dear Brother—you are too experienced, too old, too learned to help in the Sunday school! I know you are too respectable to give away a tract! Pray get out of such ignorant ways of thinking and ask to be useful in all possible ways! If you have done a little, do much! If you have done much, do more! And when you have done more, ask for Grace to proceed to the highest possible degree of usefulness for your Lord.

IV. And now, fourthly, notice THE REFLEX ACTION OF HOLINESS UPON KNOWLEDGE. We have only a few moments left—let my few words sink into your hearts. “Fruitful in every good work”—what then? “Increasing in the knowledge of God.” Look at that! It seems, then, that *holiness* is the road to knowledge! God has made it so. If any man will do His will, he shall know of His doctrine. If you read and study, and cannot make out the meaning of Scripture, get up and do something—and it may be, in the doing of it, you shall discover the secret. Holiness of heart shall increase the illumination of your mind!

Will you kindly observe that this knowledge rises in tone? Paul first prayed that they “might be filled with the knowledge of God’s will.” But *now* he implores for them an increase in the knowledge of God, Himself! Oh, blessed growth! First to know the *Law* and then to know the *Lawgiver*! First to know the precept, and then to know the mouth from which it comes! This is the height of knowledge—to see Christ and know the Father, and learn how to say from the heart—“Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.” I would call your willing attention to another thought. The Apostle, if he is to be judged according to his outward language, often utters impossible things, and yet his every sentence is not only full of deep meaning, but is strictly correct!

Notice his language here—in the 9<sup>th</sup> verse he says, “that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will.” Can anything go beyond this? The vessel is filled right up to the brim! What more can it have? Yet the Apostle says, “*increasing* in the knowledge of God.” What can that mean? If the mind is full to the brim, how can it receive more? If the man is full of knowledge, how can his knowledge increase? Can there be any increase after that? I propose to you the riddle. Here is the answer—make the vessel *larger*—and then there can be an increase. This solution of the difficulty requires no great wit to discover. So Paul plainly teaches us here, that if we have so increased in knowledge as to be full, he would have us increased in capacity to know yet more!

He would have our manhood enlarged and our powers of reception increased so that we might grow from being children to be young men—and from young men to be fathers, and so may be filled—filled always! Filled with all the fullness of God! The Lord grant unto us to perceive with humility that if we are already full of knowledge, we can still advance, for we “have not yet attained.” Let no man think that he can go no further! “There is,” says Augustine, “a certain perfection according to the measure of this life. And it belongs to that perfection that such a perfect man should know that he is not yet per-

fect.” To that I heartily subscribe! There is a certain fullness to be found in this life according to the measure of a man. And it belongs to that fullness that the man should know that he can yet increase in knowledge!

Holy Bernard says, “He is not good at all who does not desire to be better.” I also subscribe to that saying! Some might become good if they were not puffed up with the fancy of their own perfection. Others are somewhat commendable, but will never grow because they judge themselves to be already full-grown. I would have you filled and yet have room for more—filled with all knowledge, filled with all holiness, filled with the indwelling Spirit, filled with God—and yet increasing in knowledge, in holiness, in likeness to God and in all good things forevermore to His Glory! The Lord add His blessing for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

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**PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON  
TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.**

# **“A PREPARED PLACE FOR A PREPARED PEOPLE” NO. 2751**

**A SERMON  
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD’S-DAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1901.**

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,  
ON LORD’S-DAY EVENING, MAY 25, 1879.**

***“I go to prepare a place for you.”  
John 14:2.***

***“Giving thanks unto the Father, who has qualified us to be  
partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.”  
Colossians 1:12.***

MY real text is not in the Bible—it is one of those Christian proverbs which are not Inspired in words, but the spirit of which is Inspired, “Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.” You have often heard that sentence. It is familiar in your mouths as household words, and well it may be.

Yet I shall have two texts from the Scriptures. The first will be our Savior’s words to His disciples, “I go to prepare a place for you,” from which we learn that “Heaven is a prepared place.” And the second will be Paul’s words to the Colossians, “Giving thanks unto the Father, who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light,” from which we learn that there is a prepared people, a people made qualified to be partakers of the inheritance which Christ has gone to prepare for them!

**I.** I am not going to have any further preface, but I will begin at once to speak upon THE PREPARATION OF HEAVEN. “I go to prepare a place for you.”

It is many months since I began to turn this sentence over. I think I might truly say that for several *years* I have thought of it, and thought of it again, and thought of it yet again—that our Lord Jesus Christ, before returning to Heaven, should say to His disciples, “I go to prepare a place for you.” Is there any difficulty about this passage? Yes, it is very difficult to explain. Indeed, I do not think that we really can know all that Christ meant when He uttered these words. A father said to his children, when the summer sun had waxed hot, “I shall go to the seaside today to prepare a place for you.” His little child asked, “What does father mean when he says that he will prepare a place for us?” And his mother answered, “My child, I cannot tell you all that your father means, but you

will see when you get there. But now it must be enough for you that although you do not know what Father will have to do at the seaside in preparing a place for you, he knows what he is going to do.”

And, dear Friends, there is this consolation for us that even if we can hardly guess what it is that Christ can find to do to prepare Heaven for us, He knows what is needed, and He knows how to do it! And that is infinitely better than our knowing, because even if we knew what was needed, we could not do it. But with Christ to know and to do are two things that run parallel. He knows that there are certain preparations to be made. He knows what those preparations must be and He is equal to the task of making them! He has not gone upon an errand which He cannot fulfill. And when we get to Heaven, we shall know—perhaps it may take us a long while to find it all out—but we shall know and discover throughout eternity what He meant when He said, “I go to prepare a place for you.”

I do not profess to be able to explain our Lord’s words, but I am going simply to make a few remarks upon them. And first, I ask you to notice that *Heaven is already prepared for Christ’s people*. Christ has told us that when He comes in His Glory, He will say to those on His right hand, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” So, there is an inheritance which the Father has already prepared for the people whom He gave to His Son—and this inheritance is reserved for them. But if it was prepared from the foundation of the world, how can it be said to be prepared by Christ? The explanation probably is that it was prepared in the eternal purpose of the Father—prepared by wise forethought—arranged for—predestinated—prepared in that sense—it was provided in the eternal arrangements of Jehovah, that there should be a suitable place for His people to dwell in forever. He made the pavilion of the sun and He gave the stars their appointed positions—would He forget to prepare a place for His people? He gave to angels their places and even to fallen spirits He has appointed a prison—so He would not forget, when He was arranging the entire universe, that a place would be needed for the twice-born, the heirs of Grace, the members of the mystical body of Christ Jesus, His brethren who were to be made like unto Him. Therefore, in purpose, plan and decree, long before God had laid the foundations of this poor world and the morning stars had sung together over creation’s six days’ work accomplished, He had prepared a place for His people! It was not actually prepared, but it was in the purpose and plan of the eternal mind and, therefore, might be regarded as already done.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has gone to Heaven, He says, that He may prepare a place for His servants, and we may be helped to form some idea of what He means by this expression if we just think a little about it. And, first, I am sure *that must be a very great and glorious place which needs Christ to prepare*. If we do not know all that He means, we can get at least this much out of His declaration. He spoke this world into being. It was not, but He said, “Be,” and it was at once made. Then He spoke it into

order, into light, into life, into beauty. He had but to speak and what He willed was done. But now that He is *preparing* a place for His people. He has gone to Heaven on purpose to do it. He used to stand still here on earth and work miracles, but this was a miracle that He could not perform while He was here. He had to go back to His home above in order to prepare a place for His people. What sort of place, then, must it be that needs Christ Himself to prepare it? He might have said, “Angels, garnish a mansion for My Beloved.” He might have spoken to the firstborn sons of light and said, “Pile a temple of jewels for My chosen.” But, no, He leaves not the work to them, but He says, “I go to prepare a place for you.”

Brothers and Sisters, He *will do it well, for He knows all about us*. He knows what will give us the most happiness—and what will best develop all our spiritual faculties forever. He loves us, too, so well that as the preparing is left to Him, I know that He will prepare us nothing second-rate, nothing that could possibly be excelled. We shall have the best of the best, and much of it! We shall have all that even His great heart can give us! Nothing will be stinted for, as He is preparing it, it will be a right royal and Divine preparation. If, when the prodigal came back to his father, there was the preparation of the fatted calf, the music and dancing and the gold ring and the best robe, what will be the preparation when we do not come home as prodigals, but as the bride prepared for her husband, or as the Beloved children, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, coming home to the Father who shall see His own image in us and rejoice over us with singing? It is a grand place that Christ prepares, I know, for never was there another such a lordly host as He is! It is a mansion of delights, I know, that He prepares, for never was there another architect with thought so magnificent as His, and never were other hands so skilled at quarrying living stones and putting them, one upon another, as His hands have ever been! This thought ought to cheer us much—it must be something very wonderful that Christ prepares as a fit place for His people.

And I think I may add to this, that *it must be something very sweet when it is prepared*. If you go to a friend’s house and just fall in with the ordinary proceedings of the family, you are very comfortable and you are glad not to disarrange anything. But if, when you arrive, you see that everything has been done on an extra scale to prepare for your coming, you feel still more grateful. It has often happened to an honored guest that he could not help observing that he was not being treated as his friends lived every day of the week and all the year round. That guest chamber had evidently been newly furnished and everything that was possible had been thought of to do him honor. If you were treated thus as a guest, there was pleasure for you in the fact that so much had been prepared for you. Did your husband ever take you to a new house and point out to you how he had purchased everything that he thought would please you? Had that little room been furnished especially for you and did he anticipate your tastes, providing this little thing and that that he

knew you would like? Well, it was not merely that you enjoyed the things, themselves, but they all seemed to you so much sweeter because they had been prepared for you by your beloved husband. And when you get to Heaven, you will be astonished to see this and that and the other joy that was prepared for you because Christ thought of you, and provided just what you would most appreciate. You will be no stranger there, Beloved! You will say, “There has been here a hand that helped me when I was in distress. There has been here, I know, an eye that saw me when I was wandering far from God. There has been in this place a heart that cared for me—that same heart that loved me and that bled for me down below upon the Cross. It is my Savior who has prepared this place for me!”

I do not know whether I can convey to you all my thoughts upon this theme, but it does seem to me so pleasant to think that we are going to a place where we shall not be the first travelers through the country but where *a Pioneer has gone before us*—the best of pioneers who went before us with this one objective in His mind, that He might get all ready and prepare the place for us. I think, Brothers and Sisters, that those who will be there before us will say, when we arrive there, “We are glad you have come, for everything has been prepared for you.” It would be an eternal sorrow in Heaven if the saints should miss their way and perish, as some falsely tell us, for then, what about the preparations for their reception? They would all have been made in vain—harps prepared which no fingers would ever play—and crowns which no heads would ever wear! I do not believe it! I have never dreamed that such a thing could happen. I feel certain that He who prepared the place for the people, will prepare the people for the place and that if He gets all ready for them, He means to bring them Home that they may enjoy the things which He has laid up for them that love Him.

I know that I am not explaining the preparation of Heaven, yet I hope I am draining some comfortable thoughts out of the subject. If Christ is preparing Heaven, then it will be what our Scotch friends call, “a bonny place.” And if it is prepared for us, when we get there, it will exactly fit us. It will be the very Heaven we wanted—a better Heaven than we ever dreamed of—a better Heaven than we ever pictured even when our imagination took its loftiest heights! The Heaven of God and yet a Heaven exactly suited to such happy creatures as we then shall be!

Now, however, let us try to come a little closer to the subject and attempt to explain our Lord’s words. Jesus Christ has gone to prepare a place for His people. Does not this refer, if we keep it to its strict meaning, to *the ultimate place of God’s people*? You see, Christ mentions a *place*, not a state. And He speaks of going to it, and coming back from it—“I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself.” Christ is speaking of Himself in His full Manhood, without any figurative meaning to His words. He meant that He was going with all His Human Nature, away from this world. And that He was going to prepare a place for us, intend-

ing to come again, with all that glorified Human Nature about Him, to receive us unto Himself! This does not mean His spiritual coming in death, nor any kind of spiritual coming, as to its first meaning, at any rate. I am persuaded that the clear run of the words involves our Lord's coming, in His Second Advent, when He will come to receive, not you or me as individuals who, one by one, will enter into rest, but to receive His whole Church into the place which He shall then have prepared for her. After the Resurrection, you must remember, we shall need a place to live—a literal, material place of abode, for this body of ours will be alive as well as our spirit and it will need a world to live in—a new Heaven and a new earth.

I am not going to enter into any speculations about the matter, but it seems clear enough to me, in this text, that Christ is preparing a place somewhere not for *disembodied* spirits, for they are already before the Throne of God perfectly blessed—but for the entire manhood of His people, when spirit, soul and body shall be again united and the complete man shall receive the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, and the whole manhood of every Believer shall be perfected in the Glory of Christ. I do not know what better world, in many respects, there could be than this, so far as material nature is concerned. It is so full of the beauty and loveliness that God pours upon it on every side! It is a wonderful world—

**“Where every prospect pleases,  
And only man is vile”—**

but I could not reconcile myself to the idea that this world would be Heaven. No. My thoughts rise far above the loftiest hills, the most flowery meadows, the rolling ocean and the flowing rivers. Earth has not space enough to be our Heaven! She has too narrow a boundary and she is too coarse a thing, bright gem though she is, for perfected manhood to possess throughout eternity! It will do well enough for the thousand years of Glory—if it shall *literally* be that—we shall reign with Christ upon it during the millennial age. But it is a drossy thing and if it ever is to be the scene of the new heavens and the new earth, it must first pass through the fire. The very smell of sin is upon it—and God will not use this globe as a vessel unto honor until He has purified it with fire as once He did with water. And then, perhaps, it may serve for this higher purpose, but I scarcely think it will. Even now Jesus is preparing and has gone away on purpose to prepare a place for us—and He will come again, “with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God”—and He will catch His people away and will bear them to the eternal home where their happiness shall know no end. That is what I suppose to be the meaning of our Lord's words.

“But,” perhaps you say to me, “what do you mean by what you have been saying?” I reply—I do not know to the fullest. I can but dimly guess at the meaning of what my Lord has said—that He is doing something so glorious for ALL His people that, perhaps, if I did know it, I might not be allowed to tell you, for there are some things which, when a man knows them, it is not lawful for him to utter. Did not Paul see a great deal when

he was caught up into paradise? Yet he has told us very little about it, for there was a finger laid upon his lips that bade him know it for himself, but not to tell it to others. “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him.” And though He has “revealed them unto us by His Spirit,” even the Spirit who searches the deep things of God, yet is it not possible for us to tell all that has been revealed to us!

It strikes me that there is some little light to be obtained concerning this preparation of Heaven by Christ if I leave the direct and literal meaning of the words and think of the future state as a whole rather than in detail. Do you not think, dear Friends, that *our Lord Jesus Christ prepares Heaven for His people by going there?* I mean this. Supposing you were to be lifted up to a state which was looked upon as heavenly, but that Jesus was not there—it would be no Heaven to you. But wherever I may go, when I do go, if Jesus is already there, I do not care where it is! Wherever He is shall be my Heaven, for, as I said in the reading, [the exposition at the end of the sermon] that is our very first and last thought about Heaven—to be with Christ where He is! To be with Christ is far better than to be anywhere else! Well, then, the first thing that Christ had to do, in order to prepare Heaven for His people, was to go to Heaven, for that made it Heaven! Then were Heaven’s lamps kindled. Then did Heaven’s heralds ring out their supernal melodies. Then did the whole of the New Jerusalem seem to be ablaze with a glory brighter than the sun, for, “the Lamb is the light thereof.” When He comes there, then all is bliss! Do you not see, Beloved, that He has prepared Heaven by going there? His being there will make it Heaven for you, so you need not begin asking what else there will be in Heaven! There will be all manner of rare delights to spiritual men, but the chief of them all will be that Jesus is there! As Rowland Hill used to sing, so may you and I comfort ourselves with this thought—

**“And this I do find—we two are so joined—  
He’ll not be in Glory and leave me behind.”**

If I may but be where He is, that shall be Heaven to me!

But another reflection is this—that *our Lord Jesus Christ has prepared Heaven for His people by the merit of His Atonement.* Thus has He opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers. He tore the veil and made a way into the Holiest of All for all who trust Him. But, in addition to that, He perfumed Heaven with the fragrance of His Sacrifice. If Heaven is the place of the Godhead, as we know it is, we could not have stood there without the Mediator! If Heaven is the Throne of the great King, we could not have stood there without the cloud of perfumed incense from Christ’s meritorious death and righteousness ever rising up before that Throne of God! But now, Heaven is a safe place for the saints to enter. Now may they tread that sea of glass like as of fire and know that it is glass, and that no fire from it will consume them. Now will they be able to come up near to God and not be afraid. I quote again a passage that often leaps to my lips—a text of Scripture which is often shamefully misused—“Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among

us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” Why, none of us could unless Christ had changed us by His Grace—but now we may do so!

What is the Scriptural answer to those questions, “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” What do the Scriptures say? Listen! “He that walks righteously and speaks uprightly. He that despises the gain of oppressions, that shakes his hands from holding bribes, that stops his ears from hearing of blood and shuts his eyes from seeing evils. He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Your eyes shall see the King in His beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.”

This is the man who shall dwell there! With God, who is a consuming fire, we, like the holy children in the burning fiery furnace, shall find it safe to dwell and find it bliss to dwell because Christ is there! But there would have been no Heaven in the Presence of God for any man that lives, after sin had once come into the world, if Jesus had not gone there as the High Priest of old went up to the blazing throne whereon the Shekinah shone and sprinkled it with blood out of the basin, and then waved the censer to and fro till the thick smoke hid the cherubim and, for a while resting, spoke with God. Even so has Christ gone within the veil and sprinkled His own atoning blood upon His Father’s Throne and then waved aloft the censer full of the incense of His mercy! And now it is safe for us to have access with boldness to the Throne of Glory as well as to the Throne of Grace. Thus has He prepared a place for us!

Another meaning, I think, is allowable, namely, that *Christ has prepared Heaven for us by appearing there in His Glory*. I said that His very Presence made Heaven, but now I add that His Glory there makes Heaven yet more glorious. How does Christ describe the heavenly state? “Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory.” It will be their bliss, then, to see His Glory, but there would have been no Glory for them to see if He had not gone there in His Glory! But now with His Presence there, in all His majesty and splendor, Heaven is still more glorious! Oh, how I long to see Him in His Glory! Long to see Him, did I say? I would part with all the joys of time and sense to gaze upon Him seated upon His Throne. Oh, what will it be to see Him? You have seen how painters have failed when they have tried to depict Him. The bravest artist may well tremble and the brightest colors fade when anyone tries to paint Him even in His humiliation! There is no other face so marred as His face was, but what will it be in Heaven when it is marred no more? No tear in His eyes! No spit running down His cheeks! No giving of His face to them that pluck out the hair, but, oh, the Glory of Manhood perfected and allied with Deity! “The King in His beauty!” Why, I think to see Him but for a minute, if we never saw Him again, might furnish us with an eternity of bliss! But we shall gaze upon Him, in His glory, day without night, never fainting, or flagging, or tiring, but delighting forever to behold Him smile, forevermore

to call Him ours and to see Him still before us! He has gone to Heaven, then, in His Glory and, surely, that is preparing a place for us!

Besides that, we cannot tell what arrangements had to be made in order to prepare a place of eternal blessedness for the Lord's redeemed. Certain it is that in the economy of the universe, everything has its place. Men have discovered, as you know, what they call evolution. They think that one thing grows out of another because long before they were born everybody with half an eye could see that one thing fitted into another and, as one step rises above another step by a beautiful gradation, so do the created things of God. Not that they grow out of each other any more than the stones of a staircase grow out of one another—they rise above each other, but they were so made from the first by the skill and wisdom of God. That a dewdrop should be precisely of the size and shape that it is, is necessary to the perfection of the universe. That there should be insects born in such a month to fertilize the flowers that bloom in that month, and others to suck the sweetness of those flowers is all necessary. God has arranged everything, from the little to the great, with perfect skill. There is a place for everything with God and everything in its place.

It was a question where to put man. He once had a place. When God created this world, He made a pyramid and set man upon the very top of it, giving him dominion over all the works of His hands. But then man fell. Now it is more difficult to restore than it was, at first, to place. Often and often you must have found that when a thing has gone awry, it has cost you more trouble to set it right than if it had to be made *de novo*. Where, then, was the place for man to be? O matchless Love, O sacred Wisdom that provided that man's place should be where Christ's place was and is! Lo, He who came down from Heaven and who was also in Heaven, has gone back to Heaven! He carried manhood with Him and, in so doing, one with Him, His Church, has found her place. His union to the Godhead has found a place for His Church at the right hand of God, even the Father, where Christ sits—and all is as it should be!

As I have already told you, I do not know much about this matter, but I should not wonder if there has been going on, ever since Christ went up to Heaven, a putting things straight—getting this race of creatures into its proper place and that other race, and the other race, so that, when we get to Heaven, nobody will say, “You have got my place.” Not even Gabriel will say to me, “Why, what business have you here? You have got my place.” No, no—you shall have a place of your own, Beloved—and all the members of Christ's Church shall find a place prepared which no one else shall be able to claim, for nobody shall be dispossessed or put out of his rightful position.

It struck me, as I turned this subject over in my mind, that *our Lord Jesus Christ knew that there was a place to be prepared for each one of His people*. It may be—I cannot tell—that in some part of the society of Heaven, one spirit will be happier than it might have been in another part. You know that even though you love all the Brethren, you cannot

help feeling most at home with some of them. Our blessed Lord and Master had no sinful favoritism, yet He did love 12 men better than all the rest of His disciples. And out of the 12 He loved three whom He introduced into mysteries from which He excluded the other nine. And even out of the three, there was one, you know, who was “that disciple whom Jesus loved.” Now, everybody here has his favorites. I do not know if we shall carry anything of that spirit to Heaven. If we do, Christ has so prepared a place for us that you shall be nearest, in your position and occupation, to those who would contribute most to your happiness. You shall be where you can most honor God and most enjoy God. You would be glad enough to be anywhere—would you not?—with the very least of the saints in Heaven if there ‘be any degrees of glory’ among their thrones, or at His feet, as long as you might see Christ’s face. But, depend upon it, if there is any association—any more intimate connection—between some saints than among others, Jesus Christ will so beautifully arrange it that we shall all be in the happiest places.

If you were to give a dinner party and you had a number of friends there, you would like to pick the seats for them. You would say, “Now, there is So-and-So. I know that he would like to sit next to So-and-So.” And you would try to arrange it so. Well, in that grand wedding feast above, our Savior has so prepared a place for us that He will find us each the right position. I was talking, this afternoon, with one whom I very dearly love and she said to me, “I hope my place in Heaven will not be far from yours.” And I replied, “Well, I trust so, too, but we are not married or given in marriage there.” Such ties and such relationships must end, as far as they are after the flesh, but we know that there have been bonds of spirit that may still continue. I sometimes think that if I could have any choice as to those I should live near in Heaven, I should like to live in the region of such strange folk as Rowland Hill and John Berridge. I think I should get on best with them, for we could talk together of the way wherein God led us and of how He brought souls to Christ by us. Though some said that we were a deal too merry when we were down below and that the people laughed when they listened to us, and some spoke as if that were a great sin, we will make them laugh up yonder, I guarantee you, as we tell again the wonders of redeeming love and of the Grace of God—their mouths shall be filled with laughter and their tongues with singing! And then—

**“Loudest of the crowd I’ll sing,  
While Heaven’s resounding mansions ring  
With shouts of Sovereign Grace”**

and I expect each of you who love the Lord will do the same!

I have no time for the other part of the sermon. You must come again to hear about THE PREPARED PEOPLE. But let me just say this to you—The place is prepared, are you prepared for it? Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, your preparation has begun. Do you love the Lord and love His people? If so, your preparation is going on. Do you hate sin and do you pant after holiness? If so, your preparation is progressing. Are you nothing at all and is Jesus Christ your All-in-All? Then you are

almost ready and may the Lord keep you in that condition and, before long, swing up the gates of pearl and let you into the prepared place!

May the Lord bring us all safely there, for Jesus' sake! Amen.

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
JOHN 14:1-12; COLOSSIANS 1:1-19.**

**John 14:1.** *Let not your heart be troubled.* This is one of those verses that you may read as slowly as you like and spell out every letter and find honey in it all.

**1.** *You believe in God, believe also in Me.* As Jews, they had already known and seen the power of God. They were now to rise to the faith of Christians and to believe in Jesus their Savior. Even though they should see Him die, they were not to doubt Him. “You believe in God, believe also in Me.”

**2.** *In My Father's house are many mansions.* So there is room for many. There are homes for many. There is wealth for many. “In My Father's house are many mansions.”

**2.** *It were not so, I would have told you.* The Savior seems to say to His disciples, “I keep nothing back from you. Had there been some sorrowful fact to be revealed to you, I would at length have told you of it.”

**2.** *I go to prepare a place for you.* “There must be a Heaven, for I am going there, Myself, and I am going on purpose to make it ready for you.”

**3.** *And If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.* That is the first and simplest idea of Heaven—to be with Christ—and I think it is the last and most sublime idea of Heaven, too! To be with Christ—“that where I am, there you may be also.”

**4, 5.** *And where I go you know, and the way you know.* Thomas said unto Him, Lord, we know not where You go; and how can we know the way? The Apostles blundered and lost themselves in the words of their Master, instead of entering into the spirit of what He said. So we must not wonder if we often do the same. Unless we wait upon God to be instructed by His Spirit, even the most plain passages of Scripture may be obscure to us.

**6, 7.** *Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, but by Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. And from henceforth you know Him, and have seen Him.* Jesus had been talking about the many mansions and now He talks about the Father. Is the Father, then, the same as Heaven? Yes, indeed—to come to the Father is to come to perfect blessedness, to know the fullness of His eternal love and to enjoy it in face-to-face communion—this is Heaven! What higher bliss can we desire?

**8, 9.** *Philip said unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us. Jesus said unto him, Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He that has seen Me has seen the Father, so how can you say, Show us the Father? Do we, then, see the Father when*

we see Christ? And is the Father's Presence Heaven? Then Christ is Heaven and to be with Him is Heaven! It is even so. He is the way to Heaven, the truth of Heaven, the life of Heaven. He is Heaven's everything—

**“His track I see, and I'll pursue  
The narrow way, till Him I view”—**

and when I view Him, shall I not have seen the Father and have entered into the Father's rest?

**10-12.** *Do you not believe I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwells in Me. He does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto My Father. In consequence of Christ's going to the Father and the Spirit of God descending upon Christ's disciples, they are enabled to outdo their Master in some forms of holy service! For instance, some of them brought more to the faith than Christ Himself had done during His lifetime—and so realized the fulfillment of this promise—“The works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto My Father.”*

**Colossians 1:1-14.** *Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colosse: Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which you have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven, whereof you heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and brings forth fruit, as it does also in you, since the day you heard of it, and knew the Grace of God in truth: as you also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light: who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. As we read these words, we cannot help noticing how positively the Apostle speaks. There are no, “hope so,” “trust so,” “ifs” and, “buts.” It is all, “it is so” and, “it is so.” And, beloved Brothers and Sisters, concerning eternal matters, nothing but certainties will suffice for us. Allow uncertainties about your estates if you will, but we must have positive assurance concerning eternal things! And nothing short of this ought to content our spirits. Can we all*

say, as we listen to these words, “God has delivered us from the power of darkness; He has translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins”?

**15.** *Who is the image of the invisible God.* Admire this delightful passage in which the Apostle seems to burn and glow while he describes his Lord and Master, “who is the image of the invisible God.”

**15-19.** *The first-born of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether they are thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the Head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.* Blessed be His glorious name! Amen.

### **HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”— 875, 852, 866.**

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# SPECIAL THANKSGIVING TO THE FATHER NO. 319

**DELIVERED ON SABBATH EVENING, JANUARY 15, 1860,  
BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.**

***“Giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to  
be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:  
who has delivered us from the power of darkness,  
and has translated us into the kingdom  
of His dear Son.”  
Colossians 1:12, 13.***

THIS passage is a mine of riches. I can anticipate the difficulty in preaching and the regret in concluding we shall experience this evening because we are not able to dig out all the gold which lies in this precious vein. We lack the power to grasp and the time to expatiate upon that volume of truths which is here condensed into a few short sentences.

We are exhorted to “give thanks unto the Father.” This counsel is at once needful and salutary. I think, my Brethren, we scarcely need to be told to give thanks unto the Son. The remembrance of that bleeding body hanging upon the Cross is ever present to our faith. The nails and the spear, His griefs, the anguish of His soul and His sweat of agony make much tender touching appeals to our gratitude—these will prevent us always from ceasing our songs and sometimes fire our hearts with rekindling rapture in praise of the Man, Christ Jesus. Yes, we will bless You, dearest Lord. Our souls are all on fire. As we survey the wondrous Cross, we cannot but shout—

***“O for this love let rocks and hills  
Their lasting silence break,  
And all harmonious human tongues  
The Savior’s praises speak.”***

It is in a degree very much the same with the Holy Spirit. I think we are compelled to feel every day our dependence upon His constant influence. He abides with us as a present and personal Comforter and Counselor. We, therefore, do praise the Spirit of Grace, who has made our heart His temple and who works in us all that is gracious, virtuous and well-pleasing in the sight of God. If there is any one Person in the Trinity whom we are more apt to forget than another in our praises, it is God the Father.

In fact there are some who even get a wrong idea of Him, a slanderous idea of that God whose name is LOVE. They imagine that love dwelt in Christ, rather than in the Father and that our salvation is rather due to the Son and the Holy Spirit, than to our Father God. Let us not be of the number of the ignorant, but let us receive this Truth of God. We are as much indebted to the Father as to any other Person of the Sacred Three. He as much and as truly loves us as any of the adorable Three Persons.

He is as truly worthy of our highest praise as either the Son or the Holy Spirit.

A remarkable fact, which we should always bear in mind, is this—in the Holy Scriptures most of the operations which are set down as being the works of the Spirit, are in other Scriptures ascribed to God the Father. Do we say it is God the Spirit that quickens the sinner who is dead in sin? It is true. But you will find in another passage it is said, “The Father quickens whom He will.” Do we say that the Spirit is the sanctifier and that the sanctification of the soul is worked by the Holy Spirit? You will find a passage in the opening of the Epistle of St. Jude, in which it is said, “Sanctified by God the Father.”

Now, how are we to account for this? I think it may be explained thus. God the Spirit comes from God the Father, and therefore whatever acts are performed by the Spirit are truly done by the Father, because He sends forth the Spirit. And again, the Spirit is often the instrument—though I say this not in any way to derogate from His glory—He is often the instrument with which the Father works. It is the Father who says to the dry bones, live. It is the Spirit who, going forth with the Divine Word, makes them live. The quickening is due as much to the Word as to the influence that went with the Word. And as the Word came with all the bounty of Free Grace and goodwill from the Father, the quickening is due to Him.

It is true that the seal on our hearts is the Holy Spirit. He is the seal, but it is the Eternal Father’s hand that stamps the seal. The Father communicates the Spirit to seal our adoption. The works of the Spirit are, many of them, I repeat it again, attributed to the Father, because He works in, through, and by the Spirit. The works of the Son of God, I ought to observe, are every one of them in intimate connection with the Father. If the Son comes into the world, it is because the Father sends Him. If the Son calls His people, it is because His Father gave this people into His hands. If the Son redeems the chosen race, is not the Son Himself, the Father’s gift? And does not God send His Son into the world that we may live through Him? So that the Father, the great Ancient of Days, is ever to be extolled. And we must never omit the full homage of our hearts to Him when we sing that sacred doxology—

**“Praise Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”**

In order to excite your gratitude to God the Father tonight, I propose to dilate a little upon this passage, as God the Holy Spirit shall enable me. If you will look at the text, you will see two blessings in it. The first has regard to the future. It is a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. The second blessing, which must go with the first, for indeed it is the cause of the first, the effective cause, has relation to the past. Here we read of our deliverance from the power of darkness. Let us meditate a little upon each of these blessings and then, in the third place, I will endeavor to show the relation which exists between the two.

**I.** The first blessing introduced to our notice is this—“God the Father has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” It is a PRESENT BLESSING. Not a mercy laid up for us in the Covenant, which we have not yet received—it is a blessing which every true Believer

already has in his hand. Those mercies in the Covenant of which we have the earnest now while we wait for the full possession, are just as rich and just as certain as those which have been already with abundant loving kindness bestowed on us—but still they are not so precious in our enjoyment. The mercy we have in store and in hand is, after all, the main source of our present comfort.

And oh, what a blessing this! “Made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” The true Believer is fit for Heaven. He is meet to be a partaker of the inheritance—and that now, at this very moment. What does this mean? Does it mean that the Believer is perfect? That he is free from sin? No, my Brethren, where shall you ever find such perfection in this world? If no man can be a Believer but the perfect man, then what has the perfect man to believe? Could he not walk by sight? When he is perfect, he may cease to be a Believer. No, Brethren, it is not such perfection that is meant although perfection is *implied* and assuredly will be given as the result.

Far less does this mean that we have a right to eternal life from any doings of our own. We have a fitness for eternal life, a meetness for it, but we have no desert of it. We deserve nothing of God even now, in ourselves, but His eternal wrath and His infinite displeasure. What, then, does it mean? Why, it means just this—we are so far meet that we are accepted in the Beloved, adopted into the family and fitted by Divine approbation to dwell with the saints in light.

There is a woman chosen to be a bride. She is fitted to be married, fitted to enter into the honorable state and condition of matrimony. But at present she has not on the bridal garment, she is not like the bride adorned for her husband. You do not see her yet robed in her elegant attire, with her ornaments upon her—but you know she is fitted to be a bride, she is received and welcomed as such in the family of her destination.

So Christ has chosen His Church to be married to Him. She has not yet put on her bridal garment, beautiful array in which she shall stand before the Father’s Throne—but notwithstanding, there is such a fitness in her to be the bride of Christ. When she shall have bathed herself for a little while and lain for a little while in the bed of spices—there is such a fitness in her character, such a grace given adaptation in her to become the royal bride of her glorious Lord and to become a partaker of the enjoyments of bliss—that it may be said of the Church as a whole and of every member of it, that they are “meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.”

The Greek word, moreover, bears some such meaning as this though I cannot give the exact idiom. It is always difficult when a word is not used often. This word is only used twice that I am aware of, in the New Testament. The word may be employed for “suitable,” or, I think, “sufficient.” “He has made us meet”—sufficient—“to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” But I cannot give my idea without borrowing another figure. When a child is born, it is at once endowed with all the faculties of humanity. If those powers are wanting at first, they will not come afterwards. It has eyes, it has hands, it has feet and all its physical organs. These, of course, are as it were in embryo. The senses, though perfect at

first, must be gradually developed and the understanding gradually matured. It can see but little, it cannot discern distances. It can hear, but it cannot hear distinctly enough at first to know from what direction the sound comes.

But you never find a new leg, a new arm, a new eye, or a new ear growing on that child. Each of these powers will expand and enlarge, but still there is the whole man there at first and the child is sufficient for a man. Let but God in His infinite providence cause it to feed and give it strength and increase, it has sufficient for manhood. It does not want either arm or leg, nose or ear. You cannot make it grow a new member. Nor does it require a near member, either. All are there.

In like manner, the moment a man is regenerated, there is every faculty in his new creation that there shall be, even when he gets to Heaven. It only needs to be developed and brought out—he will not have a new power. He will not have a new grace. He will have those which he had before, developed and brought out. Just as we are told by the careful observer, that in the acorn there is in embryo every root and every bough and every leaf of the future tree which only requires to be developed and brought out in their fullness.

So, in the true Believer, there is a sufficiency or meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. All that he requires is. Not that a new thing should be implanted, but that that which God has put there in the moment of regeneration shall be cherished and nurtured—and made to grow and increase, till it comes unto perfection and he enters into “the inheritance of the saints in light.” This is, as near as I can give it to you, the exact meaning and literal interpretation of the text as I understand it.

But you may say to me, “In what sense is this meetness or fitness for eternal life the work of God the Father? Are we already made meet for Heaven? How is this the Father’s work?” Look at the text a moment and I will answer you in three ways.

What is Heaven? We read it is an inheritance. Who are fit for an inheritance? Sons. Who makes us sons? “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” A son is fitted for an inheritance. The moment the son is born he is fitted to be an heir. All that is wanted is that he shall grow up and be capable of possession. But he is fit for an inheritance at first. If he were not a son he could not inherit as an heir.

Now as soon as ever we become sons we are meet to inherit. There is in us an adaptation, a power and possibility for us to have an inheritance. This is the prerogative of the Father, to adopt us into his family and to “beget us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” And do you not see that as adoption is really the meetness for inheritance, it is the Father who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light?”

Again—Heaven is an inheritance. But whose inheritance is it? It is an inheritance of the saints. It is not an inheritance of sinners, but of saints—that is, of the holy ones—of those who have been made saints by being sanctified. Turn then, to the Epistle of Jude and you will see at once who it is that is the Sanctified. You will observe the moment you fix your

eye upon the passage that it is God the Father. In the first verse you read, "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father." It is an inheritance for saints—and who are saints? The moment a man believes in Christ, he may know himself to have been truly set apart in the Covenant decree. And he finds consecration, if I may so speak, verified in his own experience, for he has now become "a new creature in Christ Jesus," separated from the rest of the world. And then it is manifest and made known that God has taken him to be His son forever.

The meetness which I must have, in order to enjoy the inheritance of the saints in light, is my becoming a son. God has made me and all Believers sons, therefore we are meet for the inheritance. So then that meetness has come from the Father. How meet, therefore, does the Father claim our gratitude, our adoration and our love!

You will, however, observe it is not merely said that Heaven is the inheritance of the saints, but that it is "the inheritance of the saints in light." So the saints dwell in light—the light of knowledge, the light of purity, the light of joy, the light of love—pure ineffable love, the light of everything that is glorious and ennobling. There they dwell and if I am to appear meet for that inheritance, what evidence must I have? I must have light shining into my soul. But where can I get it? Do I not read that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and comes down"—yes verily, but from whom? From the Spirit? No—"from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

The preparation to enter into the inheritance in light is light. And light comes from the Father of lights. Therefore, my meetness, if I have light in myself, is the work of the Father and I must give Him praise. Do you see then, that as there are three words used here—"the inheritance of the saints in light," so we have a threefold meetness? We are adopted and made sons. God has sanctified us and set us apart. And then, again, He has put light into our hearts. All this, I say, is the work of the Father and in this sense, we are "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

A few general observations here. Brethren, I am persuaded that if an angel from Heaven were to come tonight and single out any one Believer from the crowd here assembled, there is not one Believer that is unfit to be taken to Heaven. You may not be ready to be taken to Heaven now. That is to say, if I foresaw that you were going to live, I would tell you, you were unfit to die, in a certain sense. But were you to die now in your pew, if you believe in Christ, you are fit for Heaven. You have a meetness even now which would take you there at once, without being committed to purgatory for a season. You are even now fit to be "partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

You have but to gasp out your last breath and you shall be in Heaven and there shall not be one spirit in Heaven more fit for Heaven than you, nor one soul more adapted for the place than you are. You shall be just as fitted for its element as those who are nearest to the eternal Throne.

Ah, this makes the heirs of glory think much of God the Father. When we reflect, my Brethren, upon our state by nature and how fit we are to be

fire-brands in the flames of Hell—yet to think that we are this night, at this very moment, if Jehovah willed it, fit to sweep the golden harps with joyful fingers! That this head is fit this very night to wear the everlasting crown, that these loins are fit to be girded with that fair white robe throughout eternity, I say, this makes us think gratefully of God the Father. This makes us clap our hands with joy and say, “thanks be unto God the Father, who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”

Do you not remember the penitent thief? It was but a few minutes before that he had been cursing Christ. I doubt not that he had joined with the other, for it is said, “They that were crucified with him reviled him.” Not one, but both. They did it. And then a gleam of supernatural glory lit up the face of Christ and the thief saw and believed. And Jesus said unto him, “Verily I say unto you, this day,” though the sun is setting, “this day shall you be with me in Paradise.” No long preparation required, no sweltering in purifying fires. And so shall it be with us.

We may have been in Christ Jesus to our own knowledge but three weeks, or we may have been in him for ten years, or threescore years and ten—the date of our conversion makes no difference in our meetness for Heaven, in a certain sense. True, indeed, the older we grow the more grace we have tasted, the riper we are becoming and the fitter to be housed in Heaven. But that is in another sense of the word—the Spirit’s meetness which He gives. But with regard to that meetness which the Father gives, I repeat, the blade of corn, the blade of gracious wheat that has just appeared above the surface of conviction, is as fit to be carried up to Heaven as the full-grown corn in the ear.

The sanctification wherewith we are sanctified by God the Father is not progressive—it is complete at once—we are *now* adapted for Heaven, *now* fitted for it and we shall enter into the joy of our Lord. Into this subject I might have entered more fully. But I have not time. I am sure I have left some knots untied and you must untie them, if you can, yourselves. And let me recommend you to untie them on your knees—the mysteries of the kingdom of God are studied much the best when you are in prayer.

**II.** The second mercy is A MERCY THAT LOOKS BACK. We sometimes prefer the mercies that look forward, because they unfold such a bright prospect—

***“Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood.”***

But here is a mercy that looks backward—turns its back, as it were, on the Heaven of our anticipation and looks back on the gloomy past and the dangers from which we have escaped.

Let us read the account of it—“Who has delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.” This verse is an explanation of the preceding, as we shall have to show in a few minutes. But just now let us survey this mercy by itself. Ah, my Brothers and Sisters, what a description have we here of what matter of men we used to be. We were under “the power of darkness.” Since I have been musing on this text, I have turned these words over and over in my mind—“the power of darkness”! It seems to me one of the most awful expressions that man ever attempted to expound. I think I could deliver a

discourse from it, if God the Spirit helped me, which might make every bone in your body shake. "The power of darkness"!

We all know that there is a moral darkness which exercises its awful spell over the mind of the sinner. Where God is unacknowledged the mind is void of judgment. Where God is not worshipped the heart of man becomes a ruin. The chambers of that dilapidated heart are haunted by ghostly fears and degraded superstitions. The dark places of that reprobate mind are tenanted by vile lusts and noxious passions—like vermin and reptiles—from which in open daylight we turn with disgust. And even natural darkness is tremendous. In the solitary confinement which is practiced in some of our penitentiaries the very worst results would be produced if the treatment were prolonged.

If one of you were to be taken tonight and led into some dark cavern and left there, I can imagine that for a moment, not knowing your fate, you might feel a child-like kind of interest about it—there might be, perhaps, a laugh as you found yourselves in the dark. There might for the moment, from the novelty of the position, be some kind of curiosity excited. There might, perhaps, be a flush of silly joy. In a little time you might endeavor to compose yourself to sleep—possibly you might sleep. But if you should awake and still find yourself down deep in the bowels of earth, where never a ray of sun or candle light could reach you—do you know the next feeling that would come over you?

It would be a kind of idiotic thoughtlessness. You would find it impossible to control your desperate imagination. Your heart would say, "O God I am alone, alone, alone, in this dark place." How would you cast your eyeballs all around and never catching a gleam of light, your mind would begin to fail. Your next stage would be one of increasing terror. You would fancy that you saw something and then you would cry, "Ah, I would I could see something, were it foe or friend!"

You would feel the dark sides of your dungeon. You would begin to "scribble on the walls," like David before king Achish. Agitation would cease hold upon you and if you were kept there much longer, delirium and death would be the consequence. We have heard of many who have been taken from the penitentiary to the lunatic asylum. And the lunacy is produced partly by the solitary confinement and partly by the darkness in which they are placed.

In a report lately written by the Chaplain of Newgate, there are some striking reflections upon the influence of darkness in a way of discipline. Its first effect is to shut the culprit up to his own reflections and make him realize his true position in the iron grasp of the outraged law. Methinks the man that has defied his keepers and come in there cursing and swearing, when he has found himself alone in darkness, where he cannot even hear the rattling of carriages along the streets and can see no light whatever, is presently cowed. He gives in, he grows tame. "The power of darkness" literally is something awful.

If I had time, I would enlarge upon this subject. We cannot properly describe what "the power of darkness" is, even in this world. The sinner is plunged into the darkness of his sins and he sees nothing, he knows nothing. Let him remain there a little longer and that joy of curiosity, that

hectic joy which he now has in the path of sin, will die away and there will come over him a spirit of slumber. Sin will make him drowsy, so that he will not hear the voice of the ministry crying to him to escape for his life. Let him continue in it and it will by-and-by make him spiritually an idiot. He will become so in sin that common reason will be lost on him.

All the arguments that a sensible man will receive, will be only wasted on him. Let him go on and he will proceed from bad to worse, till he acquires the raving mania of a desperado in sin. And let death step in and the darkness will have produced its full effect—he will come into the delirious madness of Hell. Ah, it needs but the power of sin to make a man more truly hideous than human thought can realize, or language paint. Oh “the power of darkness”!

Now, my Brethren, all of us were under this power once. It is but a few months—a few weeks with some of you—since you were under the power of darkness and of sin. Some of you had only got as far as the curiosity of it—others had got as far as the sleepiness of it. A good many of you had got as far as the apathy of it. And I do not know but some of you had got almost to the terror of it. You had so cursed and swore—so yelled out your blasphemies—that you seemed to be ripening for Hell. But, praised and blessed be the name of the Father, He has “translated you from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of His dear Son.”

Having thus explained this term, “the power of darkness,” to show you what you were, let us take the next word, “and has translated us.” What an angular word this—“translated”—is. I dare say you think it means the process by which a word is interpreted, when the sense is retained, while the expression is rendered in another language. That is one meaning of the word “translation,” but it is not the meaning here. The word is used by Josephus in this sense—the taking away of a people who have been dwelling in a certain country and planting them in another place. This is called a translation.

We sometimes hear of a bishop being translated or removed from one see to another. Now, if you want to have the idea explained, give me your attention while I bring out an amazing instance of a great translation. The children of Israel were in Egypt under taskmasters that oppressed them very sorely and brought them into iron bondage. What did God do for these people? There were two millions of them. He did not temper the tyranny of the tyrant. He did not influence his mind, to give them a little more liberty. But He *translated* His people. He took the whole two millions bodily, with a high hand and outstretched arm and led them through the wilderness and translated them into the kingdom of Canaan. And there they were settled.

What an achievement was that, when, with their flocks and their herds and their little ones, the whole host of Israel went out of Egypt, crossed the Jordan and came into Canaan! My dear Brethren, the whole of it was not equal to the achievement of God’s powerful grace, when He brings *one poor sinner* out of the region of sin into the kingdom of holiness and peace. It was easier for God to bring Israel out of Egypt, to split the Red Sea, to make a highway through the pathless wilderness, to drop manna from Heaven, to send the whirlwind to drive out the kings—it was easier

for Omnipotence to do all this—than to translate a man from the power of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. This is the grandest achievement of Omnipotence.

The sustenance of the whole universe, I do believe, is even less than this—the changing of a bad heart, the subduing of an iron will. But thanks be unto the Father, He has done all that for you and for me. He has brought us out of darkness, He has translated us, taken up the old tree that has struck its roots ever so deep—taken it up, blessed be God, roots and all, and planted it in a goodly soil. He had to cut the top off, it is true—the high branches of our pride. But the tree has grown better in the near soil than it ever did before. Who ever heard of moving so huge a plant as a man who has grown fifty years old in sin? Oh, what wonders has our Father done for us!

He has taken the wild leopard of the wood, tamed it into a lamb and purged away its spots. He has regenerated the poor Ethiopian—oh, how black we were by nature—our blackness was more than skin deep. It went to the center of our hearts. But, blessed be His name, He has washed us white and is still carrying on the Divine operation and He will yet completely deliver us from every taint of sin and will finally bring us into the kingdom of His dear Son. Here, then, in the second mercy, we discern from what we were delivered and how we were delivered—God the Father has “translated” us.

But where are we now? Into what place is the Believer brought, when he is brought out of the power of darkness? He is brought into the kingdom of God’s dear Son. Into what other kingdom would the Christian desire to be brought? Brethren, a republic may sound very well in theory, but in spiritual matters, the last thing we want is a republic. We want a *kingdom*. I love to have Christ an absolute monarch in the heart. I do not want to have a doubt about it. I want to give up all my liberty to Him, for I feel that I never shall be free till my self-control is all gone. That I shall never have my will truly free till it is bound in the golden fetters of His sweet love.

We are brought into a kingdom—He is Lord and Sovereign and He has made us “kings and priests unto our God,” and we shall reign with Him. The proof that we are in this kingdom must consist in our obedience to our King. Here, perhaps, we may raise many causes and questions, but surely we can say after all, though we have offended our King many times, yet our heart is loyal to Him. “Oh, You precious Jesus! We would obey You and yield submission to every one of Your laws. Our sins are not willful and beloved sins and though we fall, we can truly say that we would be holy as You are holy. Our heart is true towards Your statutes. Lord, help us to run in the way of Your commandments.”

So, you see, this mercy which God the Father has given to us, this second of these present mercies, is, that he has “translated us out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son.” This is the Father’s work. Shall we not love God the Father from this day forth? Will we not give Him thanks and sing our hymns to Him and exalt and triumph in His great name?

**III.** Upon the third point, I shall be as brief as possible. It is to SHOW THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TWO VERSES.

When I get a passage of Scripture to meditate upon, I like, if I can, to see its drift, then I like to examine its various parts and see if I can understand each separate clause. And then I want to go back again and see what one clause has to do with another. I looked and looked again at this text and wondered what connection there could be between the two verses. "Giving thanks unto God the Father, who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Well, that is right enough. We can see how this is the work of God the Father, to make us meet to go to Heaven.

But has the next verse, the 13th, anything to do with our meetness?—"Who has delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." Well, I looked it over and I said I will read it in this way. I see the 12th verse tells me that the inheritance of Heaven is the inheritance of light. Is Heaven light? Then I can see my meetness, for it as described in the 13th verse—He has delivered me from the power of darkness. Is not that the same thing? If I am delivered from the power of darkness, is not that being made meet to dwell in light? If I am now brought out of darkness into light and am walking in the light, is not that the very meetness which is spoken of in the verse before?

Then I read again. It says they are saints. Well, the saints are a people that obey the Son. Here is my meetness, then, in the 13th verse, where it says "He has translated me from the power of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son." So that I not only have the light, but the sonship, too, for I am in "the kingdom of His dear Son." But how about the inheritance? Is there anything about that in the 13th verse? It is an inheritance. Shall I find anything about a meetness for it there? Yes, I find that I am in the kingdom of His dear Son. How came Christ to have a kingdom? Why, by inheritance. Then it seems I am in His inheritance. And if I am in His inheritance here, then I am meet to be in it above, for I am in it already. I am even now part of it and partner of it, since I am in the kingdom which He inherits from His Father and therefore there is the meetness.

I do not know whether I have put this plainly enough before you. If you will be kind enough to look at your Bible, I will just recapitulate. You see, Heaven is a place of light. When we are brought out of darkness, that, of course, is the meetness for light. It is a place for sons. When we are brought into the kingdom of God's dear Son, we are, of course, made sons, so that there is the meetness for it. It is an inheritance. And when we are brought into the inherited kingdom of God's dear Son, we enjoy the inheritance now and consequently are fitted to enjoy it forever.

Having thus shown the connection between these verses, I propose now to close with a few general observations. I like so to expound the Scripture that we can draw some practical inferences from it. Of course the first inference is this—let us from this night forward never omit God the Father in our praises. I think I have said this already six times over in the sermon. Why I am repeating it so often is so that we may never forget it. Martin Luther said he preached upon justification by faith every day in the week and then the people would not understand.

There are some Truths of God, I believe, that need to be said over and over again, either because our silly hearts will not receive, or our treacherous memories will not hold them. Sing, I beseech you, habitually, the praises of the Father in Heaven, as you do the praises of the Son hanging upon the Cross. Love as truly God, the ever-living God, as you love Jesus the God-man, the Savior who once died for you. That is the great inference.

Yet another inference arises. Brothers and Sisters, are you conscious tonight that you are not now what you once were? Are you sure that the power of darkness does not now rest upon you, that you love Divine knowledge, that you are panting after heavenly joys? Are you sure that you have been “translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son”? Then never be troubled about thoughts of death, because, come death whenever it may, you are meet to be a “partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.” Let no thought distress you about death’s coming to you at an unseasonable hour. Should it come tomorrow should it come now—if your faith is fixed on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness—you shall see the face of God with acceptance.

I have that consciousness in my soul, by the witness of the Holy Spirit, of my adoption into the family of God. I feel that though I should never preach again, but should lay down my body and my charge together, before I should reach my home and rest in my bed, “I know that my Redeemer lives.” And more, that I should be a “partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.” It is not always that one feels that, but I would have you never rest satisfied till you do—till you know your meetness, till you are conscious of it—until, moreover, you are panting to be gone, because you feel that you have powers which never can be satisfied short of Heaven—powers which Heaven only can employ.

One more reflection lingers behind. There are some of you here that cannot be thought by the utmost charity of judgment, to be “meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” Ah, if a wicked man should go to Heaven without being converted, Heaven would be no Heaven to him. Heaven is not adapted for sinners. It is not a place for them. If you were to take a Hottentot who has long dwelt at the equator up to where the Eskimos are dwelling and tell him that you would show him the aurora and all the glories of the North Pole, the poor wretch could not appreciate them. He would say, “It is not the element for me. It is not the place where I could rest happy!”

And if you were to take, on the other hand, some dwarfish dweller in the north, down to the region where trees grow to a stupendous height and where the spices give their balmy odors to the gale and bid him live there under the torrid zone, he could enjoy nothing. He would say, “This is not the place for me, because it is not adapted to my nature.” Or if you were to take the vulture, that has never fed on anything but carrion and put it into the noblest dwelling you could make for it and feed it with the daintiest meals, it would not be happy because it is not the food that is adapted for it.

And you, Sinner, you are nothing but a carrion vulture. Nothing makes you happy but sin. You do not want too much Psalm singing, do you?

Sunday is a dull day to you. You like to get it over with. You do not care about your Bible. You would as soon there should be no Bible at all. You find that going to a meeting house or a Church is very dull work, indeed. Oh, then you will not be troubled with that in eternity—do not agitate yourself. If you love not God and die as you are, you shall go to your own company. You shall go to your jolly mates, you shall go to your good fellows. Those who have been your mates on earth shall be your mates forever. And you shall go to the Prince of those good fellows, unless you repent and be converted.

Where God is you cannot come. It is not an element suited to you. As well place a bird at the bottom of the sea, or a fish in the air, as place an ungodly sinner in Heaven. What is to be done, then? You must have a new nature. I pray God to give it to you. Remember, if now you feel your need of a Savior, that is the beginning of the new nature. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.” Cast yourselves simply on Him, trust in nothing but His blood and then the new nature shall be expanded and you shall be made meet by the Holy Spirit’s operations to be a “partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.”

There is many a man who has come into this House of Prayer, many a man is now present, who has come in here a rollicking fellow, fearing neither God nor devil. Many a man has come from the ale house up to this place. If he had died then, where would his soul have been? But the Lord that very night met him. There are trophies of that grace present here tonight. You can say, “Thanks be to the Father, who has brought us out of the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.”

And if God has done that for some, why can He not do it for others? Why need you despair, O poor Sinner? If you are here tonight, the worst sinner out of Hell, remember, the gate of mercy stands wide open and Jesus bids you come. Conscious of your guilt, flee, flee to Him. Look to His Cross and you shall find pardon in His veins and life in His death.

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# **DELIVERANCE FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS NO. 3366**

**A SERMON  
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 1913.**

***DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,*  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,  
ON THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 29, 1866.**

***“He has delivered us from the power of darkness.”  
Colossians 1:13.***

DARKNESS is used in Scripture to express a great many things. Sometimes it represents *sorrow*. “A night of weeping” is a common expression among us. We speak, too, of, “walking in darkness and seeing no light.” We commonly say to one another that our minds are in a dark and gloomy state when we are surrounded by the fogs and mists of sorrow. Taking it in this sense, how often might we say of our heavenly Father, that, “He has delivered us from the power of darkness”? He has helped us in our temporal difficulties and circumstances, or He has whispered, “As your days so shall your strength be,” and He has turned our night of weeping into a morning of gladness, put away the sackcloth and ashes, and given us the oil of joy! Blessed be His name for all this! Let us not be ungrateful, nor forget the many times when He has turned our mourning into dancing and our sackcloth into scarlet and fine linen.

But darkness frequently signifies, too, in Scripture, *ignorance*. We were once so in darkness that we were blinded. “The God of this world” has blinded our eyes, lest the light of the glorious Gospel should shine in upon us! “We who were sometimes darkness, are now light in the Lord.” Christ’s mission had for one of its many gracious purposes and ends the taking away of the darkness of human ignorance and the pouring of light upon the intellect of man. I thank God that many of us, though we know comparatively little, do know that whereas we were once blind, now we see! We do know something of ourselves so as to be humbled—and we know, too—something of the gracious God, so as to rejoice that we are saved by Him! God has, therefore, delivered us, in that sense, from the power of darkness. Let us be thankful for that. Pant for more knowledge, but oh, Believer, be grateful for what you have! Remember that the little you already know of saving Truth is inestimably precious, for to know Jesus Christ is eternal life! And if, on this side of the grave, you never learn any more, yet you know that which should set your tongue eternal-

ly in holy motion with a rapturous song of thankfulness to Him who has taught you such priceless Truth! Yes, “He has delivered us from the power of darkness.”

Darkness, too, frequently represents *Satan and the mysterious spiritual influence which he exerts upon the human mind*. He is called “the Prince of Darkness.” Darkness seems to be his element. God is the “Father of Lights,” but Satan seems to be the father of the gloom and the dark!

Two elements are now at war in this lower world—Christ, the Light, the true Light, and Satan—sin—thick darkness, a darkness which may be felt—the Egyptian darkness in which we are naturally born and out of which we are not delivered except by the supernatural power of God exhibited through the plan of salvation by His Grace! Beloved, we still are tempted by Satan, but we are not under his power! We have to fight with him, but we are not his slaves! He is not our king. He has no rights over us. We do not obey him—we will not listen to his temptations. By the Grace of God, we mean, notwithstanding all his opposition, to fight in his very teeth and to win our way to Heaven! He “has delivered us from the power of darkness.” Oh, what a mercy this is—that man, such a poor creature as he is, should be able to escape from the power of that master spirit Diabolus, Satan, the destroyer! That was a wonderful moment when, according to Bunyan’s description, Hopeful and Christian found that the key was turned in the lock and that they could get out of Giant Despair’s castle. That was a wonderful moment, I say, when, according to Master Bunyan, the key turned in the great lock which locked the iron gate. To use John Bunyan’s own words, he says, “That lock went damnable hard.” In all the new editions of “Pilgrim’s Progress,” it is put, “That lock went desperately hard.” That is the more refined way of putting it, but John Bunyan meant just what he said and implied that there was a sense of the wrath of God upon the soul of man on account of sin, so that he felt as if he were even near to Hell itself! And yet, at such a time, the key did turn in the lock and the iron gate was opened. You recollect that just at the moment, old Giant Despair woke up, and was going to pursue the pilgrims and lay hold upon them when he was seized with one of his fainting fits. Oh, what an escape from Giant Despair! And yet this is little compared with escaping from Satan! Satan is the prince of the power of the air—and human despair is but one of his servants, one of the black officers in his infernal regiment! To escape from Satan, himself! Oh, let it be sung in Heaven! Let angels who have never fallen help us to sing in triumph over those fallen spirits from whom we have been rescued by Divine Grace! “He has delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of God’s dear Son.”

I prefer tonight, however, as we cannot talk about all these things, and the field is so very wide, to consider the word, “darkness,” here, in the restricted meaning of *sin*. Sin is a tremendous moral and spiritual darkness which has spread over the human mind. But we are told in the text and we have felt it in our personal experience, that “He has delivered us from the power of darkness.”

Let us speak, first, of *the power of darkness from which we are delivered*. Secondly, upon *the statement here made concerning it*. And thirdly, of *the inferences which inevitably flow from the statement*.

First, then, let us speak a little upon—

**I. THE POWER OF SIN FROM WHICH WE HAVE BEEN DELIVERED—**as it is here set forth—under the suggestive image of “the power of darkness.”

What is “*the power*” of darkness? I suppose everyone will admit that it is *a power which tends towards slumber*. It is a composing power. God has given us the night in which to sleep. Whether or not there is any absolute power in darkness to engender sleep, I do not know. But I do know this, that it is much easier, when reclining on your bed, to sleep in the dark than it is to sleep in the full glare of the sun. There seems to be some sedative influence about darkness, something which assists a man to fall into a state of inaction which we call, “sleep.” Now, Beloved, look upon the race of men. They are under the power of darkness and, in consequence, they sleep. Does not the Apostle say to us who are delivered from that power, “Let us not sleep as do others”? “They that sleep,” he says, “sleep in the night,” that being the proper time for sleep—the night with its raven wing seeming to engender sleep—“but let us that are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of love.” If you look abroad in the world, I say, you will see men under the soporific influence of sin given to slumber. Do you believe that men would go on to sin as they do if it were not that sin stupefies them, prevents their using their reason, drowns their conscience and will not permit them to judge accurately concerning things that differ? Why, can you imagine that a man would run the risk of everlasting misery for the sake of a few days of carnal delight if he were not, by some means or other, besotted and made a fool of by sin? Can you conceive that a man would hear the tidings of pardoning mercy through Jesus Christ and be solemnly assured that if he turned from the error of his ways, God would accept and receive him—and that then he would treat that message with levity and go his way, even to ridicule it, if it were not that sin has made him so unreasonable, even in these matters, and made him, if not an idiot, a madman, so that he will not think? He willfully chooses his own mischief, ruins himself and that with a sort of Satanic malice against himself as well as against God—choosing rather to inherit eternal misery than to give up the poor de-

lights of time—choosing rather to feast upon the empty husks of this world than to come and sit down at the table of mercy and eat and drink of the Grace which God has provided! So, then, it is very clear—observation shows it to us and we also have felt it in ourselves—that sin has a soporific, a drowsing, a sleep-giving power! It makes men careless and indifferent. Makes them say, “I’ll chance it! I do not care what the future may bring!” It makes a man go right to the very edge of Hell with his eyes blindfolded and his heart like Nabal’s heart—which was turned to stone—careless even of the “terrors of the Lord” and of “the wrath to come”!

But blessed be His holy name! “He has delivered us from the power of darkness.” I hope we do not sleep. “Oh, Christian! If you are careless, if you are asleep, if tonight your heart is heavy and dull, I should like to come and whisper this right into your soul, “He has delivered us from the power of darkness.” We are now to be active, earnest, zealous and full of devoted life! If they sleep who are unconverted, they only act according to nature. They are in the dark. They, therefore, sleep. What can they do otherwise? But you are in the Light of God, you know that you are saved, you rejoice in Jesus Christ! Oh, sleep not, my Brothers and Sisters, but seeing that there are but a few hours in your day, work while the day lasts and make it your pleasure and your delight to spend and to be spent in the service of Him! “He has delivered us from the power of darkness.”

A second power of darkness lies in *concealment*. It is the power of darkness to hide things. What a darkness we had last night! Trying to get home from ministering abroad, I thought I would never be able to find my way. One could hardly see one’s hand in that dense fog which encompassed one. Houses and trees that one would have known in a moment and that would have told one where one was, were all concealed. One could see nothing! It would be a very small world, indeed, if it were no larger than what could then be seen. Darkness hides things. No matter how glorious yonder landscape may be as you stand upon the mountain’s brow—if the sun has gone down and if night has spread its wings over the whole, you can see nothing! It may be very well for the guide to tell you that yonder is a silver lake, and there the Black Forest, and that far away are the brows of mountains covered with their eternal snows, but you can see nothing—night has effectually blotted it all out! Now, the power of sin is just like that. It hides from the human mind what that mind ought to see. The man is lost, but he does not know it—he cannot see the rocks that are just ahead. The man has soon to stand before the bar of God and receive his sentence, but he does not know it. I mean his heart does not know it. He trifles on, caring for none of these things. As for the plague that is in him, in his ruined state, he does not believe it.

He hears the Truth of God that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, but he is indifferent to it and as to the dear and precious things of the Covenant of Grace, he does not care for them. No matter how rich may be the mercy, nor how pure the consolation, he knows nothing at all about them, for he is in the dark! It is all dark, dark, dark with him amid the blaze of noon!

I think I may honestly and humbly say that I do try to speak as plainly as any man can speak—and care nothing about mighty fine words—and yet I do not doubt but that scores come into this house and go out of it, saying, “Well, I do not understand it!” How could they? They are under the power of sin which makes the plainest truth perplexing and hides from their eyes that which the merest babe in Grace can plainly see!

But, Beloved, “He has delivered us from the power of darkness.” Now we can see, blessed be His name! The first sight we had so alarmed us that we almost wished we could not see! It was a sight so terrible, but when, afterwards, we looked to Jesus upon the Cross and found there was life for that look at the Crucified One—and when since then we have learned to look continually to Him and to find in His wounds our healing, and in His death our life—oh, I hope we are thanking God every moment of our existence that “He has delivered us from the power of darkness.” Now we can see in Him our Father, who was once to us, “the unknown God.”

Now we can see in Jesus, to whom we were once strangers, our own dear Elder Brother. Now we can look at the river of death without being alarmed at it, for beyond it we can see the turrets and pinnacles of the new Jerusalem glittering with jasper and with carbuncle—and we are anticipating the happy day when we shall sing with the saints above! Sweet thought is it that with these eyes of ours, we shall see our Savior! Yes, He has delivered us from the concealing power of darkness!

In the third place, darkness has a *depressing and an afflicting power*. Are you not all conscious, if you are shut up in a dark room, that your mind seems to sink in the dark? Why, our little children, who are the simplest specimens of humanity—and let us know the truth at once—can hardly be punished more severely (though I hope we never do so punish them, for it would be very wicked to do so) than by being shut up in the dark! They cannot bear it, cannot endure it and, at first, when the little one even goes to bed in the chamber alone in the dark, it feels afraid. What must not those persons have suffered who were shut up in the dungeons at Venice—dungeons below the watermark of the canal, where not a ray of light, perhaps, did ever come, except by the jailer’s candle—shut in there, hour after hour, unable to know the day from the night, but finding it one long and dreary night! The cruel oppressor would not have thought of it unless he had known that the darkness was so uncon-

genial to us that it depresses our spirits. Now, when some men have eyes given to them and can really see, sin is like darkness to them. Of course, it is not to some of you. A blind man sees as well in the dark as he does in the light, but as soon as ever you get eyes, God begins to deal with you till you feel that sin is a darkness to you! Oh, what a darkness is this! Well do some of us remember when we walked in the darkness of our sin. We tried to kindle a fire and to light ourselves with the sparks of our own good works, but we failed in every attempt and we would have been in the thick Egyptian night even now if it had not been that He delivered us from the power of darkness! Now, we know that we still, alas, sin, but it does not fill us with despair because there is an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous!

Now, we come to our Father every night and, bowing low in reverence before Him, we mourn that we have sinned during another day, but we do not mourn with a hopeless sorrow, for we remember that—

***“There is a fountain filled with blood  
Drawn from Emmanuel’s veins,  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains.”***

We know that when we were plunged into that fountain, our foulest stains were cleansed right away and now we give thanks unto the Father who has delivered us from the depressing power of sin! Oh, Christian, if you are downcast tonight about this, if you cannot say the text in this sense, go to your heavenly Father, pray to Him and ask Him to enable you to look to Christ just as you did at first! Perhaps you have too many good works of which to boast—and that is why you are so depressed. Throw them all away and come, now, as a poor, empty-handed sinner, having nothing to which to trust but the finished work of Christ! You may depend upon it, that doing this, your peace will yet be like a river because your righteousness, being Christ’s imparted to you, will be like the waves of the sea. Then shall you sing, “Thanks be to Him who has delivered us from the depressing power of darkness.”

I cannot dwell upon these points, though they are all interesting, but must now notice, fourthly, that there is what I may call *the fascinating power of darkness*. It is strange, but it is true, that there are many who love darkness. I said just now that this was contrary to nature, and so it is in one sense. Unfallen nature could not bear darkness, but fallen nature loves it! Hear what God says about it, “Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.” Night is the time of the world’s merriment. Then the thief steals out to do his deeds of evil. “They that are drunk, are drunk in the night,” and then is the time for “wantonness and chambering.” As the Apostle says, it is the hour of evil! Darkness seems to be attractive to some men. Strange is it, but it is so. The fascinating power of sin is just like the fascinating power of darkness. I have

sometimes thought that sin might well be compared to those serpents which fascinate their prey. It may be some poor little animal—the snake looks and looks, and the little creature, instead of running away, looks at those bright, sparkling eyes till the poor hare, or rabbit, or whatever it may be, instead of escaping, stands as though it were a statue, perfectly tranquil and fascinated with the glare of the serpent's eyes! And then in a moment the snake darts at it and devours its prey! So is it with sin and there are some here, perhaps, who are under its fascinating power tonight. They know, for they have often been told, that sin is their deadly enemy—and yet it is so pleasant, it is so enchanting, so enticing! As they picture the wizard as being able to strike men into stone, or able to make them do his will, so does sin seem to do and then, at last, it destroys the man who once found pleasure in it! It is a cupbearer to you and comes with smiling face, holds out the sparkling goblet and says, "Drink, my Lord! See the beaded bubbles sparkling on the rim! Drink! For it moves itself aright and sparkles. Drink! And it shall put a flush into your veins and make your blood tingle and leap and let you know a thrill and a joy you have never known before!" And when you get the cup to your lips, you may not be able to take it away again, though, as you drink, it will scald the lips and throat and burn the very vitals! And as you drink on, especially if you drink of the cup of lust, you shall feel another thrill that shall make the very bones rot, and the very marrow to decay till you wish you had never been born and curse bitterly the day in which you came into this world to be partaker of a poison so terrible, so loathsome, so like an ante-past of Hell! Oh my God! Grant that if there are any young men or women here who have already drunk of that cup, that by Your help they may dash it down once and forever! But it is fascinating, fearfully fascinating—and when once a person begins to drink of it, it is seldom that he stops until he drains the very dregs of eternal ruin! But thanks be unto God, for "He has delivered us from the power of darkness."

It cannot fascinate us now. I know you, you fair witch! I know you, you painted harlot! Though you might have deceived me once, I know you now! My Savior has shown me superior charms. He has taught me the mischief that comes from loving the world and the things thereof—and now you tempt me in vain! I hope there are many here who can say, "He has delivered us from the fascinating power of sin, from the power of darkness."

I cannot stop on this point, however, but must notice the fifth thing. There is about darkness *an emboldening power* to some men. Darkness makes the child afraid, but it makes the evil man bold! It is in the dark that the lion comes out after his prey and all the beasts of the field go forth to get their food. The sun would frighten them, but boldness comes

to them with the darkness. And oh, there is a wonderfully emboldening power to some men in sin! Perhaps, my dear Friend, you have come in here tonight, but you have said this afternoon that which you would not have said 10 years ago! Ah, young woman, you have already done that which you would have shuddered to have done only 12 months ago! Ah, merchant, you have already entered into a doubtful transaction which you would have scorned some months back! You see, you did wrong by little, and as you did one wrong, you got courage to do another, and another, and another! There is the darkness of sin over your minds—you have grown more bold in sin, but that is a poor courage which depends upon the darkness—it is, in fact, the darkness of Satan! It is because of his supreme darkness of mind and spirit that Satan is the boldest of all spirits in contending with the God of Heaven and earth. Beware of the brow of brass! It is a grand thing for a Christian to be like a pillar of iron against evil, but it is a mark of reprobation to become like an iron pillar against God and against His Truth—and some men do become such. They sin until their sin engenders a second nature!

At first, when sin catches us in its net, it is with the tiniest spider's cobwebs that can scarcely be seen. And they seem as though you could break from them in a moment. Then they become silken bonds—then firmer, still, until a man seems to be enveloped in a tangle of cables—and every cable hardens and becomes as iron or triple steel until at last there is no escaping, for sin gathers daily force until it gets a monstrous power over men! Men will now say and laugh at a thing which once made them shudder! And do an action and then wipe their mouths and say, "Aha! Aha!" An action which once he would no more have thought of doing than trying to mount without wings above the skies! Hazael said, "Is your servant a dog that he should do this thing?" And yet, dog or not, he did the very thing he thought it impossible for him to do! Now, I trust if we have been delivered from the power of sin in this respect, that we are no longer to be found doing wrong—and that if we *have* done wrong, we are humbled on account of it. Then should we be contrite and broken in spirit—and instead of boasting, snapping our fingers, and saying, "It is nothing"—we should go to our beds ashamed, or go to our Father's face blushing, mourning, weeping and saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" What a blessed thing it is to have a broken heart! Thank God for a tender conscience, and if you have one, never tamper with it. Oh, young man, never tamper with a tender conscience! It is such a blessing to have it. Oh, cultivate it, and pray the Lord to make your heart more and more tender concerning sin that you may hate it with a perfect hatred! He has delivered us from the power of sin.

Once more, and I shall leave this point. Darkness seems to have about it a kind of *prophetic* power. If we were not warned by our astronomers

when an eclipse was coming, I have no doubt that half the world would be dreadfully frightened as soon as the sun became darkened. People would say to one another, "The Judgment is coming." That is their general thought. If the day gets unusually dark, they think something horrible is going to happen and they want to know whether this is not the time when the Judgment may be expected, and so on. Darkness seems to be a prognostication of evil. Such is sin. My dear Hearer, if you hear the voice of sin, it tells you in your sober moments—it cannot help telling you—that there is a judgment to come. "Be sure your sin will find you out." "God will bring every work into judgment." For every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account at the Last Day. But the Christian knows that to him the darkness of sin prognosticates nothing of the kind! He stands beneath the Cross of Christ and he knows that sin spent itself upon Jesus upon that Cross so that it might not touch, for a single moment, the soul that believes in Jesus! Now, notwithstanding everything, the Christian can say, "I am forgiven. I am a monument of Grace. I am a sinner saved by blood! I rejoice that for me sin has been put away and I am, therefore, saved." Thus, "He has delivered us from the power of darkness."

Now, I shall need your attention for a little upon the second Truth of God found here, which is—

## II. THE STATEMENT HERE MADE CONCERNING THE POWER OF DARKNESS.

Observe that, in the first place, it is *a statement full of assurance*. "He has delivered us." Paul does not say he hopes so, but definitely asserts, "He *has* delivered us." Brothers and Sisters, can we speak in the same positive manner? Let us not be content unless we can, for if we have believed in Him, "He has delivered us." If, indeed, our trust is in His finished work and perfect righteousness, then He has delivered us! It is not a matter of argument, or a thing about which to raise a debate—it is so—it must be so, for every soul that is in Christ, He has delivered from the power of darkness and translated into His own Kingdom!

Observe, again, it is a statement *full of intelligence*. The person who uttered it knew what he was saying. He was a sound Divine, for he says, "He *has* delivered us." He does not say, "We have got out of it somehow," but, "He *has* delivered us." I wish some persons could have much clearer notions than they have about who it is that saves. If salvation comes of man—well, say so! And if sinners save themselves by all manner of means, give them the credit, the glory, the praise of it! But if it is God who saves, then let Him have the sole and perfect honor for it! "Salvation is of the Lord." Sinner, you should not try to save yourself! You cannot do it! If you could, why did Christ come to save you? Your salvation does not rest in your hands. "It is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but

of God that shows mercy.” All the matter of salvation rests with the Eternal Father, through Jesus Christ. He is the Alpha and the Omega of our salvation. The person who wrote this verse, then, it seems, was a sound Divine, for he ascribes the glory where it ought to be ascribed. “He has delivered us.”

Then, next, it is a *statement full of gratitude*. If you look at the connection, you find it says, “Giving thanks unto the Father.” What a delightful Grace gratitude is! It is such a heavenly thing to be thankful. I wish we spent a little more time about it, being dissolved by God’s goodness, looking at all that He has done for us and at all our demerit, which renders that love the more wonderful! What joy is there in gratitude—to fall speechless at the foot of the Cross and feel the thanks we cannot speak, or to stand up and sing, “Blessed be His name,” or to tell others the loving kindness of the Lord and to say, “He has dealt graciously with me and He will deal graciously with me.” Brothers and Sisters, be much in the sacred and holy palace of gratitude! You cannot have anything that will more strengthen you for service than holy thankfulness to God for His favors. We might have said a good deal more upon that last point, but we leave you to say it to yourselves! And so we will close with the third Truth of God that shines here, namely—

### III. THE INFERENCES THAT MAY BE DRAWN FROM THIS STATEMENT.

The first inference is a doctrinal one, but as I have already touched on this, I only briefly hint and then leave it. Here it is. Deliverance from the power of sin is as much the work of God as deliverance from the guilt of sin! Where we look for justification, there must we also look for sanctification, for as we are justified through Jesus Christ, we must also expect to receive sanctification from a heavenly source. We cannot receive the one blessing through the spirit and the other through the flesh. We would infer from the text, speaking doctrinally, that in order to our sanctification and our deliverance from the power of sin, we must look to our heavenly Father, altogether and alone.

The next evidence is *experimental*. “He has delivered us.” Now, then, I ought to feel in my soul that I am so delivered—and if I do not so feel—I ought to be wretched until I do feel it because this has been the experience of every true Christian sooner or later. He has delivered us from the power! We may be in darkness sometimes, but it shall not have power over and enslave us. Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the Law, but under Grace. Let the experimental inference then be, “I am resolved to be happy, yet I will—I will rejoice in God, for He has delivered.”

The next inference is *practical*. If we are delivered from the power of darkness, do not let us put ourselves under its power again, and do not

let us temporize with it. You would fancy, from the actions of some professors, that they were not delivered from the power of darkness at all, but were only helped to keep away from some conspicuous sin. When I hear some people talk about fox-hunting Christians, card-playing Christians, Christians who are never at Prayer Meeting, Christians who have no zeal for souls, it seems to me that they might just as well talk about angels who are not in Heaven, or angels who never obey the voice of God! Why, these are sham Christians! They are not genuine Christians—they are of the world and do the things of the world! We may conclude that their hearts and natures are worldly, for if they were spiritual, they would love spiritual things, and their hearts would be engaged in spiritual exercises. Brothers and Sisters, the Grace of God has not come into us merely to keep us away from some few notable vices, but to deliver us altogether from the power of darkness! And if I can sometimes go into sin—just occasionally by way of pleasure—it proves that I am a stranger to the deliverance which Jesus Christ gives to His really called and regenerated people!

And now the last inference is *a hopeful* inference. If He has delivered us from the powers of darkness, He will deliver us all the way through! If He has done this great thing for us, what will He not do for us? If He has delivered us from the tremendous power of sin, He will certainly deliver us from the power of death! If sin is taken away, why need we fear? Has He delivered us from the power of darkness? Then He will certainly help us in our daily troubles. Did He give His own dear Son to put away our sin—and will He not give us bread and water? If He has covered our souls with the beautiful robe of righteousness that Christ has woven, will He let us lack for ordinary raiment? Oh, let us be of good cheer! The good God of Grace cannot be a bad God of Providence! He who feeds us so well on heavenly bread cannot starve us for lack of bodily bread! He has delivered us! We have already received the greatest mercy—and you may be quite sure of the smaller ones! When Sir Francis Drake was overtaken by a storm in the Thames off Greenwich, “What?” he said, “afraid of a storm? Been round the world three times and afraid, now, of being drowned in a ditch? No!” And surely we who have circumnavigated a whole world of discipline and trouble over whose heads the waves and billows have rolled, we do not mean to be drowned in this present trouble! Do you, my dear Friend? You shall not perish in this ditch! You shall get safely Home! He who has delivered you from the power of darkness will never withdraw His hand and help until He brings you within the pearly gates, puts the crown on your head, the palm branch in your hand, the snow-white robe on your shoulders and the new song of everlasting joy in your mouth, even praise forevermore! Be of good courage, then!

And then there is this inference for some of you who are not converted. *If God has delivered us, why should He not deliver you?* Why, some of us who have been delivered seemed very unlikely to ever be delivered! We did not want to be! We loved darkness rather than light and yet He delivered us from it. We were, some of us, very hardhearted. Some of us had plunged very deep into sin. There are some here who are wonders of Divine Grace! They were once wonders of sin and yet the love of God looked them up and brought them out—fetched them from the bar of the gin palace, fetched them out of the theater, brought them even from the brothel, some of them, and washed and cleansed them and made them sit among God’s people, love His ways and rejoice in His dear name! And why should not God do the same with you? I know 20 reasons why He should not, but I will tell you one thing He has said, “Him that comes unto Me I will in no wise cast out.” So if you come to Him, He will not cast out even you!

The way to come to Him is to trust Him. That is, trust Christ to save you and it is all done, and you are saved! That is the great work. When a soul, sensible of sin, sees that Christ, by His blood, made atonement and comes and throws himself upon that Sacrifice of the Cross, then sin is pardoned! Then because the sin is pardoned, the forgiven sinner is grateful and he says, “I will not go on in this sin.” So he puts it away and he is led into a life of holiness by the mercy of God. Oh, that we could all say in the words of the text—and if we cannot all say it tonight, I hope we shall soon be able to do so—“Giving thanks unto the Father, who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and has delivered us from the Power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.”

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# CHRIST THE CREATOR

## NO. 3180

A SERMON  
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*"All things were created by Him and for Him."  
Colossians 1:16.*

THERE can be no mistake as to the Person concerning whom Paul is writing under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit—it is Jesus of Nazareth, the Incarnate Son of God who was crucified on Calvary for, writing concerning the same Person in the 14<sup>th</sup> verse, the Apostle says, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." It is, therefore, that Savior whose blood was shed for His people's redemption who is here declared to be the Creator of all things and by whom all things consist!

The first verse of the Book of Genesis tells us that, "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," so someone may ask, "How do you reconcile that statement with Paul's declaration that all things were created by Christ and for Him?" No reconciliation is needed, for the two statements are identical, *as Jesus is God*, and "in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Jesus said, "I and My Father are One," and so they are! We know not how it is, but the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are distinct Personalities, yet there are *not* three Gods, but only one, as the Apostle John writes, "There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit; and these Three are One." The one God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the Father, Son and Spirit—Three in One and One in Three!

The subject I have to speak about is the honor and glory of the Second Person of the blessed Trinity, even our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! But it is so vast a theme that the preacher, at the outset, confesses that the task is too great for him to accomplish! He staggers beneath the weight of his theme which seems to him too great for the human mind to compass or for human lips adequately to express! All I can hope to do is to be lost in my subject that Jesus Christ may be All-in-All.

The text tells us that all things were created by Christ and for Him, so we will, first, consider *Paul's statement*. And, secondly, we will *review the rejections arising from it*.

I. First, then, let us CONSIDER PAUL'S STATEMENT—"All things were created by Him and for Him."

So, first of all, *Heaven, itself, was created by and for Christ Jesus*. Then there is such a place, as well as such a state, and of that place Je-

sus is the center! There is such a place, for Enoch is there. “Enoch walked with God: and he was not, for God took him.” God took him bodily to some place—and that place is Heaven. Elijah is also there—the horses of fire and the chariots of fire took not merely his spirit, but the entire Elijah—and he is in Heaven. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has gone back to Heaven, went there in His own body. When He passed into the skies, He went up into the heavenly places, as well as into the heavenly state—and there He lives at the right hand of God, even the Father, enthroned in the New Jerusalem, the Holy City of God—

**“See how the Conqueror mounts aloft,  
And to His Father flies!  
With scars of honor in His flesh,  
And triumph in His eyes!  
There our exalted Savior reigns,  
And scatters blessings down—  
His Father well rewards His pains,  
And bids Him wear the crown.”**

God, absolutely considered as a pure Spirit, needed no such place as Heaven. God is everywhere! Long ago He asked, “Do not I fill Heaven and earth?” The idea of there being needed any celestial court or place of abode falls short of the true idea of the Omnipresent Jehovah. Neither do I suppose that it would have been necessary to have a place for angels, for the holy spirits would have been able to behold the face of God everywhere—wherever they might be, there they would see God and, consequently, no special place would have been needed to be set apart for them! But it was ordained, in the eternal purpose of God, that there should be created a race of beings who should not be pure spirits, but who should have bodies made of material substances. And it was resolved by Jesus Christ that He would become one of these beings—that He would take upon Himself their nature and would become, in fact, a Man! Now, when a spirit becomes linked with a material substance, it must have a place in which to dwell and, therefore, Heaven was created both for Christ and for His people. When the Son of Man shall come in His Glory, He will say to those on His right hand, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Prepared, that is, with this view—that there might be a special central place for the display of Christ’s Glory—and that all His people might be there with Him. These are His own words—“Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My Glory.” They are not merely to be as He is, but to be *with Him where He is* and, therefore, Heaven was created by Him and for Him—and for His people who are vitally united with Him!

O Beloved, when we get to Heaven, we shall see that everything there glows with the Glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! The print of His pierced hands will be upon everything. The city of pure gold was created by Him and created for Him. The foundations of the walls of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones by Him and for Him. The jasper, sapphire, emerald, beryl and all the rest—and the gates

of pearl are all for Him—all shall be to His glory! For Him each harp of gold, each palm of victory, each shout of victory, each song of adoration—all Heaven shall ring with the praises of Jesus! Heaven shall be, as it were, set with mirrors and every one of which you will be able to see a reflection of the glorious Person of Jesus Christ, even as in every dew-drop you may see the image of the sun. Everyone in Heaven will feel it to be his bliss to praise Jesus! Towards the august Throne of the Most High this anthem will triumphantly ascend, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing!” And with the variation of which John tells us in the Revelation, “Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sits upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever.”

There will be nothing in Heaven that will be derogatory to Jesus, but everyone and everything there will be to His praise and glory! I cannot believe that any of His chosen people will be missing on the Last Great gathering Day. No David’s seat will be empty there! No Thomas will be absent then! I cannot conceive of one whom He has purchased with His precious blood being lost! Not one sheep or lamb will be missing from the great Shepherd’s flock in the day when they pass under the hand of Him that counts them—they shall all be there! The army of the Great Captain of our salvation shall be complete there! When the muster-roll is read, they shall all answer to their names—and all who are gathered there will owe their salvation to the Lamb who was slain! There will not be one Pharisee there to boast, “God, I thank You that I am not as other men are.” There will not be one atheist there blasphemously shouting, “There is no God!” Nor one Unitarian seeking to drag Christ from the Throne that is rightly His—but all will be adoring and magnifying, and delighting to adore and magnify Him by whom and for whom Heaven itself was created—

***“All the chosen of the Father,  
All for whom the Lamb was slain,  
All the Church appear together,  
Washed from every sinful stain!”***

Next, *all angels were created by Jesus and for Him*. However great and strong, and swift they are, there is not one angel that ever flies from Jehovah’s Throne that was not created by Christ! Read the whole verse from which our text is taken—“For by Him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they are thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him.” If there are rank upon rank of blessed spirits, “that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word,” all were created by Him and for Him! Gabriel was sent to foretell Christ’s coming to earth. Angels announced His birth at Bethlehem. Others of them ministered to Him in the wilderness and in Gethsemane. They watched over His empty sepulcher and joyfully attended Him as He returned to Heaven as the victorious King of Glory! It is written that He was “seen of angels,” and it must have been with awe and wonder that

they gazed upon Him from the manger to the tomb! We read, also, “which things the angels desire to look into”—and there must have been many mysteries which even their lofty intelligence could not comprehend until He explained it to them! They delight to praise and worship Him! And they help to swell the mighty chorus of adoring homage that is always ascending to Him—

***“Bright angels, strike your loudest strings,  
Your sweetest voices raise!  
Let Heaven and all created things  
Sound our Immanuel’s praise!”***

Angels were created by Christ and for Him—not merely to admire and adore Him, but actually to serve Him. Truly did the Psalmist write, “who makes His angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire.” And Paul reveals a most important part of their service when he asks, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” We will not enter into any speculations about their battles with evil spirits on our behalf, though we believe that this is one of the many ways in which they minister for us. We cannot describe all the service that these heavenly messengers render to the Lord’s own people. I remind you of how one of them killed 185,000 of Sennacherib’s army in a single night! And of how the Prophet Elisha, besieged by the Syrians in Dothan, saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire for his protection. You will recall many other instances of angelic interposition and you know, too, how it is written, “He shall give His angels charge over You, to keep You in all Your ways. They shall bear You up in their hands, lest You dash Your foot against a stone.”

As for the fallen angels who rebelled against God and who have sunk forever into hopeless alienation from Him—even these were created by Christ and for Him! And though they hate Him, they shall be compelled to obey Him and to acknowledge that He is Lord over all! Even their malice against the people of God shall only draw out His love toward them and manifest His vigilance, wisdom and power on their behalf. In the wilderness the Son of Man met “the prince of the power of the air” in mortal conflict. Evil stood there endowed with all the attributes it could desire to have upon its side—evil ancient with long and varied experience, evil backed up by a powerful angelic intellect, evil with ferocious malice glaring in its eyes—evil with diabolic cunning tempting the Son of God to sin! There, too, stood the Prince of Life—alone, yet undaunted—the Incarnation of holiness and love! Three times they wrestled, foot to foot, but the tempter had to retire beaten. And when he came again, hoping to take the Son of God and Son of Man at a disadvantage in Gethsemane—when He was full of anguish and was shortly to die in still greater agony on the Cross—it was again a desperate struggle, but the Master flung him to the ground! Our Samson tore the old roaring lion as if he had been a kid, and left him prostrate and defeated, while He passed on to complete the great work of His people’s redemption and to conquer all the powers of darkness before He gave up the ghost! Glory be to Jesus! He has gotten Glory to Himself out of the devil and all his angels!

And even Hell, itself, terrible as it is, was created by Christ as a necessary part of the moral government of the universe so that sin might not go unpunished. Even there Christ reigns! His Sovereignty is supreme down to its lowest depths. He has the keys of Hell and of death—and when the appointed time comes, He will send an angel with the key of the bottomless pit and bid him lay hold on “the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan,” and bind him for a thousand years and cast him into the bottomless pit. And then, after the Millennium, and Satan has been again loosed for a little season, he shall be “cast into the Lake of Fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophets are—and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.” Christ is King even over that dark sad part of His domains! And amidst all the confusion and tumult of the Pit, His enemies shall “confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.”

The verse from which our text is taken also reminds us that *this world was created by Christ and for Christ*. “By Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth.” John tells us, “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him: and without Him was not anything made that was made.” The eternal *Logos* was the Creator of this lower world as well as of the realms on high! There is neither hill nor valley, sparkling fountain nor foaming sea which He has not made. “The sea is His and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land.” Truly is He the Creator of this earth! It was formed for Him as well as by Him!

It was especially made to be the place of residence for His people, the place on which they would fall through sin and the place on which they would be restored through the redemption accomplished there by Christ Jesus on the Cross of Calvary. This world was created by Christ as the place where He, Himself, would live and labor—and suffer and die. He would be laid as a Baby in an earthly manger. As a Boy and a Man He would walk through the streets and lanes of this world! He would fare as human beings fared and suffer as the dwellers upon the earth suffered, though never through any sin of His own. I might truly say that the whole world was created for Calvary. “Why leap you, you high hills?” That little mound outside Jerusalem’s gate explains your very existence! The world itself was created that Christ might die on Calvary! This earth was to be a sort of stage upon which Christ was to take the principal part in the greatest drama that the whole universe has ever witnessed! The world was made by Him and for Him—and it will remain until His great purpose of love and mercy is fully accomplished!

We must not forget that even the lower orders of Creation were made by Christ and for Him. They were needed by man—and man was necessary to the completeness of Christ’s plan of Salvation—so the lower forms of creatures are links in the chain that could not be spared. There is a wonderful sympathy between the various portions of Creation, as the Apostle Paul tells us, “for we know that the whole creation groans and

travails in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves, also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Treat all creatures kindly, then, as far as you can, for the great Creator’s sake. I would not have a sparrow needlessly killed, nor even a worm trod on that might be spared. My Lord and Master made them all—and when I look at them, I see traces of His wonderful wisdom and power! And when I see how bountifully He provides for them, I note the tokens of His goodness and care. He opens His hands and satisfies the desire of every living thing! There is not a little bird that picks up a seed by the roadside that was not created by Christ and for Him! And, perhaps, answers its end better than some of you who lift your brows to yonder Heaven only to defy your Maker! There is not an animal upon the common, nor a lion in the forest, nor a fish in the sea, nor a fowl in the air that was not made by Him—and that does not in some way promote His Glory!

And to come to ourselves, *men were created by Christ and for Him.* Perhaps the Creator resolved to manifest His power and skill in a new order of created beings. He had made pure spirits and He had made material substances. He had created various forms of life rising from the vegetable to the animal. But He resolved that there should be a spirit created that would be affiliated with materialism and that this spirit should, in the end, when it had passed through all its graduations, become the most wonderful creature in the whole universe—a creature that should know evil, not merely by report, but by actual personal experience—a creature that would, after that, be delivered from the power of evil and so should be bound to God by ties of gratitude so strong that it would never revolt from Him again! This creature, knowing evil and knowing good, strengthened by Divine Grace, would, of its own free will, cling to the good and eschew the evil—and would forever be God’s best ally against all revolt in His dominions—for this creature, though it had known evil, was to become a child of God and to be a partaker of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. These creatures, partly spiritual and partly material, were to have at their head, Christ Jesus, who was to be the model of them all! And they were to be like He and to be His companions forever! But they were to be to Him more than companions—to be His friends with whom He might hold familiar conversation and to be to Him even more than friends—to be united to Him in personal relationship—to be so completely one with Him that they should be “members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones,” that His life should be their life and that their life should be derived from Him!

What a wonderful creature a man will be when He gets to Heaven with His body, soul and spirit all complete! No other creature will be so near to God as man will be through his union to the God-Man, Christ Jesus the Lord! Yet this glorified man will never presume upon his position, but will always keep his proper place. He will have been so trained and educated by his falls, his regeneration and his redemption that he will be al-

ways humble, and yet will rejoice that he is a son of the Most High who may say to Him, “Abba, Father.” I do not know how such a creature as a perfect man could have been made by God except through the fall in Eden, the birth of Christ at Bethlehem and His death on Calvary. In making man, God had produced a new type of being, that in him, Jesus Christ might find an opportunity of displaying His wondrous condescension in taking upon Himself man’s nature—and His wondrous Grace in taking upon Himself man’s sin and dying in his place! Through glorified men becoming Christ’s companions, friends and faithful servants by reason of His mysterious union with them, a new race of beings has been created who can have greater sympathy with God than any others of His creatures can have. Devils can have no sympathy with God, for they are only evil. The holy angels cannot have as much sympathy with God as man who has fallen by sin and then been saved by Divine Grace! It is of those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, that it is written, “Therefore are they before the Throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He who sits upon the Throne shall dwell among them.” He will be our God and we shall be His people! He will be our Father and we shall be His children forever and ever!

But oh, if you reject the Savior! If you turn the wondrous opportunity of immortal glory which God presents to you in the Gospel, into the dread alternative of eternal wrath—if you are resolved that you will not be among those privileged beings who will be next to God, Himself. If you spurn the dignity that is held before you. Then, notwithstanding all that, you will have to glorify Christ! Even in this life and against your own will—you shall scarcely know how—you shall be made to subserve Christ’s purpose! And at the last He will make you realize how terrible He is as He breaks you in pieces as a potter’s vessel! If you will not touch His silver scepter of Mercy, you shall feel the weight of the iron rod of His inflexible Justice! If you will not lie at His feet as a penitent, you shall be driven from His Presence into the outer darkness where there will be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth forever! God grant that none of you may ever know experimentally what this means!—

***“You sinners, seek His Grace,  
Whose wrath you cannot bear!  
Fly to the shelter of His Cross  
And find salvation there!”***

**II.** Now I must pass on briefly to REVIEW THE REFLECTIONS ARISING FROM THIS STATEMENT—“All things were created by Him and for Him.”

And the first clear reflection from this declaration is, then, *Jesus is God*. If all things were made by Him and for Him, how is it possible for us to get away from the conviction that He is, indeed, God? I will not attempt to argue about the matter, but whatever others may say or do, as for me, Jesus of Nazareth is my Lord and my God—and I will love and adore, and worship Him forever and ever!

The second reflection is that *Jesus is the key of the universe*—its center and its explanation. Creation and history are enigmas which can only be understood in the light of the Cross. When we look at the planets, their motions seem irregular from our standpoint. But if we could stand in the sun, we would see the planets revolving in their orbits in an orderly manner around it. Calvary is the sun of the universe! Stand there, believe in God making Propitiation for sin by the death of His Son, and you can understand everything in the light that streams from Calvary! Get away from that great center and you understand nothing. The great question to ask concerning everything is—Will it glorify Christ? How will it affect His infinitely wise designs?

Try, beloved Friends, wherever you are, to see all things in the light of Christ. I think this will teach you not to look with scorn upon any of the things that are around you. See how the Lord Jesus has purged all things for His people so that they shall no longer be common or unclean. That lovely river, those fertile valleys, that dense forest, yonder snow-clad Alps and everything else that Christ has created, you need not say, as some have done, “I will not gaze upon the beauties of Nature, lest they should take my thoughts away from my Master.” Scorn not His works, lest you should also scorn the great Maker of them! His are the mountains. And the valleys are His—sun, moon and stars all shine to His praise and glory! Go up and down, then, in the world and be not troubled by many things that now disquiet you. Say, “I do not know how this will glorify Christ, but I am persuaded that in some mysterious way which I cannot yet fully comprehend, His eternal purposes are being accomplished.” See Christ in everything and see everything in the light of Christ!

And, Beloved, another clear inference from Paul’s declaration is that *to live to Christ is to live as we ought to live*. If He made us for Himself, then we who live unto Him have found out the true purpose of our existence! Put a thing to a wrong purpose and it is a failure. But use it for the purpose for which it was made and it will answer that end. Christian, Christ made you for Himself! Yes, He has *twice* made you for Himself! Therefore lay yourself out for Him—body, soul and spirit—spend all your time, and all your strength, and all your means for Him and Him alone! So you will be in accord with the great purpose of your creation.

If we do not live unto Christ, we have to make the sorrowful reflection that we are out of gear with all things that He has made. Although by the mysterious working of His Divine Power, He will get glory out of us, yet we are not consciously in harmony with Jesus and all discords must have an end. All opposition to Omnipotence must be futile and must also be transient. However long He may allow evil to continue, there is an end even to His long-suffering patience! And then, woe be to those who are still at enmity against the Almighty!

Another reflection from the text is that *we can only live for Christ as we live by Christ*. We cannot glorify Him except as He gives us the Grace to do so—if we attempt to do it by our own power, we shall most certainly

fail. Wait at His Cross, Beloved! Cry to Him to give you the aid of His almighty Spirit and then, through the effectual working of the Holy Spirit, you shall be able to live for Jesus, alone, by whom and for whom you were made both at your first creation and also when you were created anew in Christ Jesus!

And, lastly, it is clear from all this that *Christ must triumph*. Some of us have been almost breaking our hearts as we look around at the follies of the generation in which we live. They are going on pilgrimages to the shrines of their idols—the gods that are not gods! They are bowing down to their priests and confessing in their ears the sad stories that should be told only to God! They are setting up the calves and images that their fathers worshipped and turning away from the only living and true God! All this we mourn and grieve over, but let us not imagine that Christ's true Kingdom is suffering loss! Beneath the dark clouds that hide the sun, we mourn the absence of the great orb of day, but think how brightly the sun is shining above those clouds! Borrow an eagle's wings and soar above the clouds, and then you shall see the sun shining in his strength. So is it with Christ, the Sun of Righteousness! Get away, by faith, from this poor earth, and you shall see Him shining in His Glory, whether it is day or night, summer or winter! Christ *must* reign. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us." But it is still true, "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." And He shall reign forever and ever, and let all His people say, "Hallelujah!" And again and again cry, "Hallelujah!"

He *must* reign. What power is there that can stand against Him who created all things? What arm can dare to be lifted up against His almighty arm? Be of good courage, you soldiers of the Cross! Dream not of defeat, nor think for a moment of fleeing from the foe in terror. Victory must come to the Lamb that was slain! He shall come from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah. His apparel shall be red, like the garments of him that treads in the wine vat, for all His enemies shall be trodden down in His wrath! And Rome, the harlot church, the chief of all His foes, shall be hurled down like a millstone into the flood and sink to rise no more—

***"He shall reign from pole to pole  
With illimitable sway!  
He shall reign when, like a scroll,  
Yonder heavens have passed away!  
Then the end—beneath His rod,  
Man's last enemy shall fall!  
Hallelujah! Christ in God,  
God in Christ is All-in-All."***

Happy is he who is the lowliest page in the retinue of such a King! Happy is he who shall be privileged to sprinkle a few drops of water to lay the dust in the road over which our conquering King shall ride! Blessed is he who shall spread his garments in the way, or wave a palm branch

in honor of the royal Victor in His triumphal procession! Happy shall he be, then, who has been laughed to scorn for Christ's sake! Or who has been lying in a dungeon till the moss has grown on his eyelids! Or who has been burned at the stake and his ashes cast to the four winds of Heaven because he would not deny his Lord! Oh to be wholly on His side, now, that we may be among His faithful followers on that Day! Here we are, O glorious Son of David! Take us and all that we have, and make us more than ever Yours from this time forward, and unto You shall be the glory forever and ever! Amen.

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
COLOSSIANS 1.**

**Verses 1, 2.** *Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy, our brother, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.* Kindness is the very breath of Christianity, so the Apostle will not begin the subject matter of his letter until first of all he has breathed out a benediction upon those to whom he writes.

**3.** *We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.* Paul very graciously blends his giving of thanks and his constant prayer for these Christians at Colosse and, therein, sets us an example that we may well imitate.

**4-6.** *Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which you have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel, which has come unto you, as it has, also, in all the world and is bringing forth fruit, as it has also among you, since the day you heard of it, and knew the Grace of God in truth.* If there is a way of knowing the Grace of God which is of no value, it is when it is not known in truth, that is to say, when it is only head-knowledge, not heart-knowledge. But, oh, when in truth the Grace of God sinks into the soul and changes the whole nature, then it is an experience for which we may well give thanks to God!

**7, 8.** *As you also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.* Epaphras told them of Paul's prayers for them and when he came back from Colosse, he told Paul of their great love in the Spirit.

**9.** *For this cause we, also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.* [See Sermon #1742, Volume 29—SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE AND ITS PRACTICAL RESULTS—Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.] See, the Apostle asks even more for them than faith, hope and love—that they “might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” This shows what a valuable thing it is to know and understand the will of God!

**10, 11.** *That you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience*

*and long-suffering with joyfulness.* If we have faith, hope, and love, it is desirable that we add to these a fullness of knowledge—and to this holiness of life and fruitfulness of service—that we may have patience to endure the afflictions of this life and long-suffering with which to put up with the provocations of the ungodly.

**12-14.** *Giving thanks unto the Father who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who has delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.* And now Paul, having mentioned his Master's great work—redemption by blood and the forgiveness of sins—goes on a tangent, as it were. He is so enthusiastic with regard to Christ and His great atoning Sacrifice that the very thought of Christ's blood stirs his own blood and he seems like a man all on fire with holy fervor as he writes—

**15-17.** *Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by Him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they are thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.* How can anyone ever read this passage and yet say that Christ Jesus is only a Man? By what twisting of words can such language as this be applied to the most eminent Prophet or Apostle who ever lived? Surely He must be God by whom all things were created, and by whom all things consist! But Paul's next sentence is, to us, the sweetest of all—

**18.** *And He is the head of the body, the Church.* [See Sermon #839, Volume 14—THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH—Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.] He is joined by an indissoluble union to His people and is the Head of their glory, their wisdom and their strength!

**18.** *Who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.* Are we giving Him the preeminence in all things? That theology must be false which puts Jesus in the second place, or even lower than that! And that experience is a wrong one which does not put Christ always in the front. He must in all things always stand first!

**19.** *For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.* [See Sermons #978, Volume 17—ALL FULLNESS IN CHRIST and #1169, Volume 20—THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST THE TREASURY OF THE SAINTS—Read/download both sermons, free of charge, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.] That we might have to go to Him for it, it pleased the Father to make errands for us so as to take us to Christ and to thus make our very emptiness to minister to the Glory of Christ!

**20-23.** *And having made peace through the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they are things in earth, or things in Heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and blameless and above reproach in His sight—if, indeed, you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast.* This is a text that ought to be read and pondered every day by the many unstable professors who are in the Church at this

present time— “if, indeed, you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast,” like a building that will have no further settling, no more splitting of the stones, no more cracking of the walls—because your foundation is secure and you are firmly built upon it!

**23, 24.** *And are not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which you have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under Heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister; who now rejoices in my sufferings for you.* Oh how blessed it is when a man has so mastered himself that his sufferings for his fellow Christians become a matter of rejoicing for himself! He not only accepts them and bears them with patience, but he says—

**24.** *And fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body’s sake, which is the Church.* There is nothing “behind” as to the atoning efficacy of the sufferings of Christ, but there is much yet to be endured in order that all the elect may be brought to Christ. Some must suffer through their extraordinary labors in preaching the Gospel, others through bearing reproach for the Truth of God’s sake—and Paul was glad to take in his mortal body, his share of the sufferings to be endured for the sake of Christ’s Church—which is His mystical body.

**25-27.** *Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the Word of God, the mystery which has been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* [See Sermon #1720, Volume 29—CHRIST IN YOU—Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.] This is the most blessed of all mysteries! I trust that many of us understand it—may the Holy Spirit reveal it to any who know it not!

**28.** *Whom we preach.* That is, Christ. It is not so much *what* we preach as *whom* we preach. We preach the Person of Christ—“whom we preach”—

**28, 29.** *Warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working, which works in me mightily.* [See Sermon #914, Volume 16—WORK IN US AND WORK BY US—Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.] There will never be any mighty work come *from* us unless there is first a mighty work *in* us—no man truly labors for souls unless the Holy Spirit has first worked mightily in him.

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# THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

## NO. 839

DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 1, 1868,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“He is the head of the body, the church.”*  
*Colossians 1:18.*

As if to show us that this title of “Head of the Church” is to be held in highest esteem, it is here placed in connection with the loftiest honors of our Lord Jesus. In the same breath the Son of God is styled “the image of the invisible God,” “the first-born of every creature,” the Creator of all existence, and then, “the head of the body, the church.” We dare not, therefore, think slightly of this title, nor do we hesitate to assert that any levity with regard to it would be as disgraceful as the profane use of any other name of our Divine Lord. For any *mortal* to assume it to himself, we conceive would be equal in blasphemy to the assumption of the mediatorial office—and we should be no more shocked to hear a man claim to be “the Creator of all things,” than we are now when a *mortal* is designated, “Head of the Church.”

What is the Church? The word signifies an assembly. The Church of Jesus Christ is an assembly of faithful men, the whole company of God’s chosen, His called out ones, the entire community of true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Wherever true Believers are, there is a part of the Church. Wherever such men are not, whatever organization may be in existence, there is no Church of Jesus Christ. The Church is no corporation of priests, or confederacy of unconverted men—it is the assembly of those whose names are written in Heaven. Any assembly of faithful men is a Church.

The aggregate of all these assemblies of faithful men make up the one Church which Jesus Christ has redeemed with His most precious blood, and of which HE is the sole and *only* Head. Part of that Church is in Heaven, triumphant! Part on earth, militant—but these differences of place make no division as to real *unity*. There is but one Church above, beneath. Time creates no separation—the Church is always one—one Church of the Apostles, one Church of the Reformers, one Church of the first century, one church of the latter days, and of this one, only Church, and *Jesus Christ* is the one only Head.

**I. WHAT IS MEANT BY OUR LORD’S HEADSHIP OF THE CHURCH?** That shall be very briefly our first subject of thought. We understand this headship to be the representation of the Church as a body. We speak of counting heads, meaning thereby *persons*—the head represents the whole body. God has been pleased to deal with mankind as a community and His great Covenant transactions have been with men in a body—not with separate individuals. That is to say, at the first creation God did not so much deal with each particular person of the human race as with the whole race represented in one man, namely, the first Adam.

It was so ordained that the race should be bound up in his loins, to stand if he stood, to fall if he fell. Therefore, my Brethren, the Fall, hence original sin, hence the sorrows of this life. In order to salvation, which,

perhaps, was only possible because we did not fall *singly* (for the devils falling singly and separately are reserved without hope of mercy unto everlasting fire), God instituted a *second* federation, of which Jesus Christ is the Head. The Apostle calls Him the second Adam. He is the Head of that company of mankind who are His chosen—His redeemed who are known in this world by being led to believe in Him, and are ultimately gathered into His rest.

Now, Jesus Christ stands to His Church in the same position as Adam stood to his posterity. They are chosen in Him, accepted in Him and preserved in Him—“Saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.” As His own words declare it, “Because I live, you shall live also.” In the following chapters of the Epistle before us, the Apostle shows that the saints are buried with Jesus, risen with Him and quickened with Him. Even more explicit is he in the fifth of Romans, where the headship of Adam and of Jesus are compared and contrasted.

Our Lord is Head in a mystical sense, explained in Colossians 2:19: “The Head, from which all the body by joints and hands having nourishment ministered, and knit together increases with the increase of God.” The head is to the body indispensable to life—it is the seat of mental life, the temple of the soul. Even so Jesus Christ is the vitalizing Head of all His people. “He is our life.” “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” The life of every member of the mystical body depends upon the life of the mystical Head. Through Jesus Christ every living child of God derives his spiritual life. Not one true member of the Church lives by a life of his own. “For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Separation from Christ is spiritual death, “If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered.”

The head mystically is not merely the *source* of life and the seat of sensation, but it is the throne of supreme government. It is from the brain that the mandate is issued which uplifts the hand or bids it fall by the side. Man walks or speaks, or sleeps, or rises from his couch according to the dictate of that mysterious royal something which finds a place for itself within the head. Thus in the true Church of God, Jesus Christ is the great directing Head. From Him the only binding commands go forth. To Him all the really spiritual yield a cheerful homage. His members delight to do the will of their Head.

The whole fabric of the Church, actuated by His life and being filled with His Spirit, most readily concedes to Him that in all things He shall have the preeminence. In proportion as Christians are truly united to Jesus they are perfectly governed by Him, and it is only because of the old nature which abides in separation from Christ that Believers offend and transgress. In so far as they are *spiritual* men, so far does Jesus rule them as the Head governs all the members of the body. The Head is also the glory of the body. There the chief beauty of manhood dwells. The Divine image is best seen in the countenance—the face is the distinguishing glory of man.

Man holds his head erect—his countenance is not turned towards the earth like the beast—it glows with intelligence. It is the index of an immortal mind. Beauty chooses as her favored seat the features of the countenance. Majesty and tenderness, wisdom and love, courage and compassion here hang out their ensigns—all the Graces choose the head as their favored dwelling place. In this sense, right well is our Lord saluted as the

“Head.” He is fairer than the children of men—Divine Grace is poured into His lips. In Jesus Christ all the beauty of the Church is summed up. What were His Church without Him? A carcass—a ghastly corpse bereft of all its glory—because divided from its Head.

What were all the good, and great, and excellent men who have ever lived without Christ? So many ciphers upon a writing table—they count for nothing until their Lord, as the great Unit—is put before them to give them power and value! Then, indeed, they swell to a mighty sum—but without Him they are less than nothing and vanity! An uncomely thing would be the Church of God if she were not comely with the comeliness which Jesus imparts to her! His head is as the most fine gold! His Countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars! He is the chief among 10,000, and the altogether lovely—glorious is that body of which He is the crown and excellence! Well may the Church be called the fairest among women when her Head thus excels all the beauties of earth and Heaven!

Another figure which is used to describe the Headship of Christ to the Church is the conjugal. As the Lord made Eve out of the flesh of Adam, so has He taken the Church out of the side of Christ Jesus, and she is of Him as Eve was of Adam—she is of His flesh and of His bones. A mysterious union has been established between Christ and His Church which is constantly compared to that of marriage: “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church: and He is the Savior of the body.” Jesus is the Bridegroom—His Church is His Bride. They are espoused, one to another. In bonds of love they are bound forever to each other and they are alike with sacred expectation waiting for the marriage day when shall be accomplished the eternal purpose of God and the desire of the Redeemer.

As the husband exercises a headship in the house—not at all (when the relationship is rightly carried out) tyrannical or magisterial, but a government founded upon the rule of nature and endorsed by the consent of *love*—even so Jesus Christ rules in His Church. Not as a despotic lord, compelling and constraining His subject bride against her will, but as a husband well-beloved, obtaining obedience voluntarily from the heart of the beloved one, being in all things so admired and had in esteem as to win an undisputed preeminence! Such conjugal headship is illustrated by the Word of God in the old prophecy, “You shall call Me Ishi, and shall call Me no more Baali.” Baali and Ishi both mean *lord*, but the sense differs. The one is a mere ruler, the other a beloved husband.

Jesus Christ’s kingdom is no tyranny! His scepter is not made of iron. He rules not with blows and curses and threats, but His scepter is of silver and His rule is love. The only chains He uses are the chains of His constraining Grace. His dominion is *spiritual* and extends over willing hearts who delight to bow before Him and to give Him the honor due unto His name. These, I think, are the senses in which this word, “headship,” is used. But there remains one other, these former all qualifying this last, upon which I intend to dwell at some length this morning. Christ is the Head of His Church as King in Zion. In the midst of the Church of God the supreme government is vested in the Person of Christ. “One is your Master, even Christ, and all you are brethren.”

The Church is the kingdom of God among men. It is purely spiritual—comprehending only spiritual men—and existing only for spiritual objects.

And who is its King? None but Jesus! We can truly say, as they did of old who proclaimed the Kingship of the Crucified, "We have another King, one Jesus." To Him the assemblies of the saints pay all regal honor and at His Throne the entire Church bows itself, saluting Him as Master and Lord. To no other do we render spiritual obeisance. Christ only and solely is King upon Zion's hill, set there by eternal decree, maintained in that position by infinite power and appointed to remain upon the Throne till every enemy shall be made His footstool.

I wish I had eloquence, this morning, that I might bear worthy witness to the crown-rights of King Jesus in His Church! I know no subject which is more necessary to insist upon in these eventful times. Let Jesus be acknowledged as the *only* Head of the Church and the way out of the present political debate which agitates our nation is clear enough. Ignorance of this Truth of God blinds many! It makes them labor with all their heart for a bad cause, under the notion that they are doing God service. To know this Truth is to hold a most weighty trust with which we must not trifle.

Martyrs have bled for this Truth! Scotland's heather has been stained in 10,000 places, and her waters have been dyed crimson for the defense of this weighty doctrine. Let us not be slow with unshaken courage to declare, yet again, that kings and princes and parliaments have no lawful jurisdiction over the Church of Jesus Christ! That it beseems not the best of monarchs to claim those royal prerogatives which God has given to His only begotten Son. Jesus alone is the Head of His spiritual kingdom, the Church!

And all others who come within her pale to exercise power are but usurpers and Antichrist—and not for one moment to be respected in their usurped authority by the true Church of the living God! Some Churches have not learned this lesson, but are held in leash like dogs by their masters. They crouch down at the feet of the State to eat the crumbs which fall from Mammon's table! And if they are cuffed and beaten by the powers that be, well do they deserve it—and I would almost pray that the whip may fall upon them yet more heavily till they learn to appreciate liberty and are willing to take off the dog collar of the State and be free from human domination!

If they lose a little wealth they will win the solid gold of God's own favor, and the abiding power of His Spirit, which they cannot expect to have while they are traitors to King Jesus and own not the sole and only Headship of Immanuel in the Church.

**II.** We shall now, therefore, in the second place, come to look a little into this Headship of Jesus Christ in a *regal* sense, as to WHAT IT IMPLIES. Since Christ is the Head of His body, the Church, He alone can determine doctrines for her. Nothing is to be received as Divinely warranted except it comes with His stamp upon it. It is nothing, my Brethren, to the faithful servant of Jesus Christ that a certain dogma comes down to him with the gray antiquity of the ages to make it venerable. Like a sensible man, the Christian respects antiquity, but like a loyal subject of his King, he does not so *bow* before antiquity as to let it become ruler in Zion instead of the living Christ!

A multitude of good men may meet together, and they may, in their judgment, propound a dogma and assert it to be *essential* and undoubted. And they may even threaten perils most abundant to those who receive

not their verdict! But if the dogma was not authorized long before they decided it—if it were not written in the *Bible*—the decision of the learned council amounts to nothing! All the fathers, and doctors, and divines, and confessors put together cannot add a word to the faith once delivered unto the saints! Yes, I venture to say that the unanimous assent of all the saints in Heaven and earth would not suffice to make a *single* doctrine binding upon conscience unless Jesus had so determined!

In vain do men say, “So did the early Church”—the early Church has no supremacy over us! It is to no purpose to quote Origen or Augustine! Quote the Inspired Apostles and the doctrine is established, but not otherwise! In the Church of God it is never sufficient to say, “So thinks Martin Luther.” Who was Martin Luther? A servant of Jesus Christ and nothing more! It is not sufficient to say, “So teaches John Calvin,” for who is John Calvin? Has he shed his blood for you, or is he your master? His opinion is to be *respected* as the opinion of your fellow servant, but in no respect as a doctor or authoritative teacher in the Church—for Christ *alone* is Rabbi, and we are to call no man Master upon earth!

Suppose I have received a Truth of God from the very man who was the means of my conversion? I am bound, in candor and affection, to give all respect to him because of the relationship which exists between us. But I must take heed lest this declines into *idolatry*, and I, myself, become nothing more than a receiver of the Truth of God as the word of *man*, instead of accepting it as the Word of *God*. I am, therefore, in the most candid manner, but none the less solicitously, to bring to the test every Truth of God which I have received—whether from my father or mother, or my minister, or from some great man of olden times whose name I have learned to respect—seeking all the while light from above to direct me aright.

*Nothing* is doctrine to the Church of God—nothing which has not been taught in the *Scriptures*. To Christians it is nothing to say that certain doctrines are taught in books of common prayer, or of conference discipline, or of systematic theology. To us it is of small account that either Presbytery, or the Episcopacy, or Independency have put their stamp upon a certain form of teaching. Authority is no more to us than the snap of a man’s finger unless the Truth thus commended derives *certainty* from the testimony of Jesus Christ Himself, who is the Head of His body the Church!

So next, since He is the Head, He only can legislate as to the Church. In a State, if any knot of persons should profess to make laws for the kingdom, they would be laughed at! And if they should for a moment attempt to enforce their own rules and regulations in defiance of the laws of the country, they would be amenable to punishment. Now the Church of God has no power whatever to make laws for *herself*, since she is not her own Head—and no one has any right to make laws for her, for no one is her Head but Christ. Christ alone is the Law-maker of the Church and no rule or regulation in the Christian Church stands for anything unless in its spirit, at least, it has the mind of Christ to support and back it up.

Such-and-such a thing has been thought to be right in the Church, and therefore it has been laid down and made prescriptive—the *tradition* of the fathers has established a certain custom. What then? Why this—that if we can distinctly see that the custom and prescription are not according to the tenor of Holy Scripture and the Spirit of Christ, neither of

them are anything to us! But what if the custom is supported by all the good men of every age? I say that matters *nothing* if the Lord has not taught it! Our conscience is not to be bound! If a law were backed up by 50,000 times as many as all the saints it would have no authority upon the conscience even of the weakest Christian if not laid down by our King Himself! And the violation of such a commandment of men would be no sin but might, indeed, become a Christian *duty* in order to let men see that we are not the servants of men, but the servants of Jesus Christ the Lord!

In spiritual things it is of the utmost importance to keep this fact clear—that nonconformity is only *sinful* when it refuses to conform to the *will of Christ*—and conformity itself is a great sin when it obeys a rule which is not of the Lord's ordaining! When we meet together in Church Meetings we cannot make laws for the Lord's kingdom! We dare not attempt it! Such necessary regulations as may be made for carrying out our Lord's commands—to meet for worship and to proclaim the Gospel—are commendable because they are acts necessary to obedience to His highest laws. But even these minor details are not tolerable if they clearly violate the spirit and mind of Jesus Christ.

He has given us *spiritual* guides rather than legal rubrics and fettering liturgies! And He has left us at liberty to follow the directions of His own free Spirit. But if we make a regulation, thinking it to be very wise—if it is contrary to the Spirit of our Lord—the rule is itself evil and is not to be borne with! In such a case the Church has trenched upon the rights of her Head, and has done what she ought not to have done. She has, in effect, snatched from His hand the scepter and set up a schism. Law-making in the Church was finished in that day when the curse was pronounced on him who should take from or add to the Word of God! Christ alone is the legislator of His Church—none but He!

But I go further and venture to say that Christ is not only the Legislator of the Church, and has left to us His Statute-book, sufficient to guide us in every dilemma, but He is also the living Administrator in the Church. He is not here, it is true, but as monarchs often administrate through lieutenants, so the Lord Jesus administers through His ever-living Spirit who dwells in the hearts of His people. You are not to think of Christ as of One who is dead and buried. If He were here on earth I suppose nobody would claim to be the Head of the Church but Himself. His Presence would at once overawe every pretender—and now, though He is not here in Person—yet He is not dead!

He lives! He sits on the Throne prepared for Him at the right hand of the Father! In Spirit He is here. "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." And what must the true Head of the Church think when He sees another put up into His Throne and impiously called by His title? What must the living Head moving in the midst of the Church feel in regard to such a blasphemous intrusion as that? He, the Holy Spirit, is the Vicegerent of Christ, the Representative of the absent Son of Man!

And how does this Spirit administer the Laws of God? I answer, through His people, for the Holy Spirit dwells in true Believers! And when they meet together as the Lord's servants and humbly ask His guidance, they may expect to have it—and opening the Statute-Book and seeing plain directions as to their course of action, they may be quite sure that what they do has their Master's sanction! If they look, first of all, for the

direction in their Lord's Law-Book and next seek to be instructed as to its meaning by the Holy Spirit—though they are many minds—they shall be led as one man to choose that course of action which shall be after the mind of Christ.

Acting humbly and obediently—not on their own authority but in the authority of Jesus Christ, who, by His Spirit still rules in His Church—Believers practically show Christ, still, to be the only Head of His Church as to actual administration as well as to legislation. The sole authority of Jesus Christ in all respects must be maintained rigorously, but Churches are very apt to be guided by something else. Some would have us guided by *results*. We have heard a discussion upon the question whether or not we should continue missionary operations, since there are so few converted! How can the question ever be raised while the Master's orders run thus—"Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature"?

Spoken by the mouth of Jesus, our Ruler, that command stands good, and the *results* of missions can have no effect upon loyal minds either one way or the other as to their prosecution! If from this day for the next 10,000 years not a single soul should be converted to God by foreign missions—if there still remained a Church of Christ, it would be her duty with increasing vigor to thrust her sons forward into the mission field because her duty is *not* measured by the *result*, but by the imperial *authority* of Christ!

Equally so the Church is not to be regulated by the *times*. We are told by some that this age requires a different kind of preaching from that of a hundred years ago—and that 200 years ago, in Puritan times, doctrines were suitable which are exploded now. We are told the minister must keep abreast of the age—this is a thoughtful and philosophic period and the preacher must therefore *philosophize* and bring forth his own thinking rather than "mere declamation"—which is the learned name for a plain declaration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ! But, Sirs, it is not so! Our King is the same and the doctrines He has given us have not been changed by His authority, nor the rules He has laid down reversed by His proclamation!

He is the same yesterday, today, and forever! Let the times be polished or uncouth. Let them become philosophical or sink into barbarism—our duty is still the same, in solemn loyalty to Jesus Christ, to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and Him Crucified! But the discoveries of science, we are told, have materially affected belief and therefore we should change our ways accordingly as philosophy changes. No, it must not be so! This is a stumbling stone and a rock of offense against which he who stumbles shall be broken. We still have the same King, still the same laws, still the same teaching of the Word—and we are to deliver this teaching after the same sort and in the same spirit!

*Semper idem* must be our motto—always the same, always keeping close to Jesus Christ and glorifying Him—for *He* and not the *times*, not the *philosophy* and not the *wit* of man must rule and govern the Church of God! If we shall do this, if any Church shall do this—namely, take its Truth from Jesus' lips, live according to Jesus' Word, and go forward in His name—such a Church cannot, by any possibility, fail, for the failure of such a Church would be the failure of the Master's own authority! Broth-

ers and Sisters, He has told us if we keep His commandments we shall abide in His love!

He will be with us always, even to the end of the world! And He has given to His Church His Holy Spirit according to the fullness of those words which He uttered when He breathed on His Apostles, "Whoever sins you remit, they are remitted unto them; and whoever sins you retain, they are retained." So then, a Church acting for Christ, with His authority denouncing the judgments of God upon sin, shall find those judgments follow. And opening the treasure house of God's mercy to those who seek Jesus Christ by faith, those treasures shall be freely given according to the Church's declaration, which she made in her Master's name.

Go in her *own* name, and she fails! Go in her *Lord's* name, and she succeeds! Take with her His sign manual. Walk in obedience to His Statute-Book, and deliver herself from the lordship of men—and the Church's history shall be written in some such lines as these, "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." I have in these words, I am afraid, rather confusedly stated what I believe Scripture teaches with regard to the Headship of Christ, namely, that He is the *only* teacher of doctrine, the only maker of spiritual laws. That He is the living Administrator of the laws of His own spiritual kingdom and therefore no authority is to be yielded unto the Church but that of Christ—and when we have that authority, and are obedient to it—we need entertain no fear as to the result.

**III.** Thirdly, ON WHAT DOES THIS HEADSHIP REST? Very briefly, it rests on the natural supremacy of Christ's Nature. Who could be Head but Jesus? He is a *perfect* Man, which we are not. He is the first-born among many Brethren, and we are but the younger and weaker. He is God over all, blessed forever and ever. Surely, none but He should be King in Zion since there is no part of the Church which is Divine except its glorious Head!

The headship of Christ is the inevitable and necessary result of His work. Hear how His members sing—

***"You have redeemed our souls with blood,  
Have set the prisoners free.  
Have made us kings and priests to God,  
And we shall reign with You."***

Who could be head but He to whom such praise can be awarded? He has washed us in His blood—He must be Head! He has loved us from before the foundation of the world—He must be Chief. His right hand and His holy arm have gotten Him the victory—let Him be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords! That winepress in which He trod His enemies, till His garments were dyed with blood, was the guarantee to Him that He should sit on His Father's Throne and reign forever and ever!

Moreover, the decree of God has decided this beyond dispute. Read the second Psalm and learn that when the kings of the earth stood up and the rulers took counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, the Lord sitting in the heavens *laughed* at their conspiracy and scorned the gathering of His foes! "Yet," says He, "have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." I will declare the decree—"The Lord has said unto Me, You are My Son; this day have I begotten You." How gloriously the promise reads: "Ask of Me, and I shall give You the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron. You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's ves-

sel.” It is part of the eternal purpose which constituted the Church that Christ should be made its Head. And if there is a Church of the living God, it is also inevitable that of that Church Christ should be the sole Head.

Moreover, Brethren, and but once more—is not our Lord the Head of the Church by universal acclamation and consent of all the members of that Church? We have *never* set up a rival candidate! No heart renewed by His Grace can desire any other king!—

**“Let Him be crowned with majesty  
Who bowed His head to death!  
And be His honors sounded high  
By all things that have breath.”**

Rivals in His blood-bought dominion? Rivals against the Son of David?! Let them be swept away as the smoke! Let them be as driven stubble to His bow!

King Jesus! All hail! Long live the King! Bring forth the royal diadem! See you not how the angels crown Him? Hark you not to the songs of cherubim and seraphim, “For You are worthy, You are worthy to take the book, and loose the seven seals thereof”? Hear you not the everlasting chant of those who have overcome through His blood, “You are worthy, You are worthy, for You were slain and have redeemed us unto God by Your blood”? While the Church on earth joins in the same solemn canticle, “Crown Him, crown Him, crown Him Lord of all, for worthy is the Lamb that was slain.”

By the supremacy of His Nature. By the necessity of His accomplished work. By the decree of the Father. By the universal assent of all the blood-washed, He is the *only* Head of His own Church!

**IV.** What then, Brethren, WHAT THEN, DOES THIS CONDEMN? What does it condemn? It condemns the villainous pretense of a Papal headship! A priest at Rome is the head of the Church of Jesus Christ, indeed! Well, if the Pope is head of the Church—if he is so—then see what, according to Scripture, he is. This Pius Nono is this—he is the head of the body, the Church “who is the *beginning*.” There was nothing, then, before this aforesaid Pius IX?

“The first-born from the dead”? Does he claim to have risen from the dead? “That in all things He might have the preeminence”—is this also the old Italian’s right? “For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell”—blasphemy dares not apply this to the tottering prince whose treasury needs replenishing with Peter’s pence. Yet this is the description of the Person who is the Head of the Church, and, if Pius IX is not all that, he is no head of the Church! But perhaps he is the *second* head? Then Christ’s Church is a monstrous being with two heads!

They may make it out to be three one day, perhaps, and then we will call the thing Cerberus, and Hell Dog, and we shall not be far off from the true idea of Popery. No, but he is the *delegated* head. What for? Why should Christ delegate authority which He can wield Himself? But we *need* a delegation, for Christ is absent. But the Holy Spirit is that delegation, and is *here*. Of all the dreams that ever deluded men, and probably of all blasphemies that ever were uttered, there has never been one which is more absurd and which is more fruitful in all manner of mischief than the idea that the Bishop of Rome can be the head of the Church of Jesus Christ!

No, these popes die, and are not! And how could the Church live if its head were dead? The true Head ever lives and the Church ever lives in Him! But it is affirmed that there must needs be a *visible* headship, and just now we are told every day that we must choose in church matters between the headship of the monarch of England and the headship of the pope at Rome. I beg the gentlemen's pardon—we have no such choice, for when we are asked which we will have to rule us in *spiritual* things, we say, “Neither—neither for a single moment!” We make no bones about the matter, kings and queens are no heads of the Church to us.

We will no more brook spiritual domination from an English premier than from a Romish pope! We are equally opposed to both—all human headship must go down! To our well-beloved queen all honor and reverence as to one of the best of rulers in *civil* affairs. But in *spiritual* affairs in the Church of Christ she has no ruling power—what she may have in the Church of England is another question. To us it makes no matter whether it is man or woman—whether it is prince or priest—we will have neither czar, emperor, queen, pope, seraph or angel to reign in the Church of Jesus Christ!

The Church has no lawful governor or supreme Lord but Jesus Christ Himself. Our Lord, as it seems to me, puts this so plainly in the Word of God that I marvel men who believe in the Bible should think the State could be at the head of the Church! The State-Church party has placed a Bible with a crown and a scepter upon their posters! It is suggestive that the Bible is closed—for if Englishmen were once to read it, it would be fatal to the cause which now claims it—since one of the Truths of God they would read would be this—“My kingdom is not of this world.” And they would hear Christ say, “Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's”—that is, yield all civil obedience to the civil authority, “but unto God the things that are God's.”

Leave the Lord to rule in the kingdom of mind and spirit, and let Caesar keep his kingdom of civil government! Let the State do its work and never interfere with the Church! And let the Church do her work and never interfere with, or be interfered with, by the State! The two kingdoms are separate and distinct. Broad lines of demarcation are always drawn, throughout the whole of the New Testament, between the spiritual and the temporal power—and the mischief is when men cannot see this.

Christ is the Head of the Church, not anyone who represents the State. Brethren, just think for a minute what mischief this doctrine of the headship of the State has done. Time was when men could hardly be parish ushers without coming to take the Sacrament at the established Church. Oh, the multiplied hypocrisies which were perpetrated every day by graceless men who came to qualify themselves for office by taking the emblems of our holy faith when they knew not Christ! Such things are more or less inevitable to the system. Think, again, what persecutions have risen out of this error. You cannot put any sect into a position of ascendancy but it falls into persecution—all sects have persecuted, in turn, when so tempted.

There is not a pin to choose between one and the other, except, as I sometimes say, the Baptists have never persecuted because they have never had an opportunity. But I will not insist even upon that. It is in human nature to do ill when the civil arm is ready to crush conscience, and therefore Christ has taken the temptation out of the way and put it

out of the possibility of His people, if they keep close to His rule, so much as to touch the carnal weapon. The weapons of their warfare, He tells them, are not carnal but *spiritual* and therefore mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. What a degradation to the Church of Christ to think of having any other Head but Christ!

Ah, Brothers and Sisters, if the monarch were the most holy and godly person that ever lived, I should tremble for him exceedingly that such a person should in any sense be styled the Head of the Church! How could such a person *pray*? How could a poor sinner—and such the best man still is—come before Christ and pray to Him and say, “Lord, You know I am the head of Your Church”? It seems to me to be such an atrocious claim, such a horrible profanity! I would not, for twice 10,000 worlds, touch that title with so much as the tip of my finger if I hoped to be saved! I dare not expose my friend, or even my enemy, to the awful risk he must make assuming such a title!

I judge no one, God forbid I should! But if I saw in this world a man absolutely perfect, full of Divine knowledge and light, and I were asked by him, “Shall I assume that title?” I should go down on my knees and say, “For God’s sake, and for your own soul’s sake, touch it not, for how can you, with your light, and knowledge and love to Christ, take from Him one of His grandest names?” But what shall I say when the monarch is the opposite? And such cases have occurred. I need not take you far back in history. The name of George IV has no remarkable odor of sanctity about it—and the same may be said of Charles II—I never heard historians say that he was eminent in godliness.

But yet these men were heads of the Church! I shudder at being compelled to remember such an infamous fact. Men, whose character is not to be thought of without a blush on the cheek of modesty, were heads of the Church of Jesus Christ! God have mercy on this land for having fallen so low as this, for I know not that heathen countries have ever blasphemed God more than we have done in allowing heartless debauchers to take upon themselves the name of “Head of the Church of Christ”! No, my Brethren, this cannot be endured by us in any Church with which we commune! We repudiate it! We shake off the abomination as Paul shook off the viper from his hand into the fire!

The same rebuke is due to that which has been tolerated in many Churches, namely, the headship of great religious teachers. Sometimes great teachers, while yet alive, have been practically regarded as the supreme arbiters of the Church. Their will was law, apart from the Book. Their decree stood fast, apart from the Scripture. All this was evil! There are certain Churches at this day which reverence extremely the names of dead men. “The Fathers”—are they not by some thought to be as great as the Apostles? The names of John Wesley, and John Calvin and others, I fear, very often occupy the place which belongs to Jesus Christ. Let every Church of Jesus Christ now declare that she follows not *men* but obeys her Master alone.

Mark you, Brothers and Sisters, the truth which I have brought out somewhat strongly equally applies to the Church itself, for the Church is not her own head—she has no right to act upon her own judgment apart from the statutes of her King! She must come to the Bible—everything is there for her. She has no right to use her own judgment apart from the Master. She must go to the Master. She is a *servant* and the Master is su-

preme. The Church's power is twofold. It is a power to *testify* to the world what Christ has revealed. She is set as a witness and she must act as such. She has, next, a *ministerial* power by which she carries out the will of Christ, and does His bidding as Christ's servant and minister.

A certain number of servants meet in the servants' hall—they have an order given to do such work—and they have also orders given them how to do it. They then consult with each other as to the minor details—how they can best observe the Master's rule and do His bidding. They are perfectly right in so doing. But suppose they began to consult about whether the objects proposed by the Master were good, or whether the rules which He had laid down might not be altered! They would at once become rebellious and be in danger of discharge. So a Church met together to consult how to carry out the Master's will and how to enforce His laws does rightly.

But a Church meeting to make *new* laws, or a Church meeting to rule according to its own judgment and opinion—imagining that its decision will have weight—has made a mistake and placed itself in a false position. The one doctrine which I have sought to bring forward is this—that He, alone, who *bought* the Church, and *saved* the Church is to *rule* the Church.

**V.** But if so, WHAT IS THE LESSON WHICH IT TEACHES TO EACH ONE HERE? Does not it make each of you enquire, "If the entire Church is thus to yield obedience to Christ, and to no one else, am *I* yielding such obedience? I claim to be Christian, but am I a Christian of that prejudiced sort who follows that which they are brought up to, and so acknowledge the rules of *mothers and fathers* instead of the rule of *Christ*? Have I brought what I avow to be the Truth of God to the touchstone of Scripture? Did I ever spend a quarter of an hour in weighing my cherished opinions?" I am afraid the great mass of Christians have never done this—but have sucked in their religion with their mother's milk and nothing further.

Again, if I am a Christian, am I in the habit of judging what I ought to do by my own whims and wishes, or do I judge by the Statute-Book of the King? Many say they do not like this and do not like that—as if that had anything to do with it! What are your likes and dislikes? You are a *servant* and bound to give up your will to the Master! If Christ gives a command which you imagine to be hard because it does not chime in with your love of ease—my Brothers and Sisters, will you not, as servants of the Master, put your whims aside and endeavor to follow Him? Oh, it is a blessed life to live—to be no longer the servant of *men* and of *self*—but to go to Christ daily in prayer, and say, "What I know not, teach me, Lord."

Then you may laugh at Satan's rage and face a frowning world, for the Master will never leave those who cleave to Him! If a man loves the testimonies and commandments of the Most High, God shall be his buckler, his shield, and his high tower. But if he turns aside to his own imaginings, his fall shall be certain! May the Lord keep the Church in this matter, and her day of victory shall soon come. May Christ be her only Head and her triumph draws near! I can see the morning breaking—yonder are the first streaks of light upon the sky—the Master is coming because the Church begins to acknowledge Him—and then shall her happy days begin and the days of her mourning shall be ended forever and ever.

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

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

***“For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.”  
Colossians 1:19.***

***“And of His fullness we have all received, and Grace for Grace.”  
John 1:16.***

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

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

The next step in the plan of salvation is this—that after the fullness of God has come to man in the Person of His Son, everyone that comes to Him by faith receives His Divine Grace. Salvation is not by what you *bring* to Christ, but by what you *take* from Him. You are to be receivers first,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

He has not provided a scanty garment which may barely hide your nakedness, but He has brought forth the best robe and has procured ear-

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

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

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

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

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

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

God grant us to know this first Truth of God that there is a fullness in Christ—and in the strength of that fullness we may cry—“Forward and upward!”

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

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

your Master! And if, even in your degeneracy, you would cast yourselves upon your unchanging God, you would rise to more than the strength of your sires and do yet greater things than they!

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

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

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

Furthermore, our Churches believe that there is a great fullness in Christ and that *sometimes* they ought to enjoy it. The progress of Christianity is to be by tides which ebb and flow. There are to be revivals like the spring and these must alternate with long lethargies like the winter. O accursed Unbelief, will you always pervert the Truth of God? Will you never understand this Word of God—"It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness *dwell*"? It is *not* the Lord's purpose that a fullness should reside in Jesus during revivals and then withdraw. Jesus Christ is the same

yesterday, today, and forever! The highest state of revival should be the normal condition of the Church. When her martyrs are most self-sacrificing, her missionaries most daring, her ministers most bold, her members most consecrated, she is, even then, below her standard—she has not fully reached her high calling—to come down from her position would be sin!

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

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

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

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

where we feel at home, where we are glad to go often! Yes, where we would love to abide and never to go away, but to be forever receiving of Him.

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

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

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

Since your conversion, dear Brothers and Sisters, *everything* good you have ever had, you have received from our Lord. What? Have you drunk out of your own cistern? What treasure have you found in your own fields? Nakedness, poverty, misery, death—these are the only possessions of Nature. But life, riches, fullness, joy—these are gifts of Divine Grace through Jesus Christ! Are you accepted before God? He justified you! Have you been kept? He has preserved you! Are you sanctified? He has cleansed you by His blood! Do you know, by full assurance, your interest in the Father’s love? He gave you that assurance! All you have and all you ever *will* have—all that every saint that shall ever be born shall have that is worth having comes out of the fullness of Christ!

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

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

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

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

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

sent attainments! I pant to know my Lord better! I am discontented with what I have done for Him up to now! I long to do 10 times more for His Glory!

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

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

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

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

one that finds great spoil in having picked up one solitary soul after 12 months' ministry!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—*John 1:1-34*.  
HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—436, 415, 249.**

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# ALL FULLNESS IN CHRIST

## NO. 978

A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING,  
 FEBRUARY 26, 1871,  
 BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
 AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

***“For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.”***  
***Colossians 1:19.***

THE preacher is under no difficulties this morning as to the practical object to be aimed at in his discourse. Every subject should be considered with an object. Every discourse should have a definite spiritual aim, otherwise we do not so much preach as play at preaching. The connection plainly indicates what our drift should be. Read the words immediately preceding the text, and you find it declared that our Lord Jesus is in all things to have the pre-eminence. We would seem, by this text, to yield honor and glory to the ever-blessed Redeemer, and enthrone Him in the highest seat in our hearts.

O that we may all be in an adoring frame of mind, and may give Him the pre-eminence in our thoughts, beyond all things or persons in Heaven or earth. Blessed is he who can do or think the most to honor such a Lord as our Immanuel! The verse which succeeds the text shows us how we may best promote the glory of Christ, for since He came into this world that He might reconcile the things in Heaven and the things in earth to Himself, we shall best glorify Him by falling in with His great design of mercy. By seeking to bring sinners into a state of reconciliation with God, we are giving to the great Reconciler the pre-eminence.

Our Gospel shall be the Gospel of reconciliation on this occasion. May the reconciling word come home by the power of Christ's Spirit to many, so that hundreds of souls may from this day forth glorify the great Ambassador who has made peace by the blood of His Cross. The text is a great deep, we cannot explore it, but we will voyage over its surface joyously, the Holy Spirit giving us a favorable wind. Here are plenteous provisions far exceeding those of Solomon, though at the sight of that royal profusion Sheba's queen felt that there was no more spirit in her, and declared that the half had not been told to her.

It may give some sort of order to our thoughts if they fall under four heads. *What* is here spoken of—“all fullness.” *Where* is it placed—“*in Him*,” that is, in the Redeemer. We are told *why*, because, “it pleased the Father.” And we have also a note of time, or when, in the word, “dwell.” “It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.” Those catch words, *what*, *where*, *why*, and *when*, may help you to remember the run of the sermon.

I. First, then, let us consider the subject before us, or WHAT—“It pleased the Father that in Him should all *fullness* dwell.” Two mighty words—“*fullness*,” a substantial, comprehensive, expressive word in itself—and “all,” a great little word including everything. When combined in the expression, “*all fullness*,” we have before us a superlative wealth of

meaning. Blessed be God for those two words! Our hearts rejoice to think that there is such a thing in the universe as “all fullness,” for in the most of mortal pursuits utter barrenness is found.

“Vanity of vanity, all is vanity.” Blessed be the Lord forever that He has provided a fullness for us, for in us, by nature, there is all emptiness and utter vanity. “In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing.” In us there is a lack of all merit, an absence of all power to procure any, and even an absence of will to procure it if we could. In these respects human nature is a desert—empty, and void, and filled with waste—inhabited only by the dragon of sin, and bitter sorrow.

Sinner, Saint, to you both alike these words, “all fullness,” sound like a holy hymn. The accents are sweet as those of the angel-messenger when he sang, “Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy.” Are they not stray notes from celestial sonnets? “All fullness.” You, Sinner, are all emptiness and death. You, Saint, would be so if it were not for the “all fullness” of Christ of which you have received. Therefore, both to saint and sinner the words are full of hope. There is joy in these words to every soul conscious of its sad estate, and humbled before God. I will ring the silver bell again, “all fullness,” and another note charms us—it tells us that Christ is substance, and not shadow—fullness, and not foretaste.

This is good news for us, for nothing but realities will meet our case. Types may instruct, but they cannot actually save. The patterns of the things in the heavens are too weak to serve our turn. We need the heavenly things themselves. No bleeding bird nor slaughtered bullock, nor running stream, nor scarlet wool and hyssop, can take away our sins—

***“No outward forms can make me clean,  
The leprosy lies deep within.”***

Ceremonies under the old dispensation were precious because they set forth the realities yet to be revealed. But in Christ Jesus we deal with the realities *themselves*, and this is a happy circumstance for us. For both our sins and our sorrows are real, and only substantial mercies can counteract them. In Jesus we have the substance of all that the symbols set forth. He is our Sacrifice, our Altar, our Priest, our Incense, our Tabernacle, our All in All. The Law had “the shadow of good things to come,” but in Christ we have “the very image of the things” (Heb. 10:1). What transport is this to those who so much feel their emptiness that they could not be comforted by the mere representation of a Truth, or the pattern of a Truth, or the symbol of a Truth, but must have the very substance itself!

“The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). I must return to the words of the text again, for I perceive more honey dropping from the honeycomb. “All fullness” is a wide, far-reaching, all-comprehending term, and in its abundant store it offers another source of delight. What joy these words give to us when we remember that our vast necessities demand a fullness, yes, “*all* fullness,” before they can be supplied! A little help will be of no use to us, for we are altogether without strength. A limited measure of mercy will only mock our misery.

A low degree of Divine Grace will never be enough to bring us to Heaven, defiled as we are with sin, beset with dangers, encompassed with infirmities, assailed by temptations, molested with afflictions, and all the

while bearing about with us “the body of this death.” But “all fullness,” yes, *that* will suit us! Here is exactly what our desperate estate demands for its recovery. Had the Savior only put out His finger to help our exertions, or had He only stretched out His hand to perform a measure of salvation’s work—while He left us to complete it—our soul had forever dwelt in darkness.

In these words, “all fullness,” we hear the echo of His death-cry, “It is finished.” We are to bring *nothing*, but to find all in Him. Yes, the fullness of all in Him—we are simply to receive out of His fullness Grace for Grace. We are not asked to contribute, nor required to make up deficiencies, for there are none to make up—all, ALL is laid up in Christ! All that we shall want between this place and Heaven, all we could need between the gates of Hell—where we lay in our blood—to the gates of Heaven, where we shall find welcome admission, is treasured up for us in the Lord Christ Jesus—

**“Great God, the treasures of Your love  
Are everlasting mines,  
Deep as our helpless miseries are,  
And boundless as our sins.”**

Did I not say well that the two words before us are a noble hymn? Let them, I pray you, lodge in your souls for many days. They will be blessed guests. Let these two wafers, made with honey, lie under your tongue. Let them satisfy your souls, for they are heavenly bread. The more you bemoan your emptiness the sweeter these words will be. The more you feel that you must draw largely upon the bank of Heaven, the more will you rejoice that your drafts will never diminish the boundless store—for still will it retain the name and the quality of “*all fullness*.”

The expression used here denotes that there is in Jesus Christ the fullness of the Godhead. As it is written, “In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” When John saw the Son of Man in Patmos, the marks of Deity were on Him. “His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow”—here was His eternity! “His eyes were as a flame of fire”—here was His Omniscience! “Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword”—here was the Omnipotence of His Word! “And His countenance was as the sun shines in his strength”—here was His unapproachable and infinite Glory!

He is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. Nothing is too hard for Him. Power, wisdom, truth, immutability, and all the attributes of God are in Him and constitute a fullness inconceivable and inexhaustible. The most enlarged intellect must necessarily fail to compass the personal fullness of Christ as God—therefore we do no more than quote again that noble text—“In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in Him.”

Fullness, moreover, dwells in our Lord not only intrinsically from His nature, but as the result of His mediatorial work. He achieved, by suffering, as well as possessed by nature, a wondrous fullness. He carried on His shoulders the load of our sin. He expiated, by His death, our guilt, and now He has merit with the Father—infinite, inconceivable, a fullness of desert. The Father has stored up in Christ Jesus, as in a reservoir for the use of all His people, His eternal love and His unbounded Grace, that it may come to us through Christ Jesus, and that we may glorify Him. All

power is put into His hands—and life, and light, and Grace, are to the full at His disposal.

“He shuts and no man opens, He opens and no man shuts.” He has received gifts for men, yes, for the righteous also. Not only as the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father is He the possessor of Heaven and earth, and therefore filled with all fullness, but seeing that as the Mediator He has finished our redemption, “He is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” Glory be to His name for this double fullness!

Turn the thought around again, and remember that all fullness dwells in Christ *towards God and towards men*. All fullness towards God and—I mean all that God requires of man. All that contents and delights the eternal mind so that once again, with complacency, He may look down on His creature and pronounce him, “very good.” The Lord looked for grapes in His vineyard, and it brought forth wild grapes. But now, in Christ Jesus, the great Farmer beholds the true vine which brings forth much fruit.

The Creator required obedience, and He beholds in Christ Jesus the Servant who has never failed to do the Master’s will. Justice demanded that the Law should be kept, and, lo, Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believes. Seeing that we had broken the Law, justice required the endurance of the righteous penalty, and Jesus has borne it to the full, for He bowed His head to death—even the death of the Cross. When God made man a little lower than the angels, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life—and so made him immortal—He had a right to expect singular service from so favored a being—a service perfect, joyful, continuous. And our Savior has rendered unto the Father that which perfectly contents Him.

For He cries, “This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” God is more glorified in the Person of His Son than He would have been by an unfallen world. There shines out through the entire universe a display of infinite mercy, justice, and wisdom such as neither the majesty of Nature nor the excellence of Providence could have revealed. His work, in God’s esteem, is honorable and precious. For His righteousness sake, God is well pleased. The Eternal mind is satisfied with the Redeemer’s Person, work, and sacrifice. For “unto the Son, He says, Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity. Therefore God, even Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows” (Heb. 1:8, 9).

What unspeakable consolations arise from this Truth, for, dear Brethren, if we had to render to God something by which we should be accepted, we should be always in jeopardy. But now, since we are “accepted in the Beloved,” we are safe beyond all hazard. And were we to find we should appear before the Most High God, we might still be asking, “Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?”

But now hear the voice which says, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings and offering for sin You would not, nor had pleasure in them.” We hear the same Divine voice add, “Lo, I come to do Your will,” and we re-

joyce as we receive the witness of the Spirit, saying, "By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all," for from now on is it said, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more forever." The all-fullness of Christ is also *man-ward*, and that in respect of both the sinner and the saint. There is a fullness in Christ Jesus which the seeking sinner should behold with joyfulness.

What do you want, Sinner? You want all things, and Christ is All. You want power to believe in Him—He gives power to the faint. You want repentance—He was exalted on high to give repentance as well as remission of sin. You want a new heart—the Covenant runs thus, "A new heart, also, will I give them, and a right spirit will I put within them." You want pardon—behold His streaming wounds wash you and you are clean. You want healing—He is "the Lord that heals you." You want clothing—His righteousness shall become your clothes.

You want preservation—you shall be preserved in Him. You want life, and He has said, "Awake, you that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you life." He is come that we might have life. You want—but indeed, the catalog is much too long for us to read it through at this present time. But be assured though you pile up your necessities till they rise like Alps before you, yet the All-Sufficient Savior can remove all your needs. You may confidently sing—

***"You, O Christ, are all I want,  
More than all in You I find."***

This is true, also, of the saint as well as the sinner. O Child of God, you are now saved, but your wants are not, therefore, removed. Are they not as continuous as your heartbeats? When are we not in want, my Brethren? The more alive we are to God, the more are we aware of our spiritual necessities. He who is, "blind and naked," thinks himself to be "rich and increased in goods"—but let the mind be truly enlightened, by God's Grace—and we feel that we are completely dependent upon the charity of God. Let us be glad, then, as we learn that there is no necessity in our spirit but what is abundantly provided for in the all-fullness of Jesus Christ.

You seek for a higher platform of spiritual attainments. You aim to conquer sin. You desire to be plentiful in praises unto His Glory. You are longing to be useful, you are anxious to subdue the hearts of others unto Christ. Behold the necessary Grace for all this. In the sacred armory of the Son of David behold your battle-ax and your weapons of war. In the stores of Him who is greater than Aaron see the robes in which to fulfill your priesthood. In the wounds of Jesus behold the power with which you may become a living sacrifice. If you would glow like a seraph, and serve like an Apostle, behold the Grace awaiting you in Jesus!

If you would go from strength to strength, climbing the loftiest summits of holiness, behold Grace upon Grace prepared for you! If you are perplexed, it will not be in Christ. If there is any boundary to your holy attainments it is set by yourself. The infinite God Himself gives Himself to you in the Person of His dear Son, and He says to you, "All things are yours." "The Lord is the portion of your inheritance and of your cup." Infinity is ours. He who gave us His own Son has in that very deed given us all things. Has He not said, "I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt; open your mouth wide, and I will fill it"?

Let me remark that this is not only true of saints on earth, but it is true, also, of saints in Heaven, for all the fullness of the Church triumphant is in Christ as well as that of the Church militant. They are nothing even in Heaven without Him. The pure river of the Water of Life of which they drink proceeds out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb. He has made them priests and kings, and in His power they reign. Those snowy robes were washed and made white in His blood. The Lamb is the temple of Heaven, the light of Heaven. His marriage is the joy of Heaven. And the Song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, is the song of Heaven.

Not all the harps above could make a heavenly place if Christ were gone—for He is the Heaven of Heaven, and fills all in all. It pleased the Father that for all saints and sinners all fullness should be treasured up in Christ Jesus. I feel that my text overwhelms me. Men may sail round the world, but who can circumnavigate so vast a subject as this? As far as the east is from the west so wide is its reach of blessings—

***“Philosophers have measured mountains,  
Fathomed the depths of seas, of states, and kings,  
Walked with a staff to Heaven, and traced fountains—  
But there are two vast spacious things,  
The which to measure it does more behoove—  
Yet few there are that sound them—  
Grace and Love.”***

Who is he that shall be able to express all that is meant by our text? For here we have “all” and “fullness”—and in fullness and a fullness in all. The words are both exclusive and inclusive. They deny that there is any fullness elsewhere, for they claim all for Christ. They shut out all others. “It pleased the Father that *in Him* should *all* fullness dwell.” Not in you, you pretended successors of the Apostles, can anything dwell that I need. I can do well enough without you! No, I would not insult my Savior by trading with you, for since “all fullness” is in Him, what can there be in you that I can require?

Go to your dupes who know not Christ—those who possess the exceeding riches of Christ’s Grace will not bow to you. We are “complete in Christ” without you, O hierarchy of bishops! Without you, you conclave of cardinals! And without you, O fallible infallible, unholy Holiness of Rome! He who has all in Christ would be insane, indeed, if he looked for more—or having fullness craved for emptiness. This text drives us from all confidence in men, yes, or even in angels, by making us see that everything is treasured up in Jesus Christ.

Brethren, if there is any good in what is called Catholicism, or in ritualism, or in the modern philosophical novelties, let religionists have what they find there. We shall not envy them, for they can find nothing worth having in their forms of worship or belief but what we must have already in the Person of the all-sufficient Savior. What if their candles burn brightly—the sun itself is ours! What if they are successors of the Apostles—we follow the Lamb Himself wherever He goes! What if they are exceedingly wise—we dwell with the Incarnate Wisdom Himself! Let them go to their cisterns—we will abide by the fountain of Living Water.

But, indeed, there is no light in their luminaries—they do but increase the darkness. They are blind leaders of the blind. They put their sounding

emptiness into competition with the all-fullness of Jesus Christ. They preach another Gospel which is not another. The imprecation of the Apostle be upon them! They add unto the words of God, and He shall add to them its plagues!

While the text is exclusive it is also inclusive. It shuts in everything that is required for time and for eternity for all the blood-bought. It is an ark containing all good things conceivable, yes, and many that are as yet inconceivable. For by reason of our weakness we have not yet conceived the fullness of Christ. Things which you yet have not asked nor even *thought*, He is able to give you abundantly. If you should arrive at the consecration of martyrs, the piety of Apostles, the purity of angels, yet should you never have seen or be able to think of anything pure, lovely, and of good report, that was not already treasured up in Christ Jesus.

All the rivers flow into this sea, for from this sea they came. As the atmosphere surrounds all the earth, and all things live in that sea of air, so all good things are contained in the blessed Person of our dear Redeemer. Let us join to praise Him. Let us extol Him with heart and voice, and let sinners be reconciled unto God by Him. If all the good things are in Him which a sinner can require to make him accountable with God, then let the sinner come at once through such a Mediator!

Let doubts and fears vanish at the sight of the mediatorial fullness. Jesus must be able to save to the uttermost, since all fullness dwells in Him. Come, Sinner—come and receive Him! Believe in Him and you shall find yourself made perfect in Christ Jesus.

***“The moment a sinner believes,  
And trusts in His crucified God,  
His pardon at once he receives,  
Redemption in full through His blood.”***

**II.** Having thus spoken of what, we now turn to consider WHERE. “It pleased the Father that in *Him* should all fullness dwell.” Where else could all fullness have been placed? There was wanted a vast *capacity to contain* “all fullness.” Where dwells there a being with nature capacious enough to compass within himself all fullness? As well might we ask, “Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out Heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?” To Him only could it belong to contain “all fullness,” for He must be equal with God, the Infinite.

How suitable was the Son of the Highest, who “was by Him, as one brought up with Him,” to become the grand storehouse of all the treasures of wisdom, knowledge, Divine Grace, and salvation. Moreover, there was wanted not only capacity to contain, but *immutability to retain* the fullness, for the text says, “It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness *dwell*,” that is, abide, and remain forever. Now if any kind of fullness could be put into us mutable creatures, yet by reason of our frailty we should prove but broken cisterns that can hold no water. The Redeemer is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever—therefore was it meet that all fullness should be placed in Him.

“The Son abides ever.” “He is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek.” “Being made perfect He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all they that obey Him.” “His name shall endure forever: His name

shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed.” Perhaps the sweetest thought is that the “all fullness” is fitly placed in Christ Jesus because in Him there is a *suitability to distribute it*, so that we may *obtain* it from Him. How could we come to God Himself for Grace, for “even our God is a consuming fire”? But Jesus Christ, while God, is also Man like ourselves, truly Man, of a meek lowly spirit, and therefore easily approachable.

They who know Him delight in nearness to Him. Is it not sweet that all fullness should be treasured up in Him who was the friend of publicans and sinners? And who came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost? The Man who took the child up on His knee and said, “Suffer the little children to come unto Me”? The Man who was tempted in all points like as we are? The Man who touched the sick, no, who “bore their sicknesses”? The Man who gave His hands to the nails, and His heart to the spear?

That blessed Man, into the print of whose nails His disciple, Thomas, put his finger, and into whose side he thrust his hand. It is He, the incarnate God, in whom all fullness dwells! Come, then, and receive of Him, you who are the weakest, the most mean, and most sinful of men. Come at once, O Sinner, and fear not!—

**“Why are you afraid to come,  
And tell Him all your case?  
He will not pronounce your doom,  
Nor frown you from His face.  
Will you fear Immanuel?  
Or dread the Lamb of God,  
Who, to save your soul from Hell,  
Has shed His precious blood?”**

Let it be noted here, however, very carefully, that while fullness is treasured up in Christ, it is not said to be treasured up in the *doctrines* of Christ—though they are full and complete—and we need no other teachings when the Spirit reveals the Son in us. Nor is it said to be treasured up in the *commands* of Christ, although they are amply sufficient for our guidance. But it is said, “It pleased the Father that *in Him*,” in His Person, “should all fullness dwell.” In Him, as God Incarnate dwells in all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Not as a myth, a dream, a thought, a fiction, but as a *living, real* Personality. We must lay hold of this.

I know that the fullness dwells in Him officially as Prophet, Priest, and King—but the fullness lies not in the Prophetic mantle, nor in the priestly ephod, nor in the royal vesture—but in the Person that wears all these. “It pleased the Father that *in Him* should all fullness dwell.” You must get to the very Christ in your faith and rest alone in Him, or else you have not reached the treasury wherein all fullness is stored up. All fullness is in Him radically. If there is fullness in His work, or His gifts, or His promises, all is derived from His Person, which gives weight and value to all.

All the promises are yes and amen in *Christ Jesus*. The merit of His death lies mainly in His Person, because He was God who gave Himself for us, and His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree. The excellence of His Person gave fullness to His sacrifice (Heb. 1:3). His power to save at this very day lies in His Person, for “He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him, seeing *He ever lives to make in-*

*tercession for them.*” I desire you to see this, and feel it. For when your soul clasps the pierced feet of Jesus, and looks up into the face more marred than that of any man—even if you cannot understand all His works and offices—yet if you believe in Him you have reached the place wherein all fullness dwells—and of His fullness you shall receive.

Beloved, remember our practical aim. Praise His Person, you Saints! Be you reconciled to God through His Person, you Sinners! You angels, lead us in the song! You spirits redeemed by blood, sing, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,” and our hearts shall keep tune with yours, for we owe the same debt to Him. Glory be unto the Person of the Blessed Lamb. “Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever.”

Would God we could see Him face to face, and adore Him as we would! O Sinners, will you not be reconciled to God through Him, since all fullness is in Him, and He stoops to your weakness, and holds forth His pierced hands to greet you? See Him stretching out both His hands to receive you while He sweetly woos you to come to God through Him! Come unto Him! O come with hasty steps, you Penitents! Come at once, you guilty ones! Who would not be reconciled unto God by such a One as this, in whom all fullness of Grace is made to dwell?

**III.** The third question is, WHY? “*It pleased the Father.*” That is answer enough. He is Sovereign, let Him do as He wills. Ask the reason for election, you shall receive no other than this, “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.” That one answer may reply to ten thousand questions, “It is the Lord, let Him do what seems Him good.” Once “it pleased the Father to bruise Him,” and now, “it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.”

Sovereignty may answer the question sufficiently, but listen! I hear Justice speak. Justice says there was no Person in Heaven or under Heaven so qualified to contain the fullness of Grace as Jesus. None so qualified to be glorified as the Savior, who “made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a Man, humbled Himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross.”

It is but justice that the Grace which He has brought to us should be treasured up in Him. And while Justice speaks, Wisdom will not withhold her voice. Wise are You, O Jehovah, to treasure up Grace in Christ, for to Him men can come. And coming to Him, as unto a living Stone, chosen of God and precious, men find Him precious, also, to their souls. The Lord has laid our sin in the right place, for He has laid it upon one that is mighty, and who is as loving as He is mighty, as ready as He is able to save.

Moreover, in the fitness of things the Father’s pleasure is the first point to be considered, for all things ought to be to the good pleasure of God. It is a great underlying rule of the universe that all things were created for God’s pleasure. God is the Source and Fountain of eternal love, and it is but meet that He should convey it to us by what channel He may elect. Bowing, therefore, in lowly worship at His Throne, we are glad that in this matter the fullness dwells where it perpetually satisfies the decree of Heaven. It is well that, “it pleased the Father.”

Now, Brethren, if it pleased the Father to place all Grace in Christ, let us praise the elect Savior. What pleases God pleases us. Where would you desire to have Grace placed, my Brethren, but in the Well-Beloved? The whole Church of God is unanimous about this. If I could save myself I would not. I would think salvation to be no salvation if it did not glorify Jesus. This is the very crown and glory of being saved—that our being saved will bring honor to Christ! It is delightful to think that Christ will have the glory of all God's Grace.

It were shocking if it were not so. Who could bear to see Jesus robbed of His reward? We are indignant that any should usurp His place, and ashamed of ourselves that we do not glorify Him more. No joy ever visits my soul like that of knowing that Jesus is highly exalted, and that to Him “every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

A sister in Christ, in her kindness and gratitude, used language to me the other day which brought a blush to my cheek, for I felt ashamed to be so undeserving of the praise. She said, “Your ministry profits me because you glorify Christ so much.” Ah, I thought, if you knew how I *would* glorify Him if I could, and how far I fall below what I gladly would do for Him, you would not commend me. I could weep over the best sermons I have ever preached because I cannot extol my Lord enough, and my conceptions are so low, and my words so poor. Oh, if one could but attain really to honor Him, and put another crown upon His head, it were Heaven, indeed!

We are in this agreed with the Father, for if it pleases Him to glorify His Son and we sincerely feel that it pleases us. Ought not those who are yet unrenewed to hasten to be reconciled to God by such a Redeemer? If it pleases the Father to put all Grace in Christ, O Sinner, does it not please you to come and receive it through Christ? Christ is the meeting place for a sinner and his God. God is in Christ, and when you come to Christ, God meets you, and a treaty of peace is made between you and the Most High.

Are you not agreed with God in this—that Christ shall be glorified? Do you not say, “I would glorify Him by accepting, this morning, all His Grace, love, and mercy”? Well, if you are willing to receive Jesus, God has made you willing, and that *proves* His willingness to save you. He is pleased with Christ. Are you pleased with Christ? If so, there is *already* peace between you and God, for Jesus “is our peace.”

**IV.** We must close by dwelling upon the WHEN. When is all fullness in Jesus? It is there in all time—past, present, and to come. “It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness  *dwell.*” Fullness, then, was in Christ of old, is in Christ today, will be in Christ forever. Perpetuity is here indicated. All fullness was, is, shall be in the Person of Jesus Christ. Every saint saved under the old dispensation found the fullness of his salvation in the coming Redeemer. Every saint saved since the Advent is saved through the selfsame fullness. From the streaming fountain of the wounds of Christ on Calvary redemption flows evermore.

And as long as there is a sinner to be saved, or one elect soul to be ingathered, Christ's blood shall never lose its power—the fullness of merit and Grace shall abide the same. While the expression “ *dwell*” indicates perpetuity, does not it indicate  *constancy and accessibility*? A man who dwells in a house is always to be found there—it is his home. The text

seems to me to say that this fullness of Grace is always to be found in Christ, ever abiding in Him. Knock at this door by prayer, and you shall find it at home.

If a sinner anywhere is saying, "God be merciful to me!" mercy has not gone out on loan—it dwells in Christ both night and day. It is there now at this moment. There is life in a *look* at the Crucified One, not at certain canonical hours, but at *any* hour, in *any* place, by *any* man who looks. "From the end of the earth will I cry unto You, when my heart is overwhelmed," and my prayer shall not be rejected. There is fullness of mercy in Christ to be had at any time, at any season, from any place.

It pleased the Father that all fullness should permanently abide in Him as in a house whose door is never shut. Above all, we see here *immutability*. All fullness dwells in Christ—that is to say it is never exhausted nor diminished. On the last day that this world shall stand before it is given up to be devoured with fervent heat, there shall be found as much fullness in Christ as in the hour when the first sinner looked unto Him and was lightened. O Sinner, the bath that cleanses is as efficacious to take out spots today as it was when the dying thief washed in them! O you despairing Sinner, there is as much consolation in Christ today as when He said to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven you, go in peace."

His Grace has not diminished! He is today as great a Savior as when Magdalene was delivered from seven devils. Till time shall be no more He will exercise the same infinite power to forgive, to renew, to deliver, to sanctify, to perfectly save souls. Shall not all this make us praise Christ, since all fullness is permanent in Him? Let our praises abide where the fullness abides. "All Your works praise You, O God, but Your saints shall bless You." Yes, they shall never cease their worship, because You shall never abate Your fullness.

This is a topic upon which we who love Christ, are all agreed. We can dispute about doctrines, and we have different views upon ordinances. But we have all one view concerning our Lord Jesus. Let Him sit on a glorious high throne! When shall the day dawn that He shall ride through our streets in triumph? When shall England and Scotland, and all the nations become truly the dominions of the great King? Our prayer is that He may hasten the spread of the Gospel, and His own coming as seems good in His sight.

O that He were glorious in the eyes of men! And surely if all fullness abides perpetually in Christ, there is good reason why the unreconciled should, this morning, avail themselves of it. May the blessed Spirit show you, O Sinner, that there is enough in Jesus Christ to meet your wants. That your weakness need not keep you back, nor even the hardness of your heart, nor the inveteracy of your will. For Christ is able even to subdue all things to Himself. If you seek Him He will be found of you.

Seek Him while He may be found. Leave not your seat until your soul is bowed at His feet. I think I see Him—cannot your hearts picture Him—glorious today, but yet the same Savior who was nailed like a felon to the Cross for guilty ones? Reach forth your hand and touch the silver scepter of mercy which He holds out to you, for those who touch it live. Look into that dear face where tears once made their furrows, and grief its lines. Look, I say, and live! Look at that brow radiant with many a glittering gem—it once wore a crown of thorns.

Let His love melt you to repentance. Throw yourself into His arms now feeling, "If I perish I will perish here. He shall be my only hope." As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, there shall never be a soul of you lost who will come and trust in Jesus! Heaven and earth shall pass away but this Word of God shall never pass away. "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." God has said it—will He not do it? He has declared it, it must stand fast. "Whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

O trust Him! I implore you by the mercy of God, and by the fullness of Jesus, trust Him NOW! This day! God grant you may, for Christ's sake. Amen.

### **PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Colossians 1.**

The attention of all our friends is earnestly directed to the SERIES of SPECIAL SERVICES AT THE TABERNACLE. In order that London friends may unite with us we publish the meetings week by week, and at the same time our country friends will join with us in spirit—*Lord's-Day, March 5.*—A deputation will address Mrs. Bartlett's class and the senior classes of the Sunday school. As also Mrs. Bartlett's children's meeting at the Almshouses. *Monday, March 6*—Prayer Meeting for females only, at six. For young people at the same time. Special Prayer Meetings at seven for the various agencies of the Church. Meetings for enquirers at half-past eight. *Tuesday, March 7*—The Pastor and others will meet the parents of the Sunday school to tea, and speak with them upon heavenly things. *Wednesday, March 8*—Annual Meeting of Mrs. Bartlett's class. *Thursday, March 9*—Closing gathering. May our hearts be filled with adoring praise. We shall meet to commemorate our Lord's death. Members will please show their tickets. Spectators will find room in the gallery.

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# STAND FAST NO. 1688

**DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, AUGUST 27, 1882,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

***“Be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel.”  
Colossians 1:23.***

I THINK this morning we showed pretty plainly that many a soul has a great struggle to attain to the hope of the Gospel. [See *“Despair Denounced and Grace Glorified,”* No. 1676.] Not without hand-to-hand fighting do many hearts lay hold on Christ and eternal life. Conscience often sets up a chevaux de frise around the hill of Calvary and thus cuts off the convicted sinner from approaching his Savior. Doubts and fears, the Black Watch of evil, drive back the coming ones and worry those who would gladly hide in the Rock of Ages. Satan summons all his hosts to push men back from the Cross that they may not come to Christ and live.

But, Brothers and Sisters, the battle does *not* end when, by a desperate rush, a man has come to Christ. In many it assumes a new form—the enemy now attempts to drag the trembler from his refuge and eject him from his stronghold! It is difficult to get at the hope of the Gospel, but quite as difficult to *keep* it so as not to be moved away from it. If Satan spends great power in keeping us *from* the hope, he uses equal force in endeavoring to drag us *away* from it—and equal cunning in endeavoring to allure us from it. Hence the Apostle tells us not to be moved away from the hope of the Gospel. The exhortation is necessary in presence of an imminent danger. Do not think that in the moment when you believe in Christ the conflict is over, or you will be bitterly disappointed! It is *then* that the battle renews itself and every inch of the road swarms with enemies.

Between here and Heaven you will always have to fight, more or less, and frequently the severest struggle will be at a time when you are least prepared for it. There may be smooth passages in your career and you may, for a while, be like your Savior in the wilderness, of whom it is said, “Then the devil departed from Him, and angels came and ministered unto Him.” But you may not, therefore, cry, “My mountain stands firm, I shall never be moved,” for fair weather may not outlast a single day! Do not grow secure, or carnally presumptuous. There is but a short space between one battle and another in this world. It is a series of skirmishes even when it does not assume the form of a pitched battle. He that would win Heaven must fight for it! He that would take the new Jerusalem must scale it and if he has the wits to take Jacob’s ladder and set it against the wall and climb up that way, he will win the City. “The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force.”

At this time our subject is not the winning, but the *wearing*—not the taking but the *holding* of the fort. “Be not moved away,” you that have come to it. “Be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel.”

**I.** First, BE NOT MOVED AWAY FROM THE SUBJECT OF THAT HOPE so as to give up any part of the hope which is revealed to you by the Gospel. What is your hope? First, it is the hope of full salvation—the hope that, inasmuch as you have believed in Jesus Christ, you are free from all condemnation at the present moment and shall be free from all condemnation in the future as to all your sins. And that, in addition to this, He that takes away the condemnation of sin will also destroy the power of it over you. You have this hope—that being made to love righteousness you shall be enabled to walk in obedience and “to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord.”

Your hope is that one day you shall be presented holy, without blame and unreprouvable in the sight of the great Father. You shall, one day, be presented “without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing,” cleansed from all guilt and cleansed from all tendency to sin and to corruption—and made like unto the perfect creature of God when first it comes from His hands. Oh, this is a blessed hope! “He that has this hope in him purifies himself even as Christ is pure.” We hope that we shall be like unto Christ, Himself, and that the Glory of His holiness shall be our glory—and we shall see His face and His name shall be on our foreheads—and we shall be without fault before the Throne of God. Now, never give that up! Never allow a particle of it to be diminished. God means all that He has said, and more, rather than less. Let no man debase the currency of Heaven or clip the coin of the realm of the Great King.

The first part of it—hold to it, that the Lord Jesus Christ has cleansed you from all the guilt and penalty of sin, so that not a speck remains to accuse or condemn you. Hold to it, moreover, that if He has once washed you, you shall not need to wash, again, in that fountain filled with blood, for, “He that is washed needs not except to wash his feet.” And that washing shall be given to him by the condescending hands of Christ. The water shall be a second cure of that which the blood has already cleansed and removed. The blood-washing has removed all guilt and prevented all possibility that sin shall have dominion over you. Complete forgiveness and full justification are proofs that through your Lord’s endurance of the death penalty, you are no more under the Law, but under Grace.

My soul rejoices, tonight, in perfect pardon! I will not take off a corner of it so as to allow that the smallest charge can lie against us! We are complete in Christ! He that believes in Him is justified from all things—

***“Here’s pardon for transgressions past,  
It matters not how black their cast!  
And, oh, my Soul, with wonder view—  
For sins to come, here’s pardon too!”***

All pardon is provided in the one great Sacrifice offered by our bleeding Lord who has now gone into the heavens to plead the merit of His blood. Never take off a fraction from that other part of full salvation, namely, the possibility and the absolute certainty that every sinful tendency now in your nature shall be utterly destroyed. There shall remain in you no root of bitterness, no scar of evil, no footprint of iniquity! There shall be no tinder in your soul upon which the sparks of temptation can fall so as to live and make a flame! And when the Prince of this world comes he shall find

nothing in you. Then you shall enter into your eternal rest, for God keeps not His ripe wheat in the field, but takes it Home when it is once fit to be gathered into the garner. This is your hope through the Gospel—be not moved away from it.

In connection with this, there is the hope of final perseverance. I confess that to me it is one of the most attractive doctrines of God's Word, that, "the righteous shall hold on his way, and he that has clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." For I am "confident of this very thing, that He which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "I give unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of My hands." "He that believes in Him is not condemned." "He that lives and believes in Me shall never die." There are many assurances to this effect and if anything definite is taught in Scripture, I am confident that this is among the plainest of such teachings!

I beseech you, do not shun this doctrine as though it would lead you into the least presumption. If properly understood, its legitimate effect is the very *reverse* of carelessness! If it is true that once enlisted in this army of the Lord, you must and shall fight until you are a conqueror, then there is no temptation to lay down the sword, for a while, in the hope of taking it up, again, at a more convenient season. If, as some say, you may be Christ's soldier today and desert tomorrow and then be enlisted again—if it is indeed true that a man may be regenerated and then lose the Divine life and, upon repentance, be re-regenerated and re-re-re-re-re-regenerated—I know not how many times—I am not aware that this novelty is *hinted* at in my unrevised New Testament! There I read of being "born again," but not of being born again and again and again and again and again—I say I cannot find a trace of this in the Bible!

On the other hand, I find that if the one regeneration fails, which is impossible, there would remain nothing else to be done! God's best work is broken down and He will never try it again. He has said, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinks in the rain that comes oft upon it, and bring forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receives blessings from God; but that which bears thorns and briers is rejected, and is near unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." You cannot re-salt the salt if it has once lost its savor. If, then, Grace does utterly depart, which I believe to be impossible, there remains no hope for such a one. God's supreme effort, according to that theory, has been made and failed!

Now, there is nothing for it but that the land which has received the dew of Heaven and brought forth no fruit, is near unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." We have but made the supposition to show you the danger, upon whose brink you stand, and over whose verge you would slide if Grace did not prevent. If

you, indeed, believe in Christ Jesus, set this to your seal, that He will keep you to the end! Whatever happens, “I am persuaded that neither things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” For dear life hold on to the hope of final preservation, for there is a purifying, encouraging, stimulating power about that precious Truth of God! “He keeps the feet of His saints.” “Be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel.”

We have a hope beyond this, for we believe that we shall experience the Resurrection. Though they fall down and men call them corpses, they are precious in the sight of the Lord. The grave shall be a refining pot out of which the pure metal of our purified body shall come forth. At the word of the Lord, the dry bones shall live—they shall be clothed with flesh—and skin shall come upon them, if, after that fashion, the body is to be raised. But if not—if the body is to assume another form and we are to be made like unto a Glory which as yet we cannot comprehend, then we may be sure of this—that we shall so rise that mortality shall put on immortality and corruption shall give place to incorruption! In any case, our bodies shall rise again. The Grace of God secures the bodies as well as the souls of the saints. Christ bought not the half of a man, but the whole trinity of our manhood is His redeemed inheritance—spirit, soul and body shall dwell forever with Him—for He has redeemed our undivided manhood!

Never give up that hope, either, concerning yourselves or your friends. Let nothing shake your confidence in the Resurrection! Let no philosophical explanation fritter it away. No other historical fact is so well attested as the Resurrection of Christ, which is the very cornerstone of our confidence. “For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised. And if Christ is not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins. Then they, also, which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If only in this life we have hope in Christ, we are, of all men, most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept.”

Often and often, when I am sorely beset with devilish temptations and insinuations as to the eternal hope of my soul and body, I fly to this—Jesus Christ *did* rise from the dead and, inasmuch as He rose from the dead, He has come back to tell us that there is another world and that not only our *souls*, but our *bodies* shall inherit a far more blessed condition than this present one! Hold on to this hope of the Gospel, and never let it go—

***“The Lord is risen! He lives!  
The First-born from the dead,  
To Him the Father gives  
To be creation’s Head.  
O’er all forever reigning,  
Of death He holds the keys;  
And Hell—His might constraining—  
Obeys His high decrees.  
Flies now the gloom that shaded  
The vale of death to me;  
The terrors that invaded  
Are lost, O Christ, in Thee!  
The grave, no more appalling,***

***Invites me to repose;  
Asleep in Jesus falling,  
To rise as Jesus rose.***

Then remember, you have the hope of the Second Advent. If Jesus comes before you die, you will meet Him—gladly meet and welcome the Son of God upon this earth! You shall be changed so that you shall be fit to inherit the incorruptible glories of the skies. You shall see your Redeemer when He stands in the latter day upon the earth. As Job said, “In my flesh shall I see God, whom my eyes shall see for myself, and not another.” Have joy, then, at every thought of your Master’s coming! Do not put it among dark prophecies or doubtful dreams. It is a clearly revealed Truth of God that Jesus will come again and take His people up to their eternal Home—“Therefore comfort one another with these words,” and be not moved away from that hope of the Gospel which lies so sweetly in the Second Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ!

And, once more, we have this hope—that when we have passed through all that concerns time and are in eternity, that shoreless, bottomless sea—there remains for us no fear or dread, but we shall be “forever with the Lord.” I notice that certain of those who deny the eternity of future punishment are ready, for the sake of their notion, to pull down the battlements of Heaven, itself, and to make the joy of saints to be as short as the misery of sinners. I, for one, will not pawn Heaven in that fashion, to make sin cheap for the willfully impenitent! Once landed on that eternal shore, there are no storms to dread or hurricanes to fear for these frail boats of ours! There shall not a wave of trouble roll across our peaceful spirits when once we cast anchor in the “Fair Havens,” in the Port of Peace forever!

Be not dismayed as though there would be an after-probation, or a “purgatory,” or a *limbus patrum*, or any of those pretty places that have filled priests’ pockets so long—and are now being newly vamped and produced by our proud thinkers as an aid to their pretty speculations! We will have no “purgatory” under any form—it is the larder of priests and the refuge of heresy-mongers—and there is not a word of it in God’s Bible! We stand to the text—“So shall we be forever *with the Lord*.” “The righteous shall go away into *life eternal*.” There is “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that *fades not away*, reserved in Heaven for you.” “Him that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is New Jerusalem, which comes down out of Heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new name.”

“They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” “Be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel,” as to the objects of that hope!

**II.** But now, secondly, I charge you, Beloved, before God, that you BE NOT MOVED AWAY FROM THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL AS TO THE GROUND OF THAT HOPE. And what is the ground of that hope? The ground of that hope is, first, the rich, free, Sovereign Grace of God be-

cause He has said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." The Lord claims for Himself the prerogative of mercy and, as He can exercise it without the violation of His justice through the atoning Sacrifice of Christ, we joy and rejoice in the fact that men are not saved because of any *natural* goodness of disposition, or because of anything that they have *done*, or ever shall do!

The children being not yet born, neither having done good nor evil, the Divine decree stood fast fixed in the Sovereign will and immutable counsels of Jehovah! And this is a good ground of hope for the very chief of sinners. If He has saved the dying thief—if He has saved the adulterer—if He has saved even the murderer, why should He not save me? He can if He will and He is exceedingly gracious, infinite in compassion and willing not the deaths of any, but that all should come to repentance! It is in the mercy of our God that all our hopes begin and the cause of that mercy is itself! The reason of Divine love is Divine love! Because God is gracious, therefore He bestows His Grace upon the undeserving and the lost. Be not moved away from this.

The ground of our salvation is, next, the merit of Christ—what Christ is; what Christ has done—what Christ has suffered. This is the ground upon which God saves the sons of men. Even Cardinal Bellarmine, the mighty opponent of Luther—perhaps the best opponent that he had, whose eyes saw much of Gospel Light—once said this, "That albeit good works are necessary unto salvation, yet, inasmuch as no man can be sure that he has performed as many good works as will save him, it is, upon the whole, safest to trust, alone, in the merits and sufferings of Christ." Cardinal, the safest way suits me! If that is the best and safest, what better do any of us need? Where is the rest for our soul if the ground of our hope is to be what *we* are, or what *we* do, or what *we* feel? But when we fall back upon the *finished work* of Jesus Christ and believe in Him, whom God has set forth to be a Propitiation for sin, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world—I say, when we fall back on *Him*—then we have something solid to rest upon!

Our eyes cannot bear to look into eternity so long as we cling, in the least degree, to human merit! But when it is all put aside and we look to Him bleeding yonder on the Cross, then is there a "peace that passes all understanding," filling our hearts by Christ Jesus! Brothers and Sisters, if a man were to live in good works without a single sin for 10,000 years, he would be well recompensed for that by half-an-hour of Heaven! How, then, can we expect to merit eternal bliss by any works of ours? Ah, no! The hope were vanity! Heaven is too precious a thing to be purchased by anything that *we* can, by any possibility, do—but it is *not* too great to be purchased by the blood of Christ! And when we come to His Atonement, our anchor holds abidingly. "Be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel."

Another ground of our hope is this—that God has solemnly pledged that "whoever believes in Christ shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life." If, then, we really, and in very deed, believe in Jesus Christ and rest on Him, we cannot perish, for God cannot contradict Himself! Thus it is written—hear it and accept it—"He that believes and is baptized shall

be saved.” Those of us, then, who trust the Savior, and Him *only*—and have made confession of that trust in His own appointed way—know for sure that God’s eternal veracity is staked upon our salvation! It is not possible that the Lord should cast away a Believer! Is it not written, “The just shall live by faith”? We live because we believe in the Ever-Living One! “He that believes in Him has everlasting life,” Be not moved away from this Gospel hope which God, who cannot lie, has set before us—

***“The Covenant of the King of Kings  
Shall stand forever sure!  
Beneath the shadow of His wings  
His saints repose secure.”***

Another ground of our hope is the Immutability of God. God changes not and, therefore, the sons of Jacob are not consumed. The Immutability of Christ also confirms our hope, for He is, “the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” The unchanging power of His blood is a tower of strength to our faith—

***“Dear dying Lamb, Your precious blood  
Shall never lose its power  
Till all the ransomed Church of God  
Is saved to sin no more.”***

If God is Immutable, then those that believe in Him have an immutable hope—be sure that you never cast it away! But, once again, our hope of the Gospel is grounded in the Infallibility of Scripture. The Papist has an infallible pope, but we have an Infallible Bible. If that which is spoken in this Book is not true, neither is our hope sure! If these things are questionable, our confidence is questionable! But if this Word of God abides fast, forever and ever, though Heaven and earth should pass away, then he that believes and builds on this Infallible Truth may rejoice and stand fast! I beseech you, “be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel.”

**III.** So far have I come with all my heart and soul and I believe that you, dear Friends, the members of this Church, at any rate, have accompanied me. Now let us consider HOW WE MAY BE MOVED AWAY FROM THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL unless Grace is given to prevent us. We may be moved from the hope of the Gospel in the following ways. Sometimes by a conceit of ourselves. You may get off the ground of confidence in Free Grace to think, “Now I am somebody. Have not I prayed at the Prayer Meeting? Did not friends say that they were edified by it? Have not I preached a wonderful sermon? Am I not generous? Have not I given large sums to the Church and to the poor? Am I not somebody?”

Ah, you and the devil, together, can make a commotion about that and I have no doubt that all he tells you, you will very greedily suck in, for we like to be praised and, though the praise comes from Satan, himself, it is welcome to our proud flesh! Well, whenever we get to think we are somebody, we are moved away from the hope of the Gospel. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Somebody says, “But I am not a sinner.” Ah, then He did not come to save you! Do you say, “I was *once* a sinner, but I have grown so perfect that I no longer sin”? Do you? Then you are removed from that hope which belongs to those who confess and lament their sins! You unChristianize yourself as soon as you strike your name out of the list of SINNERS who are saved by the Savior’s Grace! You *are* a

sinner and Christ died to save you, but do not be moved away from the hope of the Gospel by a vain notion that you are no longer sinful! Christ came not to heal the whole, but those who are sick.

Do not be moved away, on the other hand, by despondency. Satan does not mind which way you get off the Rock—whether it is by jumping up or by jumping down—it is all the same to him, so long as you leave the Rock of your salvation. Many there are that go up in a balloon of conceit, while others are ready to roll down the steeps of despondency and despair. But be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel either one way or the other! The least sin ought to make you humble, but the greatest sin ought not to make you despair. If you are, even now, as big a sinner as any 50 men rolled into one, Christ can save you readily—no, *has* saved you if you put your trust in Him! But, on the other hand, if you presume that you are *not* guilty, or despairingly say, “I am guilty, but I dare not believe that He can forgive *me*,” you are, in either case, moved away from the hope of the Gospel! May eternal mercy keep you hourly penitent and believing, for repentance and faith walk on either side of a Christian till he enters the pearly gates.

You may be moved away from the hope of the Gospel, also, by false teaching. If, for instance, you do not believe Christ to be, “Light of light, very God of very God,” you have moved away from our hope which depends upon His Godhead. If you think that the *priest* can save you, you are moved away from the one only Priest before whom all other priests must let their censers die out into blackness! ONLY JESUS CHRIST can save you! If you listen to any teaching which puts your *working* or your *doing* into the place of Christ, you are drinking in error and you will be removed from the hope of your calling, which is Free Grace, received by *faith*, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

You can be removed from the hope of your calling by hoping to live by feelings. Ah, there are many Christians who get tempted that way! They feel so happy and that is the reason why they believe that they are saved. That is not the reason why I believe I am saved. I am saved because I trust Christ—and if I were as miserable as misery, itself, I should be just as truly saved as if I were as happy as Heaven itself! It is *faith* that does it, not feeling! Faith is precious, feeling is fickle. Believing, we stand firm, but by feeling we are tossed about. True feeling follows faith and, as such, is valuable—but faith is the root—and the life of the tree lies there, not in the branches and leaves, which may be taken away, and yet the tree will survive.

Some have very joyous feelings. They swim in trances and deliriums and yet they are all wrong. Rest on Christ, whether it is bright day or dark night with you—though He slay you, trust in Him—as much trust in Him as if He pressed you to His bosom! Faith must abide though joy departs! If your feelings are down in the dust—if you feel as though you could not hold up your head or look towards Heaven—never mind that, but cling to the promise, feel what you may. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save sinners, and good feelings will follow, by-and-by, but, just now, your first business is this—“He that believes in Him is

not condemned.” “He that believes in Him has everlasting life,” Stand to that hope of the Gospel!

Many are moved away from the hope of their calling by a dazzle of intellect. They are content simply to believe in Jesus till they meet some fine *man*, a thinker with a big forehead and a large box which ought to be full of brains. We have not been inside to see what is there, but the preacher talks much of his thought and culture. He tells you that you are behind the age—that a faith which believes God might have done very well for the times of Cromwell and the roundhead Puritans, but that, nowadays, we are far in advance of all that kind of thing. Whenever a so-called “brother” dazzles you like that, let him dazzle! Let him shine as much as he likes! But, as for you, tell him that he who has once looked the sun in the face is not to be dazzled by a glowworm! Go back to your wax and dazzle your brother worms, but you cannot dazzle me!

A man who once has come to know Christ *experimentally* and lives by faith upon the Son of God, may, if he likes, read all your essays and reviews, and all the articles in your Quarterlies which ridicule the power of faith, whether in living or in dying, and he will say, when he has read them all through, “This is all they know about it.” I daresay that if a horse were to write a book, he would tell us that roast beef is exceedingly bad food to eat. “Well,” we should say, “that is a very natural opinion for a horse! Let him keep to his oats and his hay.” And when a man says that there is no power in prayer, he shows that he does not know anything about praying! Let him keep to what he knows and hold his tongue about what he does not know! He says that it cannot be, so we say, “But it is so”—and when we have tasted and handled it and *known* it—there is no dazzling us out of it by a sense of the great man’s superiority of mind!

I have often thought that those who cry up their own learning must have wonderfully little of it, for I have jotted down in my pocketbook that I never saw the Bank of England send its bullion anywhere with a number of bells upon the cart to say, “Here is bullion coming along!” But I have noticed that every *dustman* does that! When I hear the bells ringing so much about “culture,” I say to myself, “Dust on!” If they had real diamonds on board, they would hold their tongues about them! At any rate, dust or diamonds, the load in these men’s carts is nothing to us—we have a more sure word of testimony to which our experience has set its seal. We have believed in Christ Jesus and found salvation and, by God’s Grace, we will not be moved away from the hope of our calling!

Lastly, be not moved away by persecution, or by sneers, or by ridicule. The persecution of this present day is a small thing compared with what our forefathers suffered. Look at that picture of the amphitheatre, by Dore. All is over! Every seat is empty! The stars, like the eyes of God, are looking down upon the arena. There lie the bodies of the saints and there are the tigers and the lions prowling over the sanded floor, tearing the carcasses which they have slain. But the painter pictures a vision of angels descending from over the uttermost parapet of the amphitheatre—they are tenderly watching over those precious bodies, for they have triumphed! And from the mouths of the beasts they have gone to the thrones of the angels!

Only hold fast where the saints held fast at the first, “in nothing, terrified by your adversaries.” No more mind the advance of learning than they dreaded the universality of ignorance! We have to fight with both the ignorance of this world and the wisdom of it, too—“But the foolishness of God is wiser than man, and the weakness of God is stronger than man.” How readily shall the Divine wisdom and power make an end of learned babblings! Be not moved away from the hope of your calling. “Cast not away your confidence” which has great recompense of reward. Be like the Grecian youth who took his shield to battle—let it be your glory and your defense. We would say to you what the Spartan mother said to her son—“Come back with your shield, or on it.” Come back with the Gospel well strapped upon your arm like a golden shield, or, if you die, may it become your bier and may you be borne Home upon it as a steadfast Believer in Christ! But never be moved away from the hope of your calling, for so would your shield be vilely cast away.

**III.** Lastly, WHY IS IT THAT WE CANNOT BE MOVED AWAY FROM THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL? What would follow if we were? Well, first, we will not be moved away from the hope of our calling, for there is nothing better to take its place! A man would not think of going to Australia if he heard that the wages were less there than here, the expense of living greater and the people were poorer. “No,” he would say, “I shall not jump out of the frying pan into the fire. I shall certainly stay where I am, rather than go farther and fare worse.”

Well, we are just of that mind. We do not see how we could improve ourselves. Jonathan Edwards, in one of his treatises, speaks somewhat to this effect—“If any man can prove this form of the Gospel to be untrue and a mere dream, the very best thing that he can do is to sit down and weep forever to think that he has disproved the brightest hope that ever shone upon the eyes of men.” And that is so. To have the glorious hope that, believing in Christ, we are saved, is such a blessing and such a joy that nothing can compare with it!

Where are the fields that can tempt away the sheep of Christ? Where is the shepherd that can vie with Him? Where is the light that is brighter than this eternal sun? Oh, you tempt us with your rattles like children, but, having become men, we despise them! What have you to offer of truth, of hope, of comfort, of joy equal to what we possess? Let us, each one, sing our answer to the tempter—

***“You only, Sovereign of my heart,  
My refuge, my almighty Friend,  
And can my soul from You depart,  
On whom, alone, my hopes depend?  
Let earth’s alluring joys combine,  
While You are near, in vain they call!  
One smile, one blissful smile of Yours,  
My dearest Lord, outweighs them all!  
Your name, my inmost powers adore,  
You are my life, my joy, my care.  
Depart from You? ‘Tis death—‘tis more,  
‘Tis endless ruin, deep despair!”***

Remember, too, that if we are moved away from the hope of our calling, we shall soon be in bondage. A man may be as merry as a lark if he be-

believes in Christ for salvation. But let him leave that and, before long, he will be as dull as an owl! What is there that can give us joy apart from Christ? Are we not bound in chains of doubt when once we leave the way of Sovereign Grace through believing in Christ? If we are moved away from the hope of our calling, we cannot grow. A tree that is frequently moved usually dies—growth there cannot be! And a man who begins in the spirit and hopes to be made perfect by the flesh. A man who begins in Free Grace and then gets to relying on his own works. A man who begins by trusting in Christ and then makes confession to a priest. A man who rests in the precious blood and then dabbles in sacraments and hopes to find salvation there—he can never grow in Grace!

He is whirled about with every oar. Every tide of doctrine puts him up stream or down stream. He can make no progress. And what good can such a man do? He cannot influence others beneficially, for he teaches one thing, today, and another, tomorrow. He says that God has saved him and the next day he doubts it. He says that the Atonement is full and free, but tomorrow he says that penance is to be performed. He cannot bless others—he does not know the way to blessing. Besides, if we were moved away from the hope of our calling, what mean, miserable wretches we would be, for we should have deserted our Savior! I wonder where I could hide my dishonorable head if I once came here to preach salvation by the works of the flesh and not by the Grace of God! I hope that you would hiss me from the platform! And I hope that you will so treat anybody that shall succeed me, when I am gone, who shall preach to you any other Gospel than that which you have received!

Hold fast, with all your might, right solemnly to the grand old faith, for if you do not, in rejecting that way of salvation, you reject yourselves! What did Christ die for, if we can be saved in some other way? Why did He pour out His blood if there is a cheaper method to win the skies? Why did He go down into the depths of death-shade, if you can force your way to Heaven by your own endeavors without Him? No, no—we will stand fast where we are, resting only and alone upon Jesus Christ our Savior! For us to leave the plan of salvation—and with this I close—is something like a soldier entrenched in an impregnable fortress accepting an invitation to come out of it! You remember how the black monarch, who has been so much run after in England, said that our soldiers ought to come out of the entrenchments?

They were rats, he said, to hide behind earthworks. If they would only come out, he would destroy them! But our soldiers were wise enough not to venture into the open until the proper time. So the world, the flesh, the devil and error say, “Come out! Come out! You talk about an Infallible Scripture and an Almighty Savior and a simple faith in Him. Come out and fight us fairly on the level.” Yes, but we do not see it and we shall never attempt it! We are like the little coney, of whom Solomon speaks. He hid himself among the rocks and, the sportsman, I have no doubt, said, “Why don’t you come out, little coney? Come, and let me be your friend.” But the coney, though he was feeble, was wise, and he hid himself in the rock all the more, because a stranger invited him out. Do the same when

Satan cries, "Come away and be free. Be a man! Do not be always trusting in authority." "No," you say, "I shall stay where I am."

As I was riding along in the south of France one day, I saw pair of fine birds overhead. The driver called out in the French tongue, "Eagles!" Yes, and there was a man below, with a gun, who was wishful to get a nearer acquaintance with the eagles, but they did not come down to oblige him! He pointed his rifle at them, but his shots did not reach half way, for the royal birds kept above. The higher air is the fit dominion for eagles! Up there is the eagle's playground, where he plays with the callow lightning! Up above the smoke and clouds he dwells. Stay there, eagles! Stay there! If men can get you within range, they mean no good to you. Keep up, Christians! Keep up in the higher element, resting in Jesus Christ, and do not come down to find a perch for yourself among the trees of philosophy! Whatever we do, let us never leave the way of the Truth of God, of peace, of safety!

We are going along the King's Highway and the thieves on the side of the road say, "Come off the highway! It is so dull and monotonous. Come into the woods! We will show you fair flowers, ferny dells and quiet caves. Come, listen to the birds that sing all day and all night, too. Come with us." We heed you not—he that travels along the King's Highway is under the King's protection—but he that wanders into the dark mountains and lonesome woods may take care of himself. We shall do as we have done—follow the way that leads from the banishment—the way of trusting in the Savior and in Him, alone!

As you hold to the faith, so may God bless and enrich you. As with simple heart you plod along the road that leads to Heaven by the righteousness of the Son of God, may the Lord be with you and comfort you. But if you turn back, woe unto you! A curse will fall upon you in that day of shame and crime! The Lord keep you, that you may keep the faith. Amen.

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# CHRIST IN YOU

## NO. 1720

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 13, 1883,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

***“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”  
Colossians 1:27.***

THE Gospel is the grand secret—the mystery of mysteries! It was hidden from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to the saints. To the mass of mankind it was utterly unknown and the chosen people, who saw something of it, only perceived it dimly through the smoke of sacrifices and the veil of types. It remained a mystery which wit could not guess nor invention unravel—and it would have forever have continued a secret had not God, in His infinite mercy, been pleased to reveal it by the Holy Spirit. In a still deeper sense it is even yet a hidden thing unless the Spirit of God has revealed it to us *individually*, for the revelation of the Gospel in the Word of God does not, of itself, instruct men unto eternal life. The light is clear enough, but it avails nothing till the eyes are opened. Each separate individual must have Christ revealed to him and in him by the work of the Holy Spirit, or else he will remain in darkness even in the midst of the Gospel day.

Blessed and happy are they to whom the Lord has laid open the Divine secret which Prophets and kings could not discover—which even angels desired to look into! Brethren, we live in a time when the Gospel is clearly revealed in the Word of God and when that Word has its faithful preachers lovingly to press home its teachings. Let us take care that we do not despise the mystery which has now become a household word. Let not the commonness of the blessing cause us to undervalue it. You remember how, in the wilderness, the Israelites fed upon angels' food until they had enjoyed it so long, so constantly and so abundantly that in their wicked discontent they called it, “light bread”? I fear that many in these times are gorged with the Gospel like those who eat too much honey. They even venture to call the heavenly Word of God, “common-place,” and talk us if it were not only, “the old, old story,” but a stale story, too.

Are not many hungering after novelties, longing for things original and startling, thirsting after the spiritual dram-drinking of sensational preaching, dissatisfied with Christ Crucified, though He is the Bread which came down from Heaven? For us, let us keep clear of this folly! Let us rest content with the old food, praying from day to day, “Lord, evermore give us this bread.” May it never happen to us as unto the Jews of the Apostolic times who utterly refused the Word of Life, so that the Truth of God became to them a stumbling-block and those who preached it were compelled to turn to the Gentiles! If we despise the heavenly message, we cannot expect to fare better than they did! Let us not incur the danger of refusing Him that speaks from Heaven! If there is life, rejoice in it! If there

is light, walk in it! If there is love, rest in it. If the Lord God Almighty has, at last, set open the treasures of His Grace and put eternal bliss within your reach, stretch out the hand of faith and be enriched! Turn not your backs upon your God, your Savior, for in so doing you will turn your backs on eternal life and Heaven! God grant that none of you may do this.

In our text we have, in a few words, that great mystery with which Heaven did labor us in travail; that mystery which is to transform this poor world into new heavens and a new earth. We have it, I say, all in a nutshell in the seven words of our text—the riches of the glory of this mystery may, here, be seen set out to open view—“Christ in you, the hope of glory.” By the assistance of the Divine Spirit, I shall speak upon this mystery in three ways—The *essence* of it is “Christ.” The *sweetness* of it is “Christ in you.” And the outlook of it is “the hope of glory.” The words read like a whole body of divinity condensed into a line,—“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

**I.** The eternal mystery of the Gospel—THE ESSENCE OF IT IS CHRIST. I hardly know what is the antecedent to the word, “which,” here—whether it is, “mystery,” or, “riches,” or, “glory.” And I do not greatly care to examine which it may be. Any one of the three words will be suitable and all three will fit best of all. If it is “the mystery,” Christ is that mystery—“Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.” If it is the word, “glory,” beyond all question our Lord Jesus wears a “glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and truth.” Is He not “the brightness of the Father’s glory”? If we take the word, “riches,” you have often heard of “the unsearchable riches of Christ,” for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Oh, the riches of the Grace of God which it has pleased the Father to impart unto us in Christ Jesus! Christ is the “mystery,” the “riches” and the “glory.” He is all this and, blessed be His name, He is all this among us poor Gentiles who at first were like dogs, scarcely accounted worthy to eat the crumbs from under the children’s table! And yet we are now admitted into the children’s place and made heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ Jesus! Riches of glory among the Gentiles would have sounded like a mockery in the first ages and yet the language is most proper at this day, for all things are ours in Christ Jesus the Lord!

The essence of this mystery is Christ, Himself. In these days certain would-be wise men are laboriously attempting to constitute a church without Christ and to set forth a salvation without a Savior. But their Babel building is as a bowing wall and a tottering fence. The center of the blessed mystery of the Gospel is Christ, Himself, in His Person. What a wonderful conception it was that the infinite God should take upon Himself the nature of man! It never would have occurred to men that such a condescension would be thought of! Even now that it has been done, it is a great mystery of our faith. God and man in one Person is the wonder of Heaven, earth and Hell! Well might David exclaim, “What is man, that You are mindful of him? And the son of man, that You visit him?”

The first thought of the Incarnation was born in the unsearchably wise mind of God. It needed Omnipotent Omniscience to suggest the idea of,

“Immanuel, God With Us.” Think of it! The Infinite an infant; the Ancient of days a child; the Ever-Blessed a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief! The idea is original, astounding, Divine! Oh, that this blending of the two natures should ever have taken place! Brothers and Sisters, the heart of the Gospel throbs in the Truth of God! The Son of the Highest was born at Bethlehem and at His birth, before He had worked a deed of righteousness or shed a drop of blood, the angels sang, “Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men,” for they knew that the Incarnation had, within itself, a wealth of good things for men!

When the Lord, Himself, took our manhood, it meant inconceivable benediction to the human race! “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given,” and in that Child and Son we find our salvation! God in our nature can mean for us nothing but joy. How favored is our race in this respect! What other creature did the Lord thus espouse? We know that He took not up angels, but He took up the seed of Abraham. He took upon Him human nature, and now the next being in the universe to God is man, he who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death is this day crowned with glory and honor, and made to have dominion over all the works of Jehovah’s hands.

This is, indeed, the Gospel! Do not sinners begin to hope? Is there one in your nature who is “Light of lights, very God of very God,” and do you not perceive that this must mean good for you? Does not the “Word made flesh” dwelling among men awaken hope in your bosoms and lead you to believe that you may yet be saved? Certainly the fact of there being such an union between God and man is the delight of every regenerated mind! Our Lord’s Person is, at this day, constituted in the same manner. He is *still* God and Man! He can still sympathize with our manhood to the fullest, for He is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh! And yet He can help us without limit, seeing He is equal with the Father. Though manifestly Divine, yet Jesus is none the less Human! Though truly Man, He is none the less Divine—and this is a door of hope to us, a fountain of consolation which never ceases to flow!

When we think of our Lord, we remember with His Person the glorious work which He undertook and finished on our behalf. Being found in fashion as Man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. He took upon Himself the form of a Servant and was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, because we had failed in our service and could not be saved unless Another did suit and service on our behalf. The Heir of all things girded Himself to be among as One that serves! What service His was! How arduous! How humble! How heavy! How all-consuming! His was a life of grief and humiliation, followed by a death of agony and scorn. Up to the Cross He carried all our load. And on the Cross He bore, that we might bear, His Father’s righteous wrath!

Oh, what has Christ *not* done for us? He cast our sins into the depths of the sea. He has taken the cup which we ought to have drunk forever and He has drained it dry and left not a dreg behind! He has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us. And now He has finished transgression, made an end of sin, brought in everlasting righ-

teousness and gone up to His Father's Throne within the veil, bearing His Divine oblation and making everything right and safe for us, that, by-and-by, we may follow Him and be with Him where He is! Oh yes, Brothers and Sisters, Christ's Person and finished work are the pillars of our hope! I cannot think of what He is, what He has done, what He is doing and what He will yet do, without saying, "He is all my salvation and all my desire."

My Brethren, every one of our Lord's offices is a well-spring of comfort. Is He Prophet, Priest and King? Is He Friend? Is He Brother? Is He Husband? Is He Head? Every way and everywhere we lean the weight of our soul's great business upon Him and He is our All in All! Besides, there is this sweet thought, that He is our Representative. Know you not that of old He was our Covenant Head and stood for us in the great transactions of eternity? Like as the first Adam headed up the race and stood for us—alas, I must correct myself—*fell* for us, and we fell in him, so now has the second Adam taken up within Himself all His people and stood for them and kept for them the covenant. So that now it is ordered in all things and sure, and every blessing of it is infallibly secured to all the seed. Believers must and shall possess the covenanted inheritance because Jesus represents them and, on their behalf, has taken possession of the estate of God!

Whatever Christ is, His people are in Him. They were crucified in Him; they were dead in Him; they were buried in Him; they are risen in Him! In Him they live eternally, in Him they sit gloriously at the right hand of God, "who has raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." In Him we are "accepted in the Beloved," both now and forever! And this, I say, is the essence of the whole Gospel. He that preaches Christ preaches the Gospel! He who does not preach Christ, preaches not the Gospel. It is no more possible for there to be a Gospel without Christ than a day without the sun, or a river without water, or a living man without a head, or a quickened human body without a soul! No, Christ Himself is the life, soul, substance and *essence* of the mystery of the Gospel of God. Christ, Himself, I say again, and no other!

I have been trying to think what we would do if our Lord were gone. Suppose that a man has heard of a great physician who understands his complaint? He has traveled a great many miles to see this celebrated doctor. But when he gets to the door they tell him that he is out. "Well," he says, "then I must wait till he is in." "You need not wait," they reply, "his assistant is at home." The suffering man, who has been often disappointed, answers, "I do not care about his assistant. I want to see the man, himself—mine is a desperate case, but I have heard that this physician has cured the like. I must, therefore, see *him*. No assistants for me." "Well," they say, "he is out, but there are his books. You can see his books." "Thank you," he says, "I cannot be content with his books. I need the living man and nothing less. It is to him that I must speak and from him I will receive instructions."

"Do you see that cabinet?" "Yes." "It is full of his medicines." The sick man answers, "I dare say they are very good, but they are of no use to me without the doctor. I want their owner to prescribe for me, or I shall die of

my disease.” “But see,” cries one, “here is a person who has been cured by him, a man of great experience, who has been present at many remarkable operations. Go into the inquiry room with him and he will tell you all about the mode of cure.” The afflicted man answers, “I am much obliged to you, but all your talk only makes me long the more to see the doctor. I came to see *him*, and I am not going to be put off with anything else. I must see the man, himself, for myself. He has made my disease a specialty. He knows how to handle my case and I will stay till I see him.”

Now, dear Friends, if you are seeking Christ, imitate this sick man or else you will miss the mark altogether! Never be put off with books, or conversations. Be not content with Christian people talking to you, or preachers preaching to you, or the Bible being read to you, or prayers being offered for you. Anything short of Jesus will leave you short of salvation! You have to reach Christ and touch Christ, and nothing short of this will serve your turn. Picture the case of the prodigal son when he went home. Suppose, when he reached the house, the elder brother had come to meet him? I must make a supposition that the elder brother had sweetened himself and made himself amiable—and then I hear him say, “Come in, Brother. Welcome home!”

But I see the returning one stand there with tears in his eyes and I hear him lament, “I want to see my father. I must tell him that I have sinned and done evil in his sight.” An old servant whispers, “Master John, I am glad to see you back. Be happy, for all the servants are rejoiced to hear the sound of your voice. It is true your father will not see you, but he has ordered the fatted calf to be killed for you. And here is the best robe, and a ring, and shoes for your feet, and we are told to put them on you.” All this would not content the poor penitent! I think I hear him cry—“I do not despise anything my father gives me, for I am not worthy to be as his hired servant. But what is all this unless I see his face and know that he forgives me? There is no taste in the feast, no glitter in the ring, no fitness in the shoes, no beauty in the robe unless I can see my father and can be reconciled to him.”

Do you not see that in the case of the prodigal son the great matter was to get his head into his father’s bosom and there to sob out, “Father, I have sinned”? The one thing necessary was the kiss of free forgiveness, the touch of those dear, warm, loving lips, which said, “My dear child, I love you and your faults are blotted out.” That was the thing that gave his soul rest and perfect peace! And this is the mystery we come to preach to you—God Himself drawing near to you in Christ Jesus and forgiving you all your trespasses. We are not content to preach unless Jesus Himself is the theme. We do not set before you something *about* Christ, nor something that *belongs* to Christ, nor something *proclaimed* by Christ, nor somebody that has *known* Christ, nor some truth which extols Christ! No, we preach Christ Crucified!

We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord! And we say to you, never be content till you clasp the Savior in your arms as Simeon did in the Temple. That venerable saint did not pray to depart in peace while he only *saw* the Child in Mary’s bosom! But when he had taken the dear One

into his own arms, then he said, "Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace." A personal grasp of a *personal* Christ, even though we only know Him as an Infant, fills the heart to the fullest, but nothing else will do it! I go a little farther. As it must be Christ Himself, and none other, it must also be Christ Himself rather than anything which Christ *gives*.

I was thinking, the other day, how different Christ is from all the friends and helpers that we have. They bring us good things, but Jesus gives us *Himself*. He does not merely give us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, but He Himself is made of God all these things to us! Hence we can never do without Him. When very ill, you are pleased to see the doctor, but when you are getting well you say to yourself, "I shall be glad to see the back of the good man, for that will be a sure sign that I am off the sick list." Ah, but when Jesus heals a soul, he wants to see Jesus more than ever! Our longing for the constant company of our Lord is the sign that we are getting well! He who longs for Jesus to abide with Him, forever, is healed of his plague! We never outgrow Christ—we only grow to hunger more and more!

If you eat a meal you lose your appetite, but if you feed upon Christ, you hunger and thirst still more after Him. This insatiable desire after Him is not a painful hunger, but a heavenly, pleasant hunger which grows upon you the more its cravings are gratified. The man who has little of Christ can do with little of Christ. But he that gets more of Christ pines for a yet fuller supply. Suppose a wise man were to instruct you? You would learn all he had to teach and then say, "Let him go on and teach somebody else." But when Jesus teaches, we discover so much of our own ignorance that we would gladly keep Him as our life-tutor! When our Lord taught the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, He opened the Scriptures and He opened their minds until their hearts burned within them! What next? Shall the Divine teacher pass on? No, no! They constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us; it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." The more He taught them, the more they wished to be taught!

This is *always* the way with Christ—He is growingly dear, increasingly necessary! Oh my Brothers and Sisters, you cannot do without Him! If you have your foot upon the threshold of pure gold and your finger on the latch of the gate of pearl, you now need Christ more than ever! I feel persuaded that you are of Rutherford's mind, when he cried to have his heart enlarged till it was as big as Heaven, that he might hold all Christ within it—and then he felt that even then it was too narrow a space for the boundless love of Jesus, since the Heaven of heavens cannot contain Him! And so he cried out for a heart as large as *seven* heavens, that he might entertain the Well-Beloved. Truly, I am content with what God has given me in all points, except that I long for more of Christ! I could sit down happy if I knew that my portion in the house and in the field would never grow—but I am famished to have more of my Lord!

The more we are filled within of Christ, the more we feel our own natural emptiness! The more we know of Him, the more we long to know Him! Paul, writing to the Philippians, when he had been a Christian for many years, yet says, "That I may know Him." Oh, Paul, do you not know Christ

yet? “Yes,” he says, “and no.” For he knew the love of Christ, but felt that it surpassed all knowledge. “All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full”—this is not our case in one respect, and yet it is in another, for all the streams of Grace and love and blessedness flow into our souls and we are full—yet, being full, we are longing for more! Not Your gifts, Lord, but Yourself! You, You are the desire of our hearts! Christ alone is enough.

Mark this. Nothing must be placed with Christ as if it were necessary to Him. Some hold a candle to the sun by preaching Christ *and* man’s philosophy, or their own priestcraft. When the blessed rain comes fresh from Heaven, they would gladly perfume it with their own dainty extract of fancy. As for God’s blessed air, fresh from the eternal hills, they dream that it cannot be right unless by scientific experiments they load it with their own smoke and clouds! Come, clear out, let us see the sun! We do not need your rush lights. Away with your gauges and your fineries! Let the clear sunlight enter! Let the holy water drop from Heaven! We want not your scented essences. Out of the way and let the fresh air blow about us. There is nothing like it for the health and strength of the soul! We rejoice in Christ and nothing else but Christ! Christ and no priestcraft! Christ and no philosophy! Christ and no modern thought! Christ and no human perfection! Christ, the whole of Christ, and nothing else but Christ—here lies the mystery of the Gospel of the Grace of God!

Brethren, what else but Christ can satisfy the justice of God? Look around you when a sense of sin is on you and the dread tribunal is before your eyes—what can you bring, by way of expiation, but Christ? What can you bring *with* Christ? What dare you associate with His blood and merits? Oh, my God, nothing will content You but Your Son, Your Son, alone! What else can quiet conscience? Some professors have consciences as good as new, for they have never been used. But he that has once had his conscience thoroughly exercised and pressed upon with all the weight of sin till he has felt as if it were better for him not to be than to be guilty before God—that man acknowledges that nothing but Christ will ever quiet his agonized heart!

See the bleeding Lamb and you will be pacified! See the exalted Lord pleading His righteousness before the Throne of God and conscience is even as a weaned child—and all the storm within the spirit is hushed into a great calm. What else will do to live with but Christ? I do not find, in times of pain and depression of spirit, that I can keep up upon anything but my Lord. The mind can feed at other times on pretty kickshaws and fine confectionery such as certain divines serve out in the form of orations and essays and the like, but when you are sorely sick, your soul abhors all manner of earthly meat and nothing will stay in the stomach but the Bread of Heaven, even the blessed Christ of God! Think also, when you come to die, what else will do but Christ? Oh, I have seen men die with Heaven in their eyes, the eternal Godhead seeming to transfigure them because they rejoiced in Christ! But a deathbed without Christ—it is the darkening twilight of eternal night! It is the gloomy cave which forms the entrance of the land of darkness.

Do not venture on life or death without Jesus, I implore you. “None but Christ, none but Christ”—this has been the martyr’s cry amidst the fire—let it be ours in life and death.

**II.** Secondly, we are to consider THE SWEETNESS OF THIS MYSTERY, WHICH IS CHRIST IN YOU. This is a grand advance. I know that there are a great many fishermen here, this morning, and I heartily welcome them. When you are out at sea you like to know that there are plenty of fish in the sea all round your boats. It is a fine thing to get in among the great shoals of fish. Yes, but there is one thing better than that! Fish in the sea are good, but the fish in the boat are the fish for you! Once get them in the net, or better still, safe into the vessel, and you are glad. Now Christ in Heaven—Christ free to poor sinners is precious—but Christ here in the heart is most precious of all! Here is the marrow and fatness. Christ on board the vessel brings safety and calm. Christ in your house, Christ in your heart, Christ in you—that is the cream of the matter, the honey of the honeycomb!

Gold is valuable, but men think more of a pound in their pockets than of huge ingots in the bank vault. A loaf of bread is a fine thing, but if we could not eat it, and so get it within us, we might die of starvation. A medicine may be a noble cure, but if it is always kept in the vial and we never take a draught from it, what good will it do us? Christ is best known when He is Christ *in* you. Let us talk about that a little. Christ *in* you—that is, first, Christ accepted by faith. Is it not a wonderful thing that Christ Jesus should ever enter into a man? Yes, but I will tell you something more wonderful, and that is, that He should enter in by so narrow an opening as our little faith! There is the sun—I do not know how many thousands of times the sun is bigger than the earth, and yet the sun can come into a little room or a close cell—and what is more, the sun can get in through a chink!

When the shutters have been closed I have known him come in through a little round hole in them. So Christ can come in through a little faith—a mere chink of confidence. If you are such a poor Believer that you can hardly think of assurance or confidence, yet if you trust the Lord, as surely as the sun comes in by a narrow crack, so will Christ come into your soul by the smallest opening of true faith! How wise it will be on your part, when you see your Lord’s sunny face shining through the lattices, to say, “I am not going to be satisfied with these mere glints and gleams, I would rather walk in the light of His Countenance. Pull up those blinds! Let the heavenly sun shine in and let me rejoice in its glory.” Grow in faith and enlarge your receiving power till you take in Christ into your inmost soul by the Holy Spirit, for it is Christ in you by faith that becomes the hope of glory.

By Christ in you we mean Christ possessed. You see, nothing is so much a man’s own as that which is within him. Do you tell me that a certain slice of bread is not mine and that I have no right to it? But I have eaten it and you may bring a lawsuit against me about that bread if you like, but you cannot get it away from me! That question is settled—that which I have eaten is mine. In this case, possession is not only nine points of the

law, but *all* the points. When a man gets Christ into Him, the devil himself cannot win a suit against him to recover Christ, for that matter is settled beyond question. Christ in you is yours, indeed! Men may question whether an acre of land or a house belongs to me, but the meat I ate yesterday is not a case of property which Chancery or any other court can alter. So, when the Believer has Christ in him, the Law has no more to say! The enclosure made by faith carries its own title deeds within it.

It means, too, Christ experienced in all His power. There may be a valuable medicine that works like magic to expel a man's pains and cure his diseases, but it is of no efficacy till it is within him! When it commences to purify his blood and to strengthen his frame, he is in a fair way to know it without depending upon the witness of others. Get Christ in you curing your sin, Christ in you filling your soul with love to virtue and holiness, bathing your heart in comfort and refining it with heavenly inspirations—then will you know the Lord! Christ *believed* in, Christ *possessed*, Christ *experienced*, Christ *in you*—this is worth a world! Moreover, Christ in us is Christ reigning. It reminds me of Mr. Bunyan's picture of Mansoul, when the Prince Immanuel laid siege to it and Diabolus, from within the city, strove to keep Him out.

It was a hard time for Mansoul, then, but, at last, the battering rams had broken down the gates and the silver trumpets sounded and the Prince's captains entered! Then the Prince, Himself, did ride down the city's streets, while liberated citizens welcomed Him with all their hearts, hung out all their streamers and made the Church towers ring again! The bells rang out merry peals, for the King, Himself, was come. Up to the castle of the heart, He rode in triumph and took His royal throne to be henceforth the sole lord and king of the city. Christ in you is a right royal word! Christ swaying His scepter from the center of your being, over every power and faculty, desire and resolve, bringing every thought into captivity to Himself—oh, this is glory begun and the sure pledge of Heaven!

Oh for more of the imperial sovereignty of Jesus! It is our liberty to be absolutely under His sway. Yes, and then Christ in you is Christ *filling* you. It is wonderful, when Christ once enters into a soul, how, by degrees, He occupies the whole of it. Did you ever hear the legend of a man whose garden produced nothing else but weeds, till at last he met with a strange foreign flower of singular vitality? The story is that he sowed a handful of this seed in his overgrown garden and left it to work its own sweet way. He slept and rose and knew not how the seed was growing till one day he opened the gate and saw a scene which astounded him. He knew that the seed would produce a dainty flower and he looked for it. But he had little dreamed that the plant would cover the whole garden! So it was—the flower had exterminated every weed, till, as he looked from one end to the other—from wall to wall he could see nothing but the fair colors of that rare plant and smell nothing but its delicious perfume.

Christ is that plant of renown! If He is sown in the soil of your soul, He will gradually eat out the roots of all evil weeds and poisonous plants, till over all your nature there shall be Christ in you! God grant we may realize the picture in our own hearts, and then we shall be in Paradise! It may

sound strange to add that Christ in you transfigures the man till he becomes like Christ, Himself. You thrust a bar of cold, black iron into the fire and keep it there till the fire enters into it. Look, the iron is like fire, itself—he that feels it will know no difference. The fire has permeated the iron and made it a fiery mass. I should like to have seen that bush in Horeb before which Moses took off his shoes. When it was all ablaze it seemed no longer a bush, but a mass of fire, a furnace of pure flame. The fire had transfigured the bush. So it is with us when Christ enters into us—He elevates us to a nobler state, even as Paul said—“I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.”

Jesus sanctifies us wholly—spirit, soul, and body—and takes us to dwell with Him in the perfect state above. Christ in you—how can I explain it? We are the little graft and He is the strong and living stem. We are laid to Him, bound to Him, sealed to Him—and when there is nothing between the new shoot and the old tree, at last the sap flows into the graft and graft and the tree are one! You know right well how Christ enters into us and becomes our life. Christ in you means power in you. A strong man armed keeps his house till a stronger than he comes—and when the stronger enters, the first tenant is ejected by the power of the new comer and kept out by the same means. We were without strength till Christ came, but now we war with principalities and powers and win the victory. Christ in you! Oh, what bliss! What joy! The Bridegroom is with us and we cannot fast! The King is with us and we are glad!

When King Charles went to live at Newmarket, it is said that a most poverty-stricken village became a wealthy place. Truly, when Christ comes to dwell in our hearts, our spiritual poverty suddenly turns to blessed wealth. Christ in you! What a wonder it is that He should deign to come under our roof! Lift up your heads, O you gates, and be you lifted up, you everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in. See the honor which His entrance brings with it! He glorifies the place where His foot rests even for a moment. If Jesus does but enter into your heart, His court comes within Him—honor, glory, immortality, Heaven and all other Divine things follow where He leads. “Oh,” says one, “I wish He would come and dwell in me.” Then, be humble, for He loves to dwell with him that is humble and of a contrite spirit.

Next, be clean, for if they must be clean that bear God’s vessels, much more they that have Christ, Himself, in them. Next, be empty, for Christ will not live amid the lumber of self, pride and carnal sufficiency. Learn abundantly to rejoice in Christ, for he who welcomes Christ will have Him always for a guest. Jesus never tarries where He is not desired. If His welcome is worn out, away He goes. Oh, desire and delight in Him! Hunger and thirst after Him, for Christ delights to dwell with an eager people, a hungry people, a people who value Him and cannot be happy without Him. Surely I have said enough to make you feel that the sweetness of true godliness lies in having Christ in you.

**III.** Thirdly, we are to consider that the **OUTLOOK OF ALL THIS IS CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY.** Last Sunday morning, as best I could in my feebleness, I spoke to you about the time when this earthly

house of our tabernacle shall be dissolved, when we shall find that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. But this morning's text goes a little further—it speaks of glory which is a hope for soul as well as body. Why glory! Glory? Surely that belongs only to God. To Him alone be glory! Yes, but Christ has said, "Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory."

And He also says, "And the glory which You have given Me, I have given them." Think of it! Glory for us poor creatures! Glory for you, Sister! Glory for me! It seems a strange thing that a sinner should ever have anything to do with glory when he deserves nothing but shame. We are neither kings nor princes, what have we to do with *glory*? Yet glory is to be our dwelling, glory our light, glory our crown, glory our song! The Lord will not be content to give us less than glory. Grace is very sweet, but might we not be content to swim forever in a sea of Grace? But no, our Lord "will give Grace *and* glory."—

***"All needful Grace will God bestow,  
And crown that Grace with glory, too."***

We shall have glorified bodies, glorious companions, a glorious reward and glorious rest!

But how do we know that we shall have glory? Why, first, He that has come to live in our hearts and reigns as our bosom's Lord, makes us glorious by His coming! His rest is glorious—the place of His feet is glorious—He must mean some great thing towards us, or He would never dwell in us. I saw a line carriage stopping, the other day, at a very humble hovel, and I thought to myself—"that carriage is not stopping there to collect rent, or to borrow a broom." Oh, no, that lady, yonder, is calling round and visiting the poor, and I doubt not she has taken in some nourishment to an invalid. I hope it was so. And I am sure my Lord Jesus Christ's carriage never stops at my door to get anything out of me! Whenever He comes, He brings countless blessings with Him. Such a one as He is, God over all, blessed forever—it cannot be that He took our nature, unless with high designs of unsearchable love!

Thus we nourish large expectations upon the food of solid reason. I am sure our Lord Jesus would never have done so much if He had not meant to manifest the immeasurable breadth and length of a love which is beyond imagining. What He has done, already, surprises me even to amazement. I think nothing can appear strange or hard to believe, let Him do what He may in the future. If the Scriptures tell me my Lord is going to fill me with His own glory and to set me at His own right hand, I believe it. He who went to the Cross for me will never be ashamed of me. He who gave me Himself will give me all Heaven and more! He that opened His very heart to find blood and water to wash me in—how shall He keep back even His *kingdom* from me?

O sweet Lord Jesus, You are, indeed, to us the hope, the pledge, the guarantee of glory! Friend, do you not feel that Christ in you is the dawn of Heaven? Besides this, Christ is He that has entered into covenant with God to bring His people home to glory. He has pledged Himself to bring

every sheep of His flock safe to His Father's right hand and He will keep His engagement, for He never failed one Covenant promise yet. Moreover, this we do know, that the Christ who is come to live with us will never be separated from us. If He had not meant to stay, He would not have entered our heart at all. There was nothing to tempt Him to come, and if, in Sovereign Grace, He deigned to live in the poor cottage of our nature, then, Brothers and Sisters, He knew what He was doing. He had counted the cost, He had foreseen all the evil that would be in us and about us, and when He came, He come with the intent to stay.

Someone asked another, the other day, "What persuasion are you of?" And the answer was, "I am persuaded that neither life, nor death nor things present, nor things to come shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Are not you of that persuasion, Brother? If so, you can see how Christ in you is the hope of glory. Why, look, Sirs, Christ in you is glory! Did we not show that just now? "Lift up your heads, O you gates, and be you lifted up you everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in!" You have Heaven in having Christ, for Christ is the biggest part of Heaven! Is not Christ the *soul* of Heaven, and having Him you have glory? What is more, having gotten Christ, Christ's glory and your glory are wrapped up together.

If Christ were to lose you, it would be a great loss to you, but a greater loss to Him. If I can perish with Christ in me, I shall certainly be a fearful loser, but so will He, for where is His honor, where His glory if a Believer perishes? His glory is gone if one soul that trusts in Him is ever cast away. Comfort yourselves with this word—Christ in you means you in glory, as surely us God lives! There is no question about that! Go your ways and rejoice in Christ Jesus and let men see who it is that lives in you! Let Jesus speak through your mouth, weep through your eyes and smile through your face! Let Him work with your hands and walk within your feet, and be tender with your heart. Let Him seek sinners through you! Let Him comfort saints through you until the day breaks and the shadows flee away!

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**PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON  
TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.**

# PERFECTION IN CHRIST

## NO. 2581

A SERMON  
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, JULY 31, 1898.

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK,  
ON A THURSDAY EVENING, IN THE YEAR 1856.

*“Perfect in Christ Jesus.”*  
*Colossians 1:28.*

Perfection in Jesus Christ! What effect ought it to have upon our hearts if it really is ours? Perfection! What do we know of it from Scripture? We know that it is a word so large that while it takes us little time to say it, yet it comprehends all words within its meaning. There is no good word of any description which can be applied to any creature but this word, *perfection*, takes it in. And though it is easy to utter it with our lips, I question whether there is any mortal mind capable of grasping the idea of perfection any more than it can grasp the idea of eternity! When we begin to think of eternity—without beginning, without end—we are lost in trying to comprehend it because we are finite. And when we once endeavor to conceive perfection—without fault, without flaw—we are lost because we are imperfect! And therefore we cannot understand perfection any more than the finite can grasp the infinite! Perfection, indeed, seems to be the sole prerogative of God. He is perfect in everything. In all His attributes there is no lack. From whatever point of view we regard Him, He is without blot or blemish. And no man, speaking truthfully of God, can say that there is anything of imperfection in Him. If we speak of majesty, His Glory is unsurpassed. If we talk of power, His is Omnipotence and that, indeed, is infinite power! If we speak of wisdom, His is the wisdom of the Godhead—He knows all things, from the most minute to the most immense. He comprehends all secrets and grasps all knowledge in His mighty mind.

It does seem, at first sight, as if perfection could belong only to the Creator. But we remember that the works of God are also perfect and so are all His ways. When He made the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, He looked upon them and said, “They are very good.” Written on the face of Nature, there was then this one word, Perfection! All God’s works were perfect, without a flaw—the great Artificer completed all His workmanship and left nothing undone. There was no rough and crude matter which He had not formed—there was no substance He touched which He did not turn into the gold of perfectness. All things were good, yes, very good—all were perfect!

There is one thing on earth, even now, which is perfect. Albeit that perfection was blasted by the Fall and ever since the Garden of Eden was

devastated by the sin of man, perfection has gone, yet there is one thing on earth which we possess which is perfect. You all know what that is—it is the perfect will of God contained in the Sacred Scriptures. He who would be able to spell perfection in mortal language must read the Bible through, for he will find it perfect in all its parts—perfectly true, perfectly free from all error, perfect in everything that is necessary for man to know, perfect in all that can guide us to bliss, perfect in all that can warn us of dangers on the road. There is still something of perfection left here, but when we come to look *within*, where is perfection then, Beloved?

I shall not stop to prove the depravity of mankind, I will not talk much about the fall of Adam, how it injured us and destroyed the perfection of our nature, but I would ask this simple question of you—Do you not feel in your own souls that perfection is not in you? Does not every day teach you that? And though there are times when you are striving to be like Christ and seeking to serve Him, yet in the very striving and seeking you forget that you must live wholly on Christ, that you must trust Him as well in your duties to sanctify them as in your sins to forgive them! And then you begin to set up a perfection of your own, although you have so often had a view of your own heart that you ought not, for a moment, dream of any perfection there! Without making it a doctrine, I simply state it as a fact which you will not deny—that in you, that is, in your flesh—there is not only imperfection—but there dwells no good thing. Honestly, from the depths of your soul, you must confess that whether Adam lost perfection or not, whether you ever had perfection when you were born or not—it is not to be found in you—not in your conduct, conversation, or life! You only wish it were there. Daily experience makes you bemoan the lack of it. Every tear that trickles from your eyes say, “Imperfection.” Every sigh which comes from your heart says, “Imperfection.” Every harsh word which proceeds from your lips says, “Imperfection.” And every duty which is not done with the most holy, strict and rigid observance of God’s Law cries out, “Imperfection!” You sit down, like the captive daughter of Zion, and confess that the crown of perfection is gone from your head and departed from your heart. Guilty you must lie before God, for perfection is not in you.

But, then, while speaking of the Doctrine of Perfection, we must remember that, according to the sacred oracles, perfection is absolutely necessary for all who hope to enter Heaven! We may have lost perfection, but that does not alter God’s demand for it. It may be impossible that we should ever be perfect in ourselves, but God demands that we should be perfect. The holy Law was given by God and if we wish to be saved by it, we must keep it perfectly—no man who is not perfect can ever hope to enter Heaven! Unless he can find perfection somewhere—in another, if not in himself—He must be irretrievably ruined and driven from God’s Presence. No man under the sun can ever walk the starry plains of Heaven, or tread the golden streets of bliss until he gets perfection somehow or other! Let me tell you why.

First of all, it would be unjust of God if He did not punish man if he is not perfect. God required of all men, originally, that they should keep His

entire Law. Now, if a man is not perfect, it stands to reason that he must have broken God's Law, otherwise he would be perfect. Having broken it, God has said, "I will punish sin. The soul that sins, it shall die." And—with reverence to the Most High God, we say it—if He does not punish every sin, He is not a just God. If He does not exact the punishment for every transgression, there is a blot upon His escutcheon—the whiteness of His Throne is tinged with stains and He is no longer that awfully, severely just God we have considered Him to be! I tell you, Man, the very Nature of God demands that you should be punished if you are not perfect! If but one sin has been committed by you, you have broken the tablets of God's Commandments and you are guilty of breaking them all! Ah, but it is not merely one sin that you have committed, but ten thousand times ten thousand! You are far from perfection and unless you can get perfection somewhere—in Christ, or in yourself—you are lost beyond all hope of remedy, for perfection God must have, as a just God, or else He must punish you for your sin!

Moreover, remember that we must be perfect or else we shall never be fit companions for those who are perfect in spirit and stand before the Throne of God. Are not the angels perfect? Has sin ever stained their purity? Once, it is true, "There was war in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in Heaven." But now the spirits before God's Throne are spotless and pure even as God is. Has God any stain on Him? Will any dare to say there is imperfection in Him? No, God and the angels are perfect—and would men be fit companions for angels and God if they had imperfections? If men should have sin when they come to die, would they be fit to live with those spirits who know no sin and in whose breasts there has been no guile? Could I hold acquaintance and familiar converse with the man whose lips are always guilty of profane swearing? Could I live in peace with the man whose character is not akin to my own conduct? And, surely, there is not so much difference between me and my fellow creatures, here, as between the sinner and his God. No, my Friend, unless you get perfection somewhere—in Christ, or somewhere else—you cannot go to Heaven! You must have perfection, for God has declared that nothing that defiles shall in any way enter the gates of Paradise—

***"Those holy gates forever bar  
Pollution, sin and shame."***

None but those washed whiter than snow and as pure as the Almighty can hope to be companions of the Deity and co-heirs with the celestial spirits. You must have perfection if you would enter Heaven—this is evident not only from the Nature of God, but from the holiness of Heaven itself! Otherwise you would be unfit to enter and you would not be happy if you were there.

"Where, then, is perfection to be found?" cries the poor sinner. We find a multitude of persons ready to tell us, "Here is perfection," or, "There is perfection." *The ceremonialist* says, "I will give you perfection! Here it is—you shall, in your infancy, have sacred drops fall upon your forehead and hallowed words shall be pronounced over you—and you shall be regener-

ated! In your later years, you shall kneel before the sacred table and the bishop's hands shall be solemnly laid upon your head, and you shall take the sacramental bread and wine. And when you come to die, the priest shall sit by your side and he shall give you, in your last expiring moment, some drops of goodly cheer called wine, and a piece of bread, and these shall be your passport to Heaven—and so you shall be perfect!" Ah, poor ceremonialist, you will find yourself mightily mistaken and much deceived! Like a dream when one awakes, God will scatter all the baseless fabric of your hands—all that you have done and all those pretty garments you have woven shall be torn sunder and cast into the fire—and you shall stand naked before Him!

Then comes *the speculative perfectionist*. He tells you that you must believe in Jesus Christ and then, by a rigid system of devotion and constantly observing religious duties, you will attain to three or four stages. You will get, in the first place, to justification, then to sanctification and go on, by degree, until you will be perfectly sanctified and come to the highest degree men can have in the body. I have met with some of these "perfectly sanctified" gentlemen, but I could have spoiled their perfection simply by treading on their corns—and I believe I have done so, for they have seemed to be immensely cross when I have denied their proud boast! I have heard of a particularly perfect man who came to John Bettridge one morning. The quaint and honest minister treated him very rudely, whereupon the man turned round at once and began to speak all manner of evil words. John said to him, "Pretty perfection was yours, that I could spoil in so easy a manner!" You will always find those so-called "perfection" gentlemen far from perfect. I would not trust the man who called himself, "perfect," in anything whatever, for he that says he has no sin is a liar, and the Truth of God is not in him. He that says he is perfect, mistakes God's Word and knows not himself.

Where, then, is perfection to be found? The text tells us that all Christians are perfect in Christ Jesus, that the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty are perfect in Christ Jesus. Let me try to explain the meaning of this perfection in Christ.

#### I. First, consider HOW GOD'S PEOPLE ARE "IN CHRIST."

I remark, first, *they are, all of them, in Christ in the Covenant of Election*. When God chose His people, He did not choose them one by one, separately, but He chose Christ and all His people were chosen in Him. Just as when I select an acorn, I select all the unborn forests slumbering in that acorn cup, so, when God chose Jesus, He chose all the people that were in Him, all whom Christ had taken to Himself by an eternal union and had made one with His own Person.

Secondly, *the chosen ones are also all in Christ by redemption*. When Jesus died, each one of us who believe in Jesus died in Him. And when He suffered, we suffered in Christ. Our sins were laid on Christ's head and now, Christ's merits are laid on us. Christ made an atonement for the sins of all His elect through the shedding of His blood upon the Cross. We were in Him when He died. We were in Him when they laid Him in the grave. We were in Him when He rose and led captivity captive. And we are in Him now!

Thirdly, *we are in the Lord Jesus Christ actually, positively and, to our own knowledge, when we believe in Him.* It is then, when faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, that we become *consciously* in Christ! We were in Christ before, but we did not know it. We were made secure in Jesus from before the foundation of the world, but we did not know it—we had no evidence of it whatever. We were like a man who is underage—the possessions of his father, or those which have been left to him when he turns twenty-one, are positively his, but he cannot touch them until he comes of age. So, all the possessions of the Covenant belong to the elect even before they believe, but they cannot touch them until the appointed time comes when, by Sovereign Grace, they believe. A man who has not attained his majority cannot get much comfort from what he is to have when he comes to full age. He cannot live on it. He cannot be supported by it. So, the Christian cannot feed on what he has not received. When we have faith, then we come into our inheritance! The moment we believe, we have attained full age—we are no longer under tutors, governors and schoolmasters, but we are brought to Christ—we are of perfect age and then we are said to be “in Christ.” The moment a sinner believes, then he is “in Christ” and no man whatever has any right to make any pretense that he is in Christ until he believes—until he has surrendered himself to Christ, until he has given himself to Jesus to be saved by Him—to serve Him, to live for Him and, at last, to die in Him and live with Him forever!

**II.** The doctrine of our text is THAT EVERY MAN WHO IS “IN CHRIST” IS PERFECT.

Does not this startle us? The majesty of our text demands someone who could discourse with eloquence. Yes, it needs an angel to proclaim its glorious meaning! Believers are, in Christ, perfect—every one of them! He is a new-born child of God! It may be only ten minutes since he put his faith in Jesus Christ. Before that time he had been a drunk, a swearer, a blasphemer. But yet I tell you, if that man has really believed and is in Christ, he is perfect in Christ! There is another man who has been a backslider. Once he walked in God’s ways, but he has been suffered to wander from the faith. Now God is bringing him back. He is laying hold on him and the man is weeping, repenting and crying out! His bones are broken through the fall, his soul is sore and sick, even unto death! Look at him as he stands with tears of penitence coursing down his cheeks! I tell you, that man, backslider though he may have been—though he has sinned even as David did—is perfect in the Person of Christ!

There is another, a gray-headed old man. Long has he fought his Master’s battles—he has received many a wound and scar—and the troubles and trials of this mortal life have greatly weakened him. If you ask him whether he is perfect, he tells you, “No, from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, by nature I feel diseased. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing.” He disclaims all righteousness of his own, all trust in himself, all hope out of Christ. I tell you, that old man is perfect in Christ! I care not what may be his frailties, what may be his weaknesses—he is perfect in Christ! And then, O Christian, what though your

sins are many, what though infirmities beset you, though you have a hasty temper and, perhaps, the lusts of the flesh sometimes rise—and only preventing Grace saves you from going astray—what though evil thoughts cross your mind and today you are bemoaning your sad case and crying out, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”—I tell you, Christian, you are complete in Him, you are perfect in Christ Jesus! Having been washed in His blood, clothed with His righteousness, united to His Person, you are, this moment, perfect in Him!

There is one passage in Solomon’s Song which once flashed in my mind with great brilliancy when I was reading that blessed Canticle. It says, “You are all fair, My love; there is no spot in you.” That is Jesus Christ talking to His Church. She says, “I am black, because the sun has looked upon me.” She acknowledges her own imperfections and her lack of beauty, but Jesus Christ says, “You are all fair, My love; there is no spot in you.” Looking at His Church from the crown of her head to the sole of her feet, He sees not a blemish because she is in Him! She does not stand in herself. Her divisions and the sins of her members and of her ministers are sore blemishes if you look at her with the eye of the world, or with the eyes of Christians—but if you look at her in Christ, all her blemishes are gone—she is covered with a robe that makes her shine like a queen! Though her old garments may have been those of beggary and ruin, she now has the garments of majesty and light. “You are complete in Him,” yes, you are “perfect in Christ Jesus.”

I think it would be very hard to make some who are the Lord’s people believe this. Some of you are drudging on in bondage because you do not completely understand Justification by Faith. And I believe that the great fault of the ministry of our day is that complete justification in the Person of Jesus Christ is not preached in all its length and breadth. Because there are some ministers who, while preaching it, say things which have a tendency to lead men to licentiousness, therefore we are forbidden to say anything at all about it. But, Beloved, I am sure that all I can say to you about our perfection in Christ will never lead a Christian to licentiousness, for, because he is “perfect in Christ,” he will long to be more like Christ! And he will seek more and more, day by day, to have the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit exerted upon him to keep him from sin.

Many go to Arminians and semi-Calvinists to hear this, that and the other. They have all kinds of divinity conglomerated into one—little bits of Pelagianism tacked on to small scraps of Arminianism, these hooked on to Calvinism and that, again, joined to Socinianism—all sorts of strange combinations mixed up into one curious medley for them to drink! Whereas they need, instead of that, the pure unadulterated milk of God’s Word in the shape of the doctrinal preaching of Justification by Faith!

How are we justified? That is the question for us to answer. Are we justified by works, or by Grace? Every true Christian says, “We are justified by faith. By Grace are we saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.” Well then, if we are saved by faith in Christ,

can we be said to be saved by works? If I had no good works at this moment, and if I have faith, am I not as completely justified as though I had ten thousand good works? I know, if I am justified by faith, good works will always follow, but good works will never *merit* justification. They are the handmaidens, not the mistress! Faith in Christ is the foundation, the cornerstone and top stone of justification. Good works are *evidences* of justification—they have nothing to do with procuring it. The poor thief who died, having been hardly able to *do* a good work, went to Heaven just as surely as the man shall who lives 80 years in the service of his Master! It is not anything in *myself* that saves me—it is Christ alone. If I feel myself the most loathsome of all creatures, even though I hate and abhor myself, yet if I know I have faith in Christ—if I have cast myself on His atoning Sacrifice, He has not altered though I have—He is as perfect as ever, in Him there is no sin! And therefore I, standing in HIM, am perfect this moment notwithstanding all my corruptions and frailties!

**III.** Now I come very briefly to consider THE INFLUENCE OF THIS DOCTRINE of Perfection in Christ when it is realized in the heart.

I know that at the outset, some will say that this doctrine, stated so broadly, must necessarily lead persons to imagine that good works are of little service. I ask them, if they ever read any of Luther's writings, whether they have noticed how broadly he speaks concerning good works and the righteousness of the flesh? If they have read his writings, they will find that, as a Protestant and a follower of Luther, I have not overstepped the mark. And if they will turn to the Epistle to the Romans they will see how Paul declares, "And if by Grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise Grace is no more Grace. But if it is of works, then it is no more Grace: otherwise work is no more work." If they will read the other Epistles, they will see that I might have said even more upon this theme. I deny that this doctrine has any tendency to lead men to sin. I can speak for myself, so far as my own life is concerned, I always find myself most holy when I know myself to be most unholy. I can live most *like* Jesus when I live most *on* Jesus and most out of myself. When I say, "I must live on Christ alone, I must rest solely on Him for salvation and believe that, however unworthy, I am saved in Jesus," then there rises up, as a motive for gratitude, this thought, "Will I not live wholly to Christ? Will I not love Him and serve Him, seeing that I am saved by His merits?" That is the strongest tie to virtue and the greatest bond to a holy life.

Then let me tell you the next effect of this doctrine. *It gives a Christian the greatest calm, quiet, ease and peace.* How often are the saints of God downcast and sad! They ought not to be so. I do not think they would be if they could always see their perfection in Christ. I know you have your, "corruption men," who always preach corruption and nothing else, telling you about the depravity of the heart and the innate evil of the soul. I like to read their works and to hear them—but I like to go a little further and to remember that I am "perfect in Christ Jesus." I do not wonder that those men who always dwell upon corruption should look so sad and seem so miserable. But I think, if a man could always see his perfection in Christ, he would be happy. What if distresses afflict me? I am perfect in Christ! Though Satan assaults me, I am perfect in Christ Jesus!

Though there are many things to be done before I get to Heaven, those are done for me in the Covenant of Divine Grace! There is nothing needed—Christ has done it all.”—

**“It is finished!”**

**Hear the dying Savior cry.”**

And if it *is* finished, then am I complete in Him and can “rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

Poor Christian, you are perfect in Christ! Tried Christian, you are perfect in Jesus! If the Holy Spirit does but apply this Truth of God to your soul, if you were in the very caverns of the ocean, it would be enough to carry you up to the stars for joy, to think that you are perfect in Christ! There are some who are conscious that they have no perfection, but are covered with sin from head to foot. There is a poor wretch who has crept into this Chapel, tonight, and has felt that he would crawl down a mouse hole or stay in any corner of the building if he might but hear the sermon. He felt it was too hallowed a place for him to sit down—he was almost ashamed to stand in the company of the saints, he believed himself to be such an unworthy sinner. I tell you, Friend, if you are a poor, stripped, law-condemned sinner, you shall yet be able to see yourself “perfect in Christ Jesus.” Man, does not this make your ears tingle? Does not your heart leap for joy at the very thought of it? Black with sin as you are, you shall be white one day! Filthy as you are, you shall yet be cleansed! Evil as you are, you shall be made good! Yes, however enormous your transgressions, however black your crimes—you may even have been a murderer—Christ’s blood can wash the blood off your hands! You may have been a thief, but Jesus Christ restored that which He took not away, and He will forgive even your sins. You may be the vilest one that ever disgraced this earth—you may be a walking nuisance in the very streets—yet I tell you, if you believe in Jesus Christ this night, you shall go away perfectly clean! Oh, it is marvelous, this salvation! Christ takes a worm and transforms it into an angel! Christ takes a filthy thing and makes it into a cherub! Christ takes a black and deformed thing and makes it clean and matchless in its glory, peerless in its beauty—and fit to be the companion of seraphs!

O my Soul, stand and admire this blessed doctrine of Perfection in Christ Jesus! Though you should become more pure and pure every day, yet perfection would still be beyond you. The heights say perfection is not in them! The depths say, “Perfection is not here!” The caverns in the heart of the earth tell us, “Perfection is not in us.” Perfection is in the Person of Jesus Christ, alone! O Christian, think of this! The robes of Jesus are put on you! The royal crown Christ Jesus wore is now, in God’s eyes, on your head! The robe of azure which once He had upon His shoulders is now on yours! His silver sandals are yours! The golden zone, His belt of Glory, is yours! The matchless purity of His sinless life is yours! Everything that Christ has is yours—you are perfect in Him—there is nothing you can want which He cannot give you! If you go to His storehouse with a large list of your needs, saying, “I need this,” or, “I need that,” it is all there! And more than you will ever need is there. Do you want sanctification? It is there! Do you want redemption? It is there!

Do you want strengthening Grace? It is there! Do you want preservation? It is there! Man, are you standing, tonight, poor, naked, blind, miserable, desponding? I say—Be not so foolish as to remain in all your poverty and wretchedness when you may be rich! Why, Christian, are you now poor, ragged, stripped? Do you see the hole in that wall? It has a mark upon it in the shape of a cross. I will lend you the key called, “Promise.” Go, insert it in the keyhole, and when you open it, whatever you need you shall find. First, there is a bath of gold—in it you shall be washed and become white as snow! Further on there hangs a robe and though you are now naked, you shall put it on. There is a crown for you to wear and there is everything else you can want. If you need bread, you shall find it, for it is said, “Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure.” If you need comfort, it is there, for Christ is “the consolation of Israel.” If you need forgiveness, it is there. All things are wrapped up in Christ!

This morning my eyes were dazzled when I saw the Queen’s plate. I am not much of a believer in the Queen’s plate, or anybody else’s plate, but when I saw things of so much value—the precious jewels that sparkled here and there—I wondered at their amazing costliness and could not guess how much they would come to if they were all sold and the money given to the poor—which I rather felt inclined to wish they might be. But if I were once to get to see all the riches of Christ could I tell you how large His riches are—I would have to hold up my hands in astonishment and say, as I took up one mercy after another, “This is a golden mercy—how much is it worth?” I would be unable to tell you the value of any one of them! “Ah,” the angels would say, “Do not try to estimate these precious things, for they had to be bought with Christ’s blood. And until you know the price of Divine blood, you cannot tell the value of these mercies.”

Now, to wind up my discourse, let me enquire who of you can take to yourselves this blessed doctrine? How many of you are “perfect in Christ Jesus?” Some man says, “I think I am perfect in myself. I am as respectable a gentleman as anybody living and I am not going to be insulted by any of your nonsense! I am at least as good as other people and, perhaps, rather better. And I think if Heaven does not go by favor, I most certainly shall get in, for I feel myself to be very good and righteous.” Then hear the voice of Jesus—“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like unto whited sepulchres which, indeed, appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones and of all uncleanness. Even so you, also, outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within, you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” “Verily I say unto you that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you.”

Another says, “Perfect in Christ Jesus? No, Sir, that I am not. I know I have no interest in the blood of Christ and if I were to say I had, it would be a barefaced lie—and my conscience would cry out against me. There is something in my heart which would forbid my lips to say it.” Then, pray, do not say it, dear Heart, for I would not have you speak what is not true. If you feel that you have not any interest in Christ, say so to your own souls. It is best for you to look the matter in the face. You say

you do not know that Christ died for you. You say you are sure that you will sink into eternal torments if you die tonight. Well, take that thought home to your heart and, for half-an-hour think it over—"I am out of Christ. I am a condemned sinner and if I were to die, I feel I should sink into Hell." Do not be afraid of the thought. Do not be like the man who says, "I will not have that thought anymore," but be honest with yourselves. What is the good of cheating yourselves? Deal fairly with your own souls. It never does a man any hurt to examine his books and see if his accounts are all right. If he is a bankrupt, he will not lose anything by knowing it—if he is insolvent, he will get no richer by hiding it from himself. You may say, "It is true, I am a lost and condemned sinner." Well, the thought will bring you to your knees and you will cry, "O God, give me an interest in Jesus Christ!" And that mighty God who always hears prayer, will save you and you shall go on your way rejoicing and triumphing in Christ!

Then there is one who, when I ask the question, "Are you perfect in Christ Jesus?" will reply, "Ah, I trust I am! By humble faith I lay my hand on the head of Jesus and I know that I stand perfect in Him." Then, my Brother, give me your heart, let us shake hearts tonight! Oh, it is a sweet brotherhood, the brotherhood of the perfect in Christ Jesus! You are perfect in Him—then, my Brothers and Sisters, wipe those tears away—you are perfect in Christ! Do you know what you poor sinner says? He says, "O Lord, if I could say that, I would not care about health, I would not care whether I was in poverty, or whether I was rich." He thinks, if he only knew himself to be "perfect in Christ," he would never be miserable as long as he lived. Then why, Beloved, are you down in your spirits while you are "perfect in Christ?" Why do you lie on the ground? It is time for you to take your harp from the willows, if you are "perfect in Christ." I can see no room for sadness! Suppose that you are going to a poor house where you have not a bit of fire? Never mind, you can say, "I am perfect in Jesus." Perhaps you will scarcely know where the next meal will come from—let this thought cheer you, "Perfect in Jesus."

Though the wind may come and blow between the rags that cover you, if you can say, "I am perfect in Jesus," you can be content with poverty! Though you are in pain and tossing about in your bed, if you can say, "I am perfect in Jesus," it will be like medicine to soothe your spirits! And when grim Death appears, you only need look him in the face and say, "Perfect in Jesus," and in that moment Death will change into an angel, pain will be turned into bliss and sorrow into immortal Glory! God give all of us to realize that we are perfect in Jesus, in Jesus only, in Jesus forever! Bless His precious name! Hallelujah to His Person, glory to His Grace! Seraphs, sing out His praises! Cherubs, take up the note! You rocks, you hills, burst forth into song! All you Christians, sing praises to Him who loved us with an everlasting love and who will carry us safely home to Glory to be with Him forever and ever!

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
ISAIAH 55**

**Verse 1.** *Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters, and he that has no money; come, buy, and eat; yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.* Let no one ask whether he may come to Christ for salvation—he is bid to come! Whoever wills to come is welcome. “Ho!” says God, as men cry when they have goods to sell and would attract the passerby. And not merely to one does He speak, but to everyone—“Ho! Everyone who thirsts”—whatever is the age he lives in and to whatever age he may, himself, have attained “Ho! Everyone who thirsts.” But is there anything to be had by those who come? There is in God exactly that which every soul needs! First, “waters” for the thirsty. There is even more than absolute necessities—“wine and milk,” God has an abundance of Grace, yes, a superabundance! He can give us all we need and even more than we desire. Oh, turn not away when God the Father cries, “Ho!”

**2.** *Why do you spend money for that which is not bread? And your labor for that which satisfies not? Listen diligently to Me and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.* Apart from God, there is nothing for us but destruction. We may spend our money and our labor, too, but happiness is not to be found by the creature apart from the Creator, or by a sinner apart from the Savior. God has so constituted the human mind that it cannot be perfect without Him.

**3.** *Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live.* It seems a very little thing to do, does it not? Simply to hear—to incline the ear—yet that is the way of salvation. “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” Alas, nowadays the mass of men will not hear God’s message of mercy—they pass it by as if it were an old worn-out tale of which they knew quite enough! Hear, then, what God says to His poor forgetful creature—“Hear, and your soul shall live.”

**3.** *And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.* Will God make a covenant with man? Can it be that He will strike hands with sinful man and enter into league and compact with him? Yes, so He says. If men will but incline their ear and come to Him, He will enter into covenant with them. “I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” “But David is dead,” says someone. Yes, I know he is, but the David, here meant, always lives—it is Jesus, the Son of God!

**4.** *Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.* Jesus Christ is the people’s Witness and Leader. Born among them, living among them, dying for them, living still to save them—and God declares that He gives this Christ to such as hear Him, to such as incline their ear and come unto Him.

**5.** *Behold, you shall call a nation that you know not and nations that knew you not shall run unto you because of the Lord your God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you.* Brothers and Sisters, our Lord Jesus Christ did not die in vain. He died to redeem His chosen people and those whom He redeemed, He will certainly have. Even though some reject Him, others will not. God has power over human hearts and where Christ’s Gospel is faithfully preached and attended by the Holy Spirit’s power, sinners must come to Christ! Their will shall sweetly yield to the supremacy of love. Even though they set themselves against Christ, yet

they shall come when the Lord draws them! And Glory shall be gotten for His holy name by the salvation of those who never even thought of being saved!

**6.** *Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near.* “Seek the Lord while He may be found.” That is, NOW. “Call upon Him while He is near.” He is near now! Wherever Christ is lifted up and His Gospel is proclaimed, there He is according to His promise, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

**7.** *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.* What a grand word that is! “He will abundantly pardon.” However abundant sin may be, God’s pardon is still more abundant! As Paul puts it, “Where sin abounded, Grace did much more abound.” Sin may be like the great mountains, but the mercy of God is like Noah’s flood that rose above the tops of the highest hills! “He will abundantly pardon.”

**8.** *For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the LORD.* Oh, what a mercy it is to be taught to think God’s thoughts and to be led in God’s ways! It is the entrance into a new life! It is something infinitely beyond the greatest elevation to which any ordinary life can ever reach by its own unaided power!

**9-12.** *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from Heaven, and returns not there, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth good and bad, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall My Word be that goes forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For you shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.* “For you”—that is, you who have heard God’s Word and believed it—“you shall go out with joy.” Happy hearts help to make a happy world! He who has found his Savior, received God’s pardon and learned God’s thoughts, shall find the whole world full of music to him, wherever he may be!

**13.** *Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.* Wherever God’s Grace begins to work, it cuts up thorns and thistles—and plants in place of them fir trees and myrtle trees. Oh, that His Grace might renew each one of us! And, then, when that blessed work has been done, may we never cease to glorify that dear name by the power of which we have been changed!

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307

**PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY  
TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.**

# WORK IN US AND WORK BY US

## NO. 914

**DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 6, 1870,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

***“Whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working,  
which works in me mightily.”  
Colossians 1:29.***

THE Apostle Paul could very truthfully assert that he labored and agonized. When the Holy Spirit had anointed the Apostles they all became ardent enthusiasts for the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom. Having the whole world committed to them that they might enlighten it, they labored most ardently—each one in his sphere to spread abroad the Truth of the Gospel—but the Apostle of the Gentiles labored more abundantly than they all. Into how many countries did he carry the testimony of Christ? How often did he cross the sea, traverse mountains, and ford rivers?

One sees in his career something more than an ordinary Christian life. He was so indefatigable in service that surely, nothing beyond could have been possible to humanity, even under the help of God. His public labors were not only abundant, but they were the cause of continual inward conflict. He never preached a sermon, wrote an Epistle, or attempted a work without earnest prayer and soul-consuming zeal. Night and day with tears he said of a certain Church that he had labored for its good. He was a man so whole-hearted and intense in all that he did, that we ought to remember not merely the amount of his labors, but the way in which he wore himself out by the intensity of his zeal in them.

Probably no other man led a more intensely ardent life than he. Moreover, added to all this, he carried a weight of care enough to crush him. For there came upon him the care of all the Churches—to plant them, to defend them against rising errors, to prevent schisms from dividing the flock. To lead the converts from Grace to Grace, to instruct them, and to present everyone perfect before God. The burden resting upon the Apostle was greater than the cares of an empire.

And then, as if to complete the whole, he was called to suffer persecutions of which he has given us a list. A list of which, as we read it, makes us shudder that one man should have endured so much—and makes us also glory in humanity that it should be possible that so much should be borne and done for God by a single individual.

Yet, note it well, the Apostle takes no honor to himself. He humbly ascribes whatever he had done, or suffered, entirely to his Lord. He declares that he labored and agonized, but he confesses that it was through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, who mightily by the Holy Spirit worked in him. In another place, when he had mentioned his abundant labors, he added, “Yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me.” He remembered where to put the crown. He took care not to steal an atom of the

glory for himself. He ascribed all to the power of Him who loved him and gave Himself for him.

Let us imitate the Apostle in these two things. My Brethren, let us live, while we live, a life of energy. But let us at the same time confess, when we have done all, that we are unprofitable servants. And if there is any glory, any praise resulting from the work which we achieve, let us be careful to lay it all at the Redeemer's feet.

The doctrine of the text upon which I intend to preach this morning, as I may be enabled, is this—it is clear from what Paul has here said that the work of Christ in us and for us does not exempt as from work and service, nor does the Holy Spirit's work supersede human effort, but rather excites it. Paul speaks of an inner work, a mighty work worked in him, but he also declares, "whereunto I also labor, striving." So that the doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit is not intended in any degree to lull our minds into sloth, but wherever the Holy Spirit works He makes men work.

He works in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure, that we also may work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. I shall try to illustrate this Truth in two respects. First, in reference to a man's own salvation. And secondly, in the matter of the Christian man's ministry for the salvation of others. The work of the Holy Spirit does not supersede Christian effort in either case.

**I. First, then, IN THE BELIEVER'S SALVATION.** We believe, each one of us, and we have Scriptural warrant for it, that if any man is saved, the work within his soul is entirely worked by the Holy Spirit. Man is dead in sin, and the dead cannot raise themselves from the grave. Quickening and spiritual resurrection must be accomplished by Divine power. Man must be born again, and this birth must be effected by Divine power, for unless a man is born from Above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

As the commencement of salvation is dependent upon the Holy Spirit, so is the carrying of it on. "Without Me you can do nothing," is Christ's testimony. We shall never persevere except as Grace shall keep us from falling, nor may we hope to be presented faultless before the august Presence except as the Holy Spirit shall sanctify us from day to day, and make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. I trust, my Brethren, I need not do more than assert this doctrine in your hearing, since you know how continually we insist upon it, and our trumpet never gives an uncertain sound as to the great Truth that God works all our works in us, and that salvation is of the Lord from first to last.

But at this present time we intend to insist upon this further Truth of God—that the working of the Holy Spirit in us does not exempt the Believer from the most energetic labor, but rather necessitates his doing all that lies in him. To enforce this we remark, first, that the Christian life is always described as a thing of *energy*. Sometimes we read of it as a pilgrimage. That master allegorist, John Bunyan, has not pictured Christian as carried to Heaven while asleep in an easy chair. He makes Christian lose his burden at the foot of the Cross.

He ascribes the deliverance of the man from the burden of his sin entirely to the Lord Jesus, but he represents him as climbing the Hill Diffi-

culty. Yes, and on his hands and knees, too, Christian has to descend into the Valley of Humiliation, and to tread that dangerous pathway through the gloomy horrors of the Shadow of Death. He has to be urgently watchful to keep himself from sleeping in the Enchanted Ground. Nowhere is he delivered from the necessities incident to the way, for even at the last he fords the black river and struggles with its terrible billows.

Effort is used all the way through, and you that are pilgrims to the skies will find it to be no allegory, but a real matter of fact. Your soul must gird up her loins. You need your pilgrim's staff and armor, and you must foot it all the way to Heaven, contending with giants, fighting with lions, and combating Apollyon himself.

Our life is in Scripture represented as a race which is even sterner work than pilgrimage. In such footraces as were witnessed among the Greeks, in every case the man spent all the strength there was in him, and underwent a training beforehand that he might be fit for the contest. It sometimes happened, and indeed not seldom, that men fell dead at the winning-post, through their extreme exertions. Running to Heaven is such running as that—we are to strain every nerve. We shall require all the power we have, and more, in order to win that incorruptible crown which now glitters before the eyes of our faith. If we are so to run that we may obtain, we shall have no energy to spare, but shall spend it all in our heavenly course.

Not infrequently the Apostle compares our spiritual life to a boxing match, and the terms in the original Greek, if they were translated into pure vernacular English, would remind us very much of a boxing ring and of the place where wrestlers strive for mastery. To wit, in that notable passage, "I keep under my body," we are told by scholars that the Greek word alludes to the getting of the antagonist's head under the arm and dealing it heavy blows. So the flesh must be mortified. Now the wrestlers in the Greek and Roman games strained every muscle and sinew, too—there was no part of the body that was not brought into action to overthrow their adversary.

For this they agonized till often blood would spurt from the nostrils, and veins would burst. Such, in a spiritual sense, must be the agony of a Christian if he is to overcome temptation and subdue the power of sin. Ah Brethren, it is no child's play to win Heaven! Saved, as I repeat it, through the power of Christ's blood and with the energy of His Holy Spirit within us, yet we have no time to loiter, no space in which to trifle. We must labor, striving according to His working who works in us mightily. All the figures which represent the Christian life imply the most energetic exertion.

Secondly, be it remarked that there is no illustration used in Scripture to set forth the heavenly life which allows the supposition that in any case Heaven is won by sloth. I do not remember ever finding in Scripture the life of the Christian described as a slumber. To the sluggard I find a warning always—thorns and thistles in his garden—and rags and disease in his person. "The hand of the diligent makes rich." There may be occasional opportunities by which even idle men may become wealthy, but

such spiritual wealth I have never heard of. I find that wherever the Spirit of God comes upon men, it never leaves a saved man effortless or fruitless, but as soon as it descends upon him, according to his capacity he begins to work out his own salvation.

Remember the question of the inspired writer, "Likewise also was not Rahab, the harlot, justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?" Her *faith* saved her. And though it was very weak and very ignorant faith, it made her work—and therefore she hid the spies to save their lives. Look at the dying thief, with his hands and feet fastened to the wood, and ready to expire, yet he rebuked the reviling malefactor. Thus doing all he possibly could for his Lord, in Whom he trusted for salvation, what more could he have done? It may be said of him, "He has done what he could." It shall be well if as much can be said for us.

No, Brethren, you cannot be carried to Heaven on "flowery beds of ease." You must fight if you would reign. You must stem the flood, you must breast the waves if you mean to reach the further shore. Divine Grace will help you, else were the work an impossibility. But even with the aid of Divine Grace you are not permitted to slumber into Glory, nor sleep your way to the celestial throne. You must be up and doing, watching diligently, lest any man fail of the Grace of God. The trumpet sounds, and not the dulcimer—the call is to conflict—not to feasting.

I would next bid you note, dear Friends, that it is natural it should be so. It is unavoidable in the nature of things that when the Holy Spirit comes He should not beget a spirit of slumber, but awaken us to diligent action. It is natural, I say, because one of the first results of the Holy Spirit's entrance into a man's heart is to let him see his sin and his danger. If I feel myself guilty and perceive that God is angry with me and that I shall be cast by-and-by into the Lake of Fire, what is the inevitable result? Shall I not hear a voice crying, "Escape for your life! Look not behind you! Stay not in all the plain"?

Wherever the Holy Spirit works a sense of sin, the sinner is constrained to cry, "What must I do to be saved?" Never does the Spirit effectually show a man his sin and then leave him to fold his arms and ask for "a little more sleep and a little more slumber." No, the awakened soul exclaims, "I am guilty, I am accursed of God. How can I escape? Lord help me, help me now to find rest if rest is to be found!" Then the Holy Spirit farther reveals to us the excellence of the salvation of Christ, the happiness of those who rest in Jesus, the future reward of such as serve God on earth.

And what is the result? The enlightened soul cries, "I desire to find this pearl of great price! I desire to be enriched by an interest in Christ! I too, would, with the blessed, take my everlasting heritage." Don't you see, then, that the Holy Spirit cannot make a man appreciate salvation without at the same time creating a desire to gain it? And out of which desire arises *prayer* for the promised blessing. After a man has found Christ to the pardon of his sin, the Holy Spirit is pleased to endear Christ more and more to him. It is the office of the spirit to take of the things of Christ and show them to us.

Now, my Brethren, you know very well that whenever you have a sight of the preciousness of Christ, you are moved at once to glorify Him. Do you not cry —

***“Oh, for this love let rocks and hills  
Their lasting silence break,  
And all harmonious human tongues  
The Savior’s praises speak”?***

I know it is so! It is because we think so little of Christ that we do so little for Him. But when Christ is brought with vivid power home to the mind, then at once we cry, “Lord, what would You have me to do?” And we, by His Grace, bestir ourselves to honor Him.

Brethren, the fact that the Holy Spirit is working in a man never can be a reason for his not working. On the contrary, the moment a man perceives that the Spirit is helping him, he is encouraged diligently to labor. “Why,” says he, “my work may fail, but if it is the Spirit’s work it cannot fail.” I bow my knee in prayer, and if I believe that all acceptable prayer is worked in me by the Holy Spirit, I am fully assured that God will not refuse to grant what He Himself, by His Spirit suggests to me to ask. If the Holy One of Israel Himself breaks my heart and leads me to long after a Savior, surely He does not intend to tantalize me.

He will continue His work till He has saved me. Thus encouraged, a man is certain to give diligence to make his calling and election sure. Moreover every intelligent man feels that if he does not work when the Spirit of God is working in him, he is dishonoring that Divine Person, and is running the solemn peril of committing the sin against the Holy Spirit which shall never be forgiven him. He feels that if he should be slothful that text would condemn him, “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” Neglect—mere neglect—nobody ever gets to Heaven by it. But ah, how many perish by that alone!

To conclude this point, it is most certain that all saving *acts* must be performed by the man himself. Faith is the gift of God, but the Holy Spirit never believed for anybody. It is not His office to believe. The sinner must believe. Repentance is the work of the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit never repented. What had He to repent of? He has done no ill. It cannot be possible for Him to repent for us. No, we ourselves must repent. My Brethren, this is self-evident to every candid mind. There must be in every man a personal faith and a personal repentance. And though these are worked in him by the Holy Spirit, yet they are his own acts. They cannot be the acts of anybody else, or else the man has not believed, and has not repented, and there is no life in him.

Right on to the end of the Christian life all those acts which bring us into communion with God are our own. For instance, the Holy Spirit helps men to pray. He helps their infirmities. But they pray. They *themselves* pray. Prove to me that the man does not, himself, pray, and I will be bold to tell you that he is not saved. The intercession of Christ is prevalent, but it will not save those who live and die without praying for themselves. True desires after God must be your own desires. The desire is worked in you, but still it is yours. And the expression of that desire is helped by the teaching of the Spirit, but still it is your own expression, or else what are

you but a dead soul? There must be a voluntary putting forth on your part of the life which is quickened in you by the Spirit. This is so plain as to be self-evident.

Note again, if we were not made active, but are simply acted on by the Holy Spirit, there is a reduction of manhood to materialism. If the man does not believe nor pray, and if spiritual acts are not a man's own acts, but the acts of another in him, then what is the man? There is no moral good or moral evil in a work which is not my own—I mean no moral good or evil to me. A work which I do not myself perform may be creditable or discreditable to somebody else, it is neither to me.

Take an illustration. In the Square of St. Mark, at Venice, at certain hours the bell of the clock is struck by two bronze figures as large as life, wielding hammers. Now, nobody ever thought of presenting thanks to those bronze men for the diligence with which they have struck the hours. Of course not, they cannot help it—they are worked upon by machinery—and they strike the hours from necessity. Some years ago a stranger was upon the top of the tower, and incautiously went too near one of these bronze men. It was time to strike the hour and he knocked the stranger from the battlement of the tower and killed him.

Nobody said the bronze man ought to be hanged—nobody ever laid it to his charge at all. There was no moral good or moral evil, because there was no will in the concern. It was not a moral act, because no mind and heart gave consent to it. Am I to believe that Grace reduces men to this? I tell you, Sirs, if you think to glorify the Grace of God by such a theory, you know not what you do. To carve blocks, and move logs is small glory—but this is the glory of God's Grace—that without violating the human will, He yet achieves His own purposes, and treating men as men, He conquers their hearts with love, and wins their affections by His Divine Grace.

I warn any here present who imagine that man is a merely passive being in salvation against putting their theory in practice. I am alarmed for you if you say, "God will save me if He so decrees, and therefore I will sit still and wait." My Hearer, I am afraid for you! You are neglecting the great salvation, and I again remind you of the warning—"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" I confess, I have no hope for you. But on the contrary, if you cry, "Lord, save, or I perish," I have good hope for you, you shall not perish—the Spirit of God is working in you these desires and this longing and seeking.

Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. I pray you check not your aspirations. Quench not the Spirit. Led and guided by His mighty working, come to the foot of Christ's Cross. Trust alone to Him, and a voice shall sound in your heart, "Your sins which are many, are all forgiven you." God grant it may be so.

**II.** We shall now turn to the second part of our subject in reference to THE MINISTRY OF THE SAINTS FOR THE CONVERSION OF OTHERS. The Holy Spirit alone can convert a soul. All the ministries in the world put together, be they what they may, are utterly powerless for the salvation of a single soul apart from the Holy Spirit. "Not by might nor by

power, but by My Spirit says the Lord.” But wherever the Holy Spirit works, as a general rule (so general that I scarcely know an exception), it is in connection with the earnest efforts of Christian men.

This is clear, first, from the example of the text. The Apostle Paul certifies that the salvation of souls is the sole work of Christ, but he declares that he labored, and the next word he adds “striving,” or as in the Greek, “agonizing.” Though the Spirit did the work, it was in connection with the Apostle’s labor and agony for souls. Now, my Brethren, laboring implies abundant *work*. No man can be said to labor who only does half an hour’s work in a day. A man who is a thorough laborer makes long hours, and is ever at it. The Apostle Paul was this.

The winning of souls was not a piece of by-play with him. It was his one object to which he consecrated everything. He was “in labors more abundant.” In the morning he sowed his seed, and in the evening he withheld not his hand. If we are to have souls saved we must do the same. No tradesman expects his shop to prosper who has it open only one hour a day—and you must not expect to be soul-winners if you only now and then seek to be such. There must be, as far as time and capacity allow, the consecration of yourselves to this work, even to an abundance of effort.

Labor, again, means hard work. It is not trifling. He is no laborer who takes the spade to play with it as a little child upon the sand. He that labors works till the sweat streams from his face. And he that would win souls will find that, though it is all of the Holy Spirit, yet it involves on his part the sternest form of spiritual work. Baxter used to say if any minister found his ministry easy, he would find it hard to answer for it at the Day of Judgment. And I add, if any one of you teaching in your classes, or officiating in any form of Christian work, find it easy, you will find it hard to give an account of your stewardship at the Lord’s coming.

The labor must be *personal* labor, for no man is a laborer who does it through his servants. He may be an employer, and in a certain sense he may be said to do the work, but he cannot say, “I labor.” The Apostle performed personal work. Ah, Brethren, the power of the Church very much lies under God in the personal influence of her members. On this platform I feel that I am a long way off from you. I wish I could devise some mode of speech by which I could thrust my hand into your hearts and get my soul to pulsate close by yours to make you feel what I feel.

Between the pulpit and the pew there is too often a great gulf fixed. But you who get your friends into the parlor and talk concerning eternal things—you have a fine opportunity. Your personal influence then bears with mighty force upon the person with whom you are speaking, and you may hope that a blessing will be the result. Learn from your adversaries. What is the strength of the fools of Rome? What but their conversing with men and women by themselves at the confessional? Who could not prevail, with such an instrument? We, with nobler ends and aims, must use personal, private conversation in all honest earnestness to bring men to repentance, to faith, and to the foot of the Cross.

My Brethren, I do not believe that even this will suffice. Abundant Christian work, and hard Christian work, and personal Christian work must have combined with it inward soul conflict. If your soul never breaks for another, you will not be the means of breaking that other's heart. But when it comes to this, "I must have that soul saved, I cannot bear the thought that it should be cast away"—you are near winning that soul. Suppose it is your child, your unconverted husband, or your brother—and you are enabled to say in yourself, "I have continual heaviness for my kinsmen according to the flesh"—so that you could almost sacrifice your own soul if they might but be saved?

When it comes to tears, the Lord will not deny you. My Brothers, when your heart breaks with love to souls, they shall be yours. But there must be conflicts. I pity that minister whose life is one of uninterrupted spiritual ease. What? Can we see you backslide and not weep till you come back to the Cross? Can I know that among these thousands who are listening to my voice, perhaps half are dead in trespasses and sins—and can I be insensible as a marble statue? Then God have mercy upon me as well as upon you! Unhappy souls to be entrusted to the care of one so utterly unfit for such a service!

No, the heart must be stirred, there must be an anguishing and yearning for souls. They tell us that in the sea certain waves rise from the bottom, and these cause the ground swells and the breakers. There must be great ground swells of desire within us that souls may, by some means, be delivered from the wrath to come. And where these deep searching of the heart are found, there will be conversions. Where these four things of which we have spoken are the result of the Holy Spirit working in any of you, it is as certain that souls will be saved as that spring will follow when the sun returns from his southern tropic.

We must further note that this is plain from the work itself. For, Brethren, souls are not converted as a rule without previous prayer for them on the part of someone or another. Well, then, we must be stirred up to prayer, and the praying which God hears is not that of people half asleep. The petitions which pierce the ears of God are not those that fall from careless lips. They must come from your heart or they will never go to His heart. The importunate pleader prevails with Heaven. Souls are saved instrumentally through teaching, but the teaching which saves souls is never cold, dead teaching. God may occasionally bless such words, for He does great wonders, but as a rule the teaching that convinces and enlightens is earnest and enthusiastic.

We have heard of a traveler who, journeying onward, met with one who said, "Sir, the night is dark, and I should not advise you to go on to the river, for the bridge is broken in the middle. You will be in the stream before you know it." This was said in so careless a tone that the traveler went on. He was met sometime afterwards, fortunately for him, by another who again warned him—"The bridge is broken! Don't go on, you will be sure to lose your life if you attempt it. You cannot ford the stream and the bridge is broken." The traveler replied, "Why, I have been told that

tale before, but the man who told me it spoke in such a tone that I could see through him, I knew it was all a hoax.”

“Oh, but Sir,” said the other, “it is true! I have but now escaped myself. I am sure it is true!” “But,” said the traveler, “I am not so easily scared.” “Well, then,” said the other, “I beseech you once again, do not go on, for you will perish,” and rushing up to him he said, “I will not let you go.” He grasped him and held him fast. “Now,” said the other, “I believe you have spoken the truth, and I will turn with you.” So there are some who warn souls of their danger in such a careless tone that they create an unbelief which many an earnest tongue will not be able to dispel.

But if you get hold of the soul and say to it, “I will not let you perish.” If you say to your friends as Whitfield would say to his congregation, “If you perish it shall not be for want of praying for you. It shall not be for want of weeping over you. If you are damned it shall not be because my heart was cold towards you,” you will win them—they will be led to believe, by His Grace, from your earnestness. Who knows how many earnest spirits you may bring to Jesus? Praying and teaching, if effectual, must be earnest. And therefore when the Spirit comes to save the sons of men He always gives us earnest praying men and earnest teachers.

But, Brethren, teaching is not all. We must come to persuasion with men, and that persuasion must be very persevering. Certain men we must dog day after day with our entreaties. Some souls will not come with one invitation, they must therefore be plied with many. I remember a minister who went to see a dying laborer, and the man growled from his bed, “Tell him to be gone—I want none of the likes of him to disturb me.” He called again, and received the same rude answer. He called again, and went halfway up the stairs. He heard an oath, and would not intrude. He continued to call till he had numbered twenty times, and the twenty-first time the man said, “Well, as you are so set on it, you may come in,” and he did go in, and that soul was won for God!

Humanly speaking, where had that man been but for persevering zeal? When the Lord means to save men by you, He will give you perseverance in seeking them. He will work in you mightily by His Spirit. You will feel a determination, that twist and turn as they may with indefatigable earnestness of self-destruction, you will still pursue them if by any means you may prevent their everlasting misery. Earnest zeal is a natural result of the Holy Spirit’s working upon the souls of men. Whenever the Spirit of God comes, He sanctifies in men the natural instinct which leads them to wish others to be like themselves. Whether a man is bad or good, he seeks to make others like himself. The Holy Spirit lays hold of this and constrains Christians to desire to bring others to their state of mind.

This done, He arouses in the Christian mind the commendable principle of love to our fellow men. Having experienced the blessedness of salvation for ourselves, we desire to see others enjoying like happiness. The patriot’s bosom glows with the same passion as before, but now it is refined and purified, and he prays for his nation that not only it may be free, but that the Spirit of God may make it free, indeed. The Holy Spirit bestirs in us the impulse of gratitude, “Has Christ saved me?” Then the man ex-

claims, "I will live for Him!" The Spirit gives impetus to that suggestion, and we resolve that since Jesus has loved us so, we will give to Him all that we are, and all that we have.

In addition to this, the Holy Spirit sanctifies many other natural emotions. Such, for instance, that which we sometimes call the *esprit de corps*, by which men are moved to desire the prosperity of the community to which they belong. The Holy Spirit makes us feel one with Christ's Church and we ardently desire her success. A holy emulation as to which shall serve the Master most runs through our ranks—not that we may get honor—but that we may honor Him. We cannot endure it that our Brethren should go to the war and we sit still. We begin to be afraid lest the denunciation should go forth against us, "Curse you Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse you bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Inspired by such feelings we rush to the fight that we may rescue souls for Christ.

Then the Spirit in some men—I pray it may be in your case, my dear Friends—sheds abroad the love of Christ at such a rate that the soul is all on fire to exalt Christ. No, in some He has made this sacred passion to eat them up till they have been consumed with holy zeal. Like men inspired, like ancient Apostles, certain choice spirits have lived the life of Christ on earth with an awful vehemence of enthusiasm. Wherever such men are raised up, God is about to save souls! Whenever you listen to a man who is carried away by an all-consuming desire for the glory of God, you may conclude that he is the instrument of God to thousands. His lips shall feed many, he shall be the spiritual progenitor of tribes of Believers. Thus where the Spirit of God comes, energy is evinced and souls are saved. And we do not find it otherwise.

I would have you notice, once more, that the whole history of the Church confirms what I have stated. When the Holy Spirit descended, there were two signs of His Presence. The one was a rushing mighty wind, the other was the tongue of fire. Now if the Holy Spirit intended to do all the work Himself—without using us as earnest instruments—the first emblem would have been stagnant air. And the next might have been a mass of ice, or what you will, but certainly not a tongue of fire. The first emblem was not only wind, but it was a *mighty* wind, and not only that, but a *rushing mighty* wind, as if to show us that He intended to set every spiritual sail in the most rapid motion.

And as birds are drifted before the gale, so would He impel His people forward with His mighty influences. The other emblem was fire, a consuming, devouring, imperial element. May we be baptized in the Holy Spirit, and in fire—and so we shall know what is meant by the symbol. Our Lord's commencement of the Gospel ministry was signaled by vehemence. Here is His own experience, "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force." Christ's ministry and life were notably earnest, He was clad with zeal as with a cloak.

His Apostles, also, were men so vehement that in their earliest deliverances they were thought to be drunken with wine. Every era of the Church's prosperity has been marked by this same holy violence. Hear Chrysostom speak, he is no player upon a goodly instrument, he gives forth no dulcet tones for gentle ears. Listen to his denunciation of the Empress Eudoxia! Hear how he denounces the sins of the times! How vehemently he calls upon men to escape for their lives because of coming judgment!

Listen to Augustine, his vehement tones you will not soon forget. Turn to the notable era of the Reformation. The men who worked the Reformation were no dullards, no men of polite speech, of elegant and dainty sentences. Luther was a type of them all, vehement to the extreme of vehemence. I say not that their natural violence was the power which worked the Reformation, but that the Holy Spirit made their hearts vehement, and so they worked marvels. And we, dear Brethren—if we are to see in these days a genuine revival of religion, worthy of the name—must return to the old enthusiasm which once made the Church fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. O that we may live to see it, and the Lord's name shall be glorified!

The conclusion of the whole matter is just this—let us combine the two things of which we have spoken. Dear Brethren, let us rely upon the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit only. Let us not conduct a warfare at our own charges. Let us believe that without the Lord, nothing good can be done. But let us rest assured that Jesus is never absent where He gives the spirit of prayer, as He has given to this Church. And that He never deserts those to whom He vouchsafes holy zeal for His kingdom, such as He has bestowed on many here present. Let us be encouraged by His Presence. Gideon, when he obtained the token of the fleece wet with dew, and when by night he heard the story of the barley cake that overturned the tents of Midian—because God was with him—did not straightway go to his home and renounce the enterprise.

No, but on the contrary, thus encouraged, he gathered together his three hundred valiant men in the darkness of the night. They broke the pitchers, bade the torches shine, and shouted the watchword, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon! The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" Even so let it be, by God's Grace, with us at this hour. Knowing that God the Holy Spirit is with us, let us lift the cry amid the midnight of our age, "The sword of the Lord and of His Son Jesus!" and we shall see what God will do, for He will surely put to flight the armies of the aliens, and get to Himself renown.

But, Brethren, let us combine with this confidence in the Holy Spirit, the most earnest effort on the part of everyone to do all he can. I have a scene before my mind's eye at this moment. I see in this Church and neighborhood the counterpart of the mountainside when the multitude were fainting for lack of bread. They must be fed, Christ willed it. The disciples must bring their barley loaves and fishes—what were they among so many? Christ must break and multiply. The disciples must receive from His hands. They must then go among the many, the fifties and the hun-

dreds, and break the bread that Christ had blessed—for the hungry must be fed. Not only men, but women and children must be satisfied.

Behold, my Brethren, this great city hungry and faint, and ready to die. Bring here, all you disciples of Christ, your loaves and fishes—I mean not to *me* but to the Master. What you have of ability, however slender, bring it out. Christ will not begin to multiply till you have brought forth all you have. Miracles are not to be expected till nature is brought to a nonplus. Bring out, then, whatever of talent or Divine Grace you have—consecrate it all to Jesus—and then as He begins to multiply, stand ready as your master’s servants to wait upon the crowd. And if they push and clamor, yet weary not—break the bread till every soul shall have been supplied.

Go on, go on, and do not say the toil is hard! It is so blessed to do good to others—it is thrice blessed—no, sevenfold blessed, to turn a sinner from the error of his ways, and save a soul from death! No, weary not, though you have been so long at it that your spirit is faint. My Brother, your physical frame is weary, but be of good cheer. Do you not hear them? Hearken, I pray you! Up yonder, there are angels bending from their thrones, and I think I hear them say, “How blessed a work to feed the hungry, and those men, how honored to be permitted to hand round the Master’s precious gifts! Do they not whisper, “We would gladly be with them”?”

One bright spirit thinks he would exchange his crown with the meanest of the disciples, if he might share the service of Gospel teaching! Might they not envy you—those blessed harpers upon the sea of glass—because you can do what they cannot? You can tell of Jesus, you can fetch in the prodigals, you can find the lost jewels for the Master’s crown!

I charge you, my Brethren, by the living God—unless your religion is hypocrisy—help me this month, help my Brethren, the Elders and Deacons, help us everyone of you. By the blood that bought you, if you are, indeed, redeemed—by the Holy Spirit that is in you, except you be reprobates—by everything that God in loving kindness has done for you—I charge you come to the help of the Master in this, the hopeful hour.

So may the Lord do unto you as you shall deal with us this day. If you shall, indeed, consecrate yourselves to Him, and serve Him, may He enrich you with the increase of God, and may the peace of God that passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds. But if you refuse your service, the Lord shall judge you. He that knows his Master’s will and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.

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# A CONSISTENT WALK FOR TIME TO COME NO. 3030

A SERMON  
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 1907.

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,  
DURING THE YEAR 1864.

*“As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.”  
Colossians 2:6.*

THOUGH the shepherd cares for the lambs and carries them in his arms, he does not cease his care when they become sheep. But, as long as they shall need to be tended, so long will he watch over them. Hence it is that our Apostle, though always quick of eye after newborn souls and abundantly anxious to bring sinners to a knowledge of the Truth of God as it is in Jesus, is equally in a conflict of soul for the spiritual healthfulness of those who have been born-again. Our text contains one of those loving admonitions. It is addressed, not to the ungodly, not to those who are strangers to our Lord and Master, but to those who have “received Christ Jesus the Lord.” Longing for their spiritual good and anxious that they should be established in the faith, he admonishes them thus, “As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.”

In endeavoring, by God’s help, to speak upon this subject, we shall have three points. There is here, *first, a fact stated concerning Believers*—they have “received Christ Jesus the Lord.” Then there is *an exhortation, or a counsel, offered to such*—“walk in Him.” Besides which we have *a model held up for our imitation*. How are we to walk in Him? Why, just in the same way as we at first received Him! Let our first coming to Christ be to us the mirror of how we shall walk in Him all our days.

**I.** All true Christians are here described in the text as HAVING RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS THE LORD.

The first point to which I would particularly direct your attention is *the personality of this reception*. Believers have, it is true, received Christ’s words. They prize every precept, they value every Doctrine, but this is not all. They have received Christ *Himself*. While they have received Christ’s ordinances and are not slow to walk in obedience to the things which He has commanded, they do not stay here. They have received Christ Himself—His Person, His Godhead and His Humanity. They have “received Christ Jesus the Lord.” And, mark you, there is a very great distinction here—and also a great mystery. A great distinction, I say, for there are some who do, I think, wholly believe the doctrines which Christ has taught, and are profoundly orthodox, full of an earnest controversial spirit for the faith once delivered to the saints and yet, for all that, they do not seem to have received Him, the very Christ of God! And, truly, there are many who have received both Baptism and the Lord’s Supper,

yet, despite what any may say, we believe that they have not received Christ, but are still as great strangers to Him as though they had only passed through the rites common to mankind, or the rites in which heathens indulge! There is a vast difference between the outward reception of the Doctrine, or the ordinance, and the inward reception of *Christ*.

We also said that herein is a mystery—such a mystery that only he who has received Christ can understand. The preacher cannot tell you what it is to receive Christ. Human language is not adapted to convey to the mind this deep enigma, this matchless secret. We know what it is, for “truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ.” We can describe it in such a measure that our friends who have also received Christ will know that we understand the mystery—but to the carnal mind it will always remain a puzzle how Christ can be “in us the hope of glory”—how we can eat His flesh and drink His blood. They run away to some carnal interpretation and suppose that the bread is turned into flesh at the Eucharist or that the wine is transformed into blood. That is *carnal* talk and this they talk because they know not what is the mystery of this receiving Christ and this walking in Christ.

This much, however, we may affirm. *The Believer has received Christ into his knowledge*. He knows Him to be God and to be Man. He knows Him to be set forth of the Father as the Redeemer, but, he also knows Him by a personal acquaintance. His eyes have not seen Him and yet he has looked to Him and has, by faith, seen the King in His beauty! His hands have not handled Him and yet there has been a secret touch by which the virtue has come out of Christ and has flowed into him! He has never sat down at a Communion Table when Christ has been physically present and yet full often he could say, “He brought me to the banqueting house and His banner over me was love.” He has talked with me as a man talks with his friend and the strongest sense that can be attached to that sweet word, “communion,” is tame in reference to the Believer’s connection with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ! And in that sense of knowing Him, intimately knowing Him, the Believer has received Christ!

Not only has he received Christ into his cognizance, but *into his understanding*. He understands, with all saints, the love of Jesus in its height, depth, length and breadth. He has so seen Christ as to understand of Him that He was before all time as the Ancient of Days and then had His delights with the sons of men in the great Covenant decree of electing love. He understands how He became made flesh with us—married to us—when He came on earth, the Son of Mary, “bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.” He knows by experience what is the meaning of the Atonement. He can understand how Justice is satisfied and Grace magnified. Without confounding or making mistakes, he knows how God was always gracious and full of love and yet how Christ Jesus came that the love of God might be shed abroad in our hearts and we were reconciled unto God by His death. Hence the Christian does not read of Christ as though He were a mere historical personage, nor of His

work as a great mystery which he cannot comprehend, but he has received Christ into his understanding!

Ah, Beloved! This is a very poor and shallow sense compared with the next. I have received but one ounce of Christ into my understanding, but, bless His name, I have received the whole of Him *into my affections*. Good Rutherford used to pray for a larger heart, that he might hold more of Christ and, perhaps, you remember that strange extravaganza of prayer in which he says, “Oh, that I had a heart as deep, and wide, and high as Heaven, that I might hold Christ in it!” And then he said, “Since the Heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, oh, that I had a heart as vast as seven heavens, that I might get the whole of Christ into me and hold Him in my arms!” And truly, Christian, in one sense you have taken all of Christ into your soul, have you not? Do you not love Him—not a part of Him, but the whole of Him? I hope you can truly say to Christ—

**“Have You a lamb in all Your flock  
I would disdain to feed?  
Have You a foe, before whose face  
I fear Your cause to plead?  
You know I love You, dearest Lord  
But oh, I long to soar  
Far from the sphere of mortal joys—  
And learn to love You more!”**

We must not leave this part of the subject without adding that the Believer has received Christ *into his trust*, and this he did at his spiritual birth. He received Christ into the arms of his faith. He took Jesus Christ to be, henceforth, the unbuttressed pillar of his confidence, the one Rock of his salvation, his strong castle and high tower. And, in this sense, every soul that is saved has “received Christ Jesus the Lord.”

Our text seems to point to a threefold character in which we have received Christ. *We have received Him as the Christ*. My Soul, have you ever seen Him as the Father’s Anointed One—as the Chosen and Sent One, ordained of old—as One that is mighty, upon whom help should be laid? Have you seen Him as God’s great High Priest, ordained as was Aaron, chosen of God from among men? Have you looked upon Him as David did, as One chosen out of the people? We must accept Christ as the Anointed One and the right way to thus receive Him is to receive Him as the garments of Aaron received the oil that flowed from his head. Christ is the Anointed One and then you and I become anointed ones through the Holy Spirit which distils from Him to us—and so we receive Him as Christ.

And then He is called, “Jesus,” and *we must receive Him as the Savior*. “You shall call His name, Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.” Justification is receiving Christ as Jesus. So is sanctification! Only I think I must say justification and pardon receive Christ as Jesus—and sanctification receives Him as Christ Jesus, both as the Anointed One and the Savior. May you and I be daily delivered from sin—the guilt and power of it—and so receive Him as Jesus!

There is a peculiar emphasis about the next expression. The article is emphatic here, “Christ Jesus *the Lord*.” To me, *if I receive Christ, He must*

*be Lord*—not one of the lords that may have dominion over me, but *the Lord*, peculiarly and specially. And though hitherto other lords have had dominion over me, now I am to obey Him and only Him. What do you say, professor? Have you received Christ Jesus *the Lord*? Is your will subject to His will? Do you desire only to act according to His bidding? Are His commands your desire? Is His will your will? Is He your Lord? For, mark you, you can never truly receive Him as Christ, or as Jesus, unless you receive Him as *the Lord*! Thus, another sense in which we receive Him is by subjecting ourselves entirely to Him, sitting at His feet, wearing His yoke, taking up His Cross and bearing His reproach.

You will note that there is also, in this description of a Christian, the thought of his *entire dependence*. The Apostle does not say, “As you have therefore fought for and won or earned Christ Jesus,” but, “as you have therefore *received* Him.” It is a humbling word which divests the creature of everything like boasting! What is there to glory in if I am a receiver? The Apostle in another place says, “If you did receive it, why do you glory, as if you had not received it?” The vessel that is filled under the flowing stream cannot boast, though it is ever so full, for it was naturally empty and owes its fullness to the stream. The beggar in the street, let him receive gold, yet cannot boast of the gold because he is a receiver. He who gave must have the honor of the benefaction—not the person who received! So let your faith be ever so strong, let your confidence in Christ be ever so glorious, you have nothing to boast of in it, for you have “received Christ Jesus.” Beloved, here is a test for us—is our religion a receiving religion, or is it a working and an earning religion? An earning religion sends souls to Hell! It is only a *receiving* religion that will take you to Heaven! You may tug and toil, and do your best and make yourselves, as you think, as holy as the best of the Apostles—but when you have done your utmost, you have done nothing whatever! You have built a house of cards which shall soon fall down. But when you come as an empty-handed sinner, having nothing of your own—and *receive* Christ Jesus—then you have bowed your will to God’s will. Or rather, Divine Grace has bowed it and you are saved according to the Lord’s own word, “He that believes on Me is not condemned.” Thus you have dependence connected with the personality of the Christian’s faith!

We also have here *certainty*—“As you *have* received Christ Jesus the Lord.” Oh, how many Christians—I hope they are Christians—talk as if they really thought it was impossible to attain to any assurance of faith whatever! It is the fashion with some Christians to say, “Well, I hope,” and, “I trust”—and they have a notion that this is being very humble-minded. But to say, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him,” is thought to be pride! The declaration of Job, “I know that my Redeemer lives,” or of the spouse in the Canticles, “My Beloved is mine, and I am His; He feeds among the lilies,” is thought to be vain presumption and boasting. But indeed, Beloved, it is no such thing! Doubting is pride, but believing is humility! Let me prove it.

I think I used this illustration among you some little time ago. There are two children of one parent and the father says to the two children, "On such a day I intend to give you both a toy which has been the object of your ambition for many a day." Well, the older boy of the two sits down and calculates that the present will be expensive—and he begins to doubt whether his father can afford to purchase it. He remembers many times in which he has offended his parent, or broken his parent's commands and, therefore, he doubts whether he shall ever have it. He feels that he is unworthy—therefore he goes about the house without any joy, without any confidence. If anybody asks him whether his father will give him this present or not, he says, "Well, I—I hope so. I trust so."

Now, there is his little brother and the moment he heard that he was to have this present, he clapped his hands and ran out to his companions and said, "I am to have such-and-such a thing given me!" His brother checked him, "You are too presumptuous to say that." "No," said the little one, "for Father said he would give these toys to us." "Oh, but," said the other, "remember that you and I have often broken his commands!" "But he said he would." "Oh, but the thing is expensive!" "Ah, but Father said he would and unless you can *prove* that my father tells lies, I shall go and rejoice in the bright hope that he will keep his promise!" Now, I think that the younger of the two is less presumptuous than his brother, for certainly it is a high presumption for a child to doubt the veracity of his parent! No matter how excellent your reasoning may seem to be, and how clear it may be to the eyes of the flesh, it is always pride to doubt God! And to believe God—though, to the carnal mind which can never understand the bravery of faith, it may look like presumption—is always a badge of the truest and most reverent humility!

Beloved, you *may* know whether you are Christ's or not! I exhort you not to give sleep to your eyes till you know it! What? Can you rest when you do not know whether you are saved or not? O Sirs, can you sit down at your tables and feast—can you go about your daily business with this thought in your mind, "If I should drop dead, I do not know whether I should be found in Heaven or in Hell"? I tell you nothing but certainties will suit my soul! I hope I never shall rest comfortable while under a doubt of my interest in Christ. Doubts may come—these we can understand—but to be comfortable under doubts, we hope we never shall comprehend! No, nothing but to—

***"Read my title clear  
To mansions in the skies"***

can give me joy and peace through believing! "You *have* received Christ the Lord." Just pass the question around the gallery there, and ask yourselves down below, "Have I received Christ Jesus the Lord?" Say, "Yes," or, "No," and God help you to give the answer solemnly as in His sight!

**II.** As briefly as possible we turn to notice THE COUNSEL GIVEN—"As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him."

There are three things suggested by the word, “walk”—continuance, progress, activity.

To walk in a certain way means *continuing in it*. Now, Christian, you took Christ to be your All-in-All, did you not? Well, then, *continue* to take Him as your All-in-All. The true way for a Christian to live is to live entirely upon Christ. Living by frames and feelings is a dying form of life. “He lived by a feeling experience,” said one—and a poor method of living, too! Christians have experiences and they have feelings, but, if they are wise, they never feed upon these things, but upon Christ, Himself. You took Christ to be your All-in-All at first. You did not, then, mix up your frames and feelings with Him—you looked entirely out of self to Him. Well now, continue in the same frame of mind! You sat down at the foot of the Cross and you said—

**“Now free from sin, I’ll walk at large  
My Savior’s blood’s my full discharge!  
At His dear feet myself I lay—  
A sinner saved, and homage pay.”**

Well, then stay there! Stay there! Never get an inch beyond that position. When you get sanctified, still look to Christ as if you were unsanctified! When you are on the verge of being glorified, look to Him as if you were just newly come out of the hole of the Pit. Hang upon Christ, you who are the best, just as though you were the worst! The same faith which saved Mary Magdalene, which saved Saul of Tarsus—must save you in the moment when you shall be the nearest to the perfect image of Christ Jesus! It is “none but Jesus” now to your soul—let it be “none but Jesus—none but Jesus,” as long as you live!

In walking, there is not only continuance, but also *progress*. After a man becomes a Christian, he has not to lay again the foundation, but he has to go on and to advance in the Divine Life. Still, wherever he shall advance, he is always to say, “None but Christ! Christ is all!” Depend upon it, every inch of progress that you make beyond a simple reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ will entail the painful necessity of your going back. If you begin to patch Christ’s robe of righteousness with the very best rags of your own, no matter how cleanly you may have washed them, every rag will have to be unraveled, and every stitch will have to be cut! There is the Rock, Christ Jesus. Some Christians begin building their own stages on the Rock. How carefully they tie the timbers together. How neatly they plane and smooth them. And then they get high up upon these stages that they have built and they feel so happy—they have such frames! Such feelings! Such graces! Such fullness! And they are inclined to look down upon those poor souls who are crying, “None but Jesus!” By-and-by there comes a storm and the edifice they have built begins to creak, and crack, and rock to and fro—and they begin to cry, “Ah, where are we now? Now we shall perish! Now Christ’s love begins to dry up! Now He will fail us!” No—no such thing! It is not Christ who is failing you! It is not the Rock that is shaking, but what you have built upon the Rock! Come down from the stage which you have built and, as Job says, “embrace the Rock for want of a shelter.” I believe those souls have the most safety and comfort who simply trust to Christ. Was it not

Irving who said that he believed his good works had done him more harm than his bad works had done him, for his bad ones drove him to Christ, but his good ones led him to rely upon them? And, after all, are not our good works, bad works, for is there not something in all of them to make us fly to the fountain of the Savior's blood for cleansing?

"As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him," also implies *activity*. Christians are not to be lie-a-beds, nor forever to sit still. There is an *activity* in religion without which it is of little worth. Feed the hungry. Clothe the naked. Help the poor. Teach the ignorant. Comfort the miserable. But take care that when you do all this, you do it in Christ, and for Christ—and let no thought of merit stain the act! Let no reflection of getting salvation for yourself come in to mar it all, but in Christ Jesus walk day by day. Ah, Brothers and Sisters, if a thunderstorm were to come on just now while we are sitting here, and if the lightning should come flashing in at these windows and run with its blue flame down these columns, you and I might begin to feel some alarm! And if one were struck dead in our presence, in what kind of state would you and I likely to be amidst such confusion and alarm? If I were to choose the words which I would like to say at such a moment, they would be these—

***"Nothing in my hands I bring—  
Simply to Your Cross I cling."***

You are on board ship in a storm just now. There goes a mast into the water! The lifeboats have all drifted away. The ship is pretty sure to be dashed on yonder rock! Pallor is on every cheek and turmoil every side. What is your prayer as you kneel down? What are your thoughts? Do you think, now, about your sermons, about your visiting the sick, about your prayers and your experiences? No! I tell you that they will seem to you to be nothing better than dross and dung when you are in such a state of apprehension! But you will cling to Christ's Cross and be conveyed to Heaven, let the stormy winds blow as they will! And if everything were silent, tonight—could we hear nothing but the ticking of the clock were we, ourselves, reclining on our death pillow? While loving friends wiped the clammy sweat from our brow, surely we would, each one, wish to say—

***"My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness!  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame  
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.  
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand!  
All other ground is sinking sand."***

Well, walk in Him just as you would walk in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, but walk on the mountaintops of life's activities!

**III.** Let us now say a few words on our third point—THE MODEL WHICH IS PRESENTED TO US HERE. We are to walk in Him *as we received Him*.

And how did we receive Him? Let us remember. You will not have to strain your memories much, for, I think, though other days have mingled with their fellows and, like coins worn in the circulation, have lost their

impression, yet the day when you first received Christ will be as fresh as though it were newly minted in time. Oh, that first day!—

***“Do mind the place, the spot of ground  
Where Jesus did you meet?”***

Some of us can never forget either that place or that time. Well, how did we receive Christ?

*We received Him very gratefully, having no claim whatever to His Grace.* We felt that we had done everything to deserve God’s wrath. We confessed that there was no merit in us, but we perceived that there was mercy in Him—

***“We saw One hanging on a tree  
In agonies and blood”***

—and as He told us to look at Him and assured us that there was life in a look, we did—and we were lightened, and we found life in Him! Surely we had shaken our hands of all merit, as Paul shook off the viper into the fire at Melita. We had no confidence, then, in any resolutions of our own, in any performances yet to come, much less in anything past. Well, then, we are to come now as empty-handed as we came then! Our song is to be—

***“Nothing in my hands I bring—  
Simply to Your Cross I cling.”***

How did we receive Christ? Well, we *received Him very humbly.* Whatever pride may be in our heart—and there is much of it—and, I suppose we shall never get rid of it till we are wrapped in our winding-sheets—there was as little that day as we ever had at any other time. Oh, how humbly did we creep to the foot of the Cross! We were then broken in heart and contrite in spirit. Ah, Christian, can you remember what humble views you had of yourself—what a sink of depravity you felt your heart to be? Do you not recollect Augustine’s expression when he compares himself to a walking dunghill? And did you not feel yourself to be something of that kind—so base, so loathsome that you could only stand afar off and cry, “God be merciful to me, a sinner”? And you cried to Christ just as Peter did, “Lord, save me!” And just as the sea seemed about to swallow you up, you laid hold upon His outstretched hand and you were saved! Now, tonight, do the same. Your danger is as great as ever out of Christ. Your sin is as great as ever out of Him. Come then, casting away all the pride which your experiences and graces may have worked in you—come to Him and take Him for your All-in-All!

How did we receive Christ? If I recollect rightly—and I think I do—*we received Him very joyfully.* Oh, what joy my soul had when first I knew the Lord! It was holy day in my soul that day. Perhaps we have never had such joyous days since then, and the reason has been, most likely, because we have been thinking about other things and have not thought so much about Christ Jesus the Lord. Come, let us again take Him! The wine is as sweet—let us drink as deeply as ever. Christ, the Bread of Heaven, is as nourishing. Come, let us eat as heartily as ever. Fill your omers, O you poor and weak ones! Gather much, for you shall have nothing left over. This Manna is very sweet—it tastes like wafers made of

honey. Come to my Master as you came at first and He will give you to drink of the living waters once again!

How did we receive Christ? I am sure *we received Him very graciously*. He stood at the door and knocked, and we said, "Come in." Your Savior, my dear Friends, was long a stranger to your hearts. "Come in," we said. We knew that He meant to take the best seat at the table. We understood that He came as Master and Lord, but we said, "Come in." We did not quite know all that the Cross might mean, but whatever it might mean, we meant to take it! Surely that day, when He asked us, "Can you drink of My cup, and can you be baptized with My Baptism?" our soul said, "We are able." And though we have been unfaithful to Him, yet I hope tonight we can take Christ as unreservedly as ever. Had I dreamed, when first I preached His Gospel, that the way of the ministry would be so rough and thorny, my flesh would have shunned it! But, despite all, let it be what it is and ten thousand times worse, come in, my Master! Come and take Your servant—let me lie like a consecrated bull upon the altar, to be wholly burned, and not an atom left! Brothers, do you not feel the same? On this platform I have sometimes prayed that if the crushing of us might lift Christ one inch higher, it might be so! And if the dragging of our names through mire and dirt could make Christ's Church more pure, we have prayed that it might be so! We have prayed that if any shame, if any dishonor, if any pain might put one more jewel in His crown than could be there in any other way, we might have the honor of suffering and being made ashamed for His sake!

And I think, Brothers and Sisters, though the flesh struggles, we may pray tonight, "Lord, bind the sacrifice with cords, even with cords to the horns of the altar." We have received Christ and in that same way—*unreservedly*, we desire to walk in Him—

***"Have you counted the cost? Have you counted the cost  
You followers of the Cross?  
And are you prepared, for your Master's sake,  
To suffer all worldly loss?  
And can you endure with that virgin band,  
The lowly and pure in heart  
Who, where ever the Lamb does lead,  
From His footsteps never depart?  
Do you answer, 'We can'? Do you answer, 'We can,  
Through His love's constraining power'?  
But do you remember the flesh is weak,  
And will shrink in the trial-hour?  
Yet yield to His love who around you now  
The bands of a man would cast.  
The cords of His love who was given for you  
To His altar binding you fast.  
You may count the cost, you may count the cost  
Of all Egypt's treasure,  
But the riches of Christ you can never count—  
His love you can never measure."***

"As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him."

But oh, some of you have never received Him, so my last word is to them. Do you ask, "What is the way of salvation?" It is by receiving

Christ. Oh, then come and receive Him! May the Holy Spirit's power lead sinners to Christ! You need not bring anything to Him. You need not bring a soft heart to Him. You need not bring tears of repentance to Him. But just come and take Christ. Remember, it is not what you are, but it is what Christ is that saves you! Never look at yourself, but look at the wounds of Jesus! There is life there. God help you to look—to look tonight! And if you shall find Him, our prayer shall be that from this day forth, you shall walk in Him and He shall have the glory!

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
PSALM 90.**

A Prayer of Moses, the Man of God.

It may help us to understand this Psalm if we recollect the circumstances which surrounded Moses when he was in the desert. For forty years he had to see a whole generation of people die in the wilderness. In addition to the deaths which might occur among those who were born in the wilderness, the whole of that great host which came out of Egypt, numbering, probably, between two and three million persons, must lie in their graves in the desert so that there must have been constant funerals—and the march of the children of Israel could be perceived along the desert track by the graves which they left behind them. You do not wonder, therefore, at this expression of the awe of “Moses, the man of God” as he was so continually reminded of the mortality of mankind. And note how reverently and trustfully he turns to the ever-living and eternal God and rests in Him.

**Verse 1.** *LORD, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. “Did not Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all our fathers dwell in You? And though we are now weary-footed pilgrims who have no fixed dwelling place on earth, we do dwell in You. You, Lord, are the true home of all the generations of Your people.”*

**2.** *Before the mountains were brought forth, or before You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.* God is the only Being who has had eternal and essential Existence independently of all others—and all others have owed their existence to Him.

**3.** *You turn man to destruction and say, Return, you children of men.* He sends us forth into life, and He calls us back again in death.

**4.** *For a thousand years in Your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.* Yesterday, while it was with us, was a short period of 24 hours. But when it is past, it seems like nothing at all. A thousand years, all big with events which we consider to be full of weight and importance, make up a long period in which myriads of men come and go—yet those thousand years, in God's sight, “are but as yesterday when it is past,” or but as the few hours in the night during which the mariner keeps watch at sea and then is relieved by another. A thousand years are but “as a watch in the night” to the Eternal—and He

needs no one to relieve Him, for “He that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”

**5.** *You carry them away as with a flood.* They have no power to stem the torrent.

**5.** *They are as a sleep.* Our earthly existence is but “as a sleep.” Many things are not what they seem to us to be in our fevered dreams. The time of awaking is coming and then things will appear very different to us from what they seem to be now.

**5.** *They are like grass which grows up.* Fresh, green, vigorous, lovely, restful to the eyes.

**6.** *In the morning it flourishes, and grows up; in the evening it is cut down and withers.* It needs no long period, ages upon ages, to destroy its beauty. Only let the swiftly-passing day come to its waning and the grass “is cut down and withers.”

**7.** *For we are consumed by Your anger, and by Your wrath are we troubled.* If we had to endure the flames of God’s anger, we would be consumed by it. But I think that Christians should not read this passage as though it applied to them. They are not under the Divine anger, nor need they fear being troubled by the Divine wrath, for His anger is turned away from them through the great atoning Sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ. But the children of Israel in the wilderness were being consumed by God’s anger and by His wrath they were being troubled, so that the words of Moses did apply to them.

**8, 9.** *You have set our iniquities before You, our secret sins in the light of Your Countenance. For all our days are passed away in Your wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.* Like a romance, with which the Orientals still delight to beguile the passing hours. Such is the life of man—“as a tale that is told.”

**10.** *The days of our years are threescore years and ten.* This was a gloomy fact to Moses, who lived to be 120 years of age and who probably remembered other men who had been far older than himself. Yet it is well that the ordinary period of human life has been shortened. It is still far too long for those who do evil, though it may not be too long for those who do good. Yet there are, even now, some who outlive their usefulness, and who might have been happier if they had finished their course sooner. “The days of our years are threescore years and ten.”

**10.** *And if by reason of strength they are fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.* Where do we fly? That is the all-important point! The cutting of the string that holds the bird by the foot is a blessing or a curse according to the way in which it takes its flight. If we fly up to build our nest on yonder trees of God that are full of sap, then, indeed, we do well when we fly away. And we may even long for the wings of a dove, that we may fly away and be at rest.

**11, 12.** *Who knows the power of Your anger? Even according to Your fear, so is Your wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* It has been well said that many men will number their cows, and number their coins, but forget to number their days! Yet

that is a kind of arithmetic that would be exceedingly profitable to those who practiced it aright. Counting our days and finding them but few, we should seek to use them discreetly—we should not reckon that we could afford to lose so much as one of them! Who would be a spendthrift with so small a store as that which belongs to us?

**13, 14.** *Return, O LORD, how long? And let it repent You concerning Your servants. O satisfy us early with Your mercy that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.* “If they are but few, yet let them be happy. Give us an abundance of Your mercy, O Lord, and let us have it at once, so that however few our days may be, every one of them may be spent in the ways of wisdom and, consequently, in the ways of peace and happiness.”

**15.** *Make us glad according to the days wherein You have afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.* “Balance our sorrows with an equal weight of joys. Give us Grace equivalent to our griefs and if You have given us a bitter cup of woe, now let us drink from the golden chalice of Your love, and so let our fainting spirits be refreshed.”

**16.** *Let Your work appear unto Your servants.* May we have Grace to devote ourselves entirely to God’s service and do the work which He has appointed us to do!

**16.** *And Your glory unto their children.* If we may not live to see the success of our efforts, may our children see it! If the glory of that bright millennial age, which is certain to come in due time, shall not gladden our eyes before we fall asleep in Jesus, let us do the Lord’s work as far as we can that our children may see His Glory.

**17.** *And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish You the work of our hands upon us.* Even if we die, let our work live. May there be *something* permanent remaining after we are gone—not wood, hay, and stubble, which the fire will consume, but a building of gold, silver, and precious stones which will endure the fire that, sooner or later, will “try every man’s work of what sort it is.”

**17.** *Yes, the work of our hands establish You it.*

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307

**PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON  
TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.**

# “AS” AND “SO”

## NO. 3173

**A SERMON  
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1909.**

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,  
ON LORD’S-DAY EVENING, AUGUST 3, 1873.**

**“As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him.”  
Colossians 2:6.**

[Two other Sermons by Mr. Spurgeon upon the same text are Sermons #483, Volume 8—LIFE AND WALK OF FAITH and #3030, Volume 53—A CONSISTENT WALK FOR TIME TO COME—Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.]

THIS is a very simple text, yet no human being has ever discovered its full meaning. It is a great deep—happy are they who know how to dive into its depths and to swim at ease in its lengths and breadths! Blessed are they who continually obey the exhortation which it contains, “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him.” The text divides itself into faith and practice. “You have received Christ Jesus the Lord,” there is your faith. “Walk you in Him,” that is to be your daily practice!

The text also contains a model for that practice in the “as” and the “so” which are its cardinal points. “As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him.” What we have done suggests the way in which we are to do what still lies before us. “As you have received...so walk.”

**I.** Notice in the text, first, THE FACT STATED. “You have received Christ Jesus the Lord.”

Whatever else you have done or have not done, *you have received Christ*. The act of faith was the putting out of your empty hands to receive all the fullness of the Godhead in receiving Christ. There are some precious experiences to which you have not yet attained, some lofty heights to which you have not yet climbed, but you “have received Christ Jesus the Lord.” That is the distinguishing mark of all true Christians! Though you may not all belong to the same denomination, yet without a single exception this is true concerning you, whether you are old or young, whether you are well-instructed or ill-taught, whether you are full of faith or are troubled with many a doubt and many a fear, you “have received Christ Jesus the Lord.”

There is nothing in this fact to cause you one boastful thought. You have *received*, that is what emptiness does in order that it may be filled, that is what hunger does in order that its cravings may be satisfied, that is what the beggar in the street does when he craves and obtains alms. There is *nothing* of which you can glory in the fact that you have received, for I may further remind you that even your very receiving you

have received! The faith by which you received Christ was as much the gift of God to you as was the Christ upon whom your faith was fixed. You know that it is so and, therefore, you also know that boasting is forever excluded from the fact that you are saved! You have received Christ Jesus, that is all. I hope you prize the Gift, and praise the Giver. I trust that you often cry with the Apostle Paul, “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!” And that your soul makes her boast in the Lord concerning the Savior whom you have received, but no other boasting is permissible even for a moment!

I remind you once more, Beloved, that, *you have received* CHRIST. It is true that you have received His Doctrines and that you still believe them. It is true that you have received His precepts and that you have obeyed them, though, alas, your obedience has been far from perfect. It is true that you have received His ordinances and that you have conformed to them by being baptized on profession of your faith in Him—and by sitting down with your fellow Believers at His Table. But, after all, the main point is that you have received Jesus Christ, Himself! Every word that He has spoken is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, but sweeter far are the lips with which He uttered those words! Every command of His is to be esteemed more highly than the finest of fine gold, but as for the King who gave those commands, “He is altogether lovely.” Human language cannot describe Him and yet *you have received Him*—His very Self—you have received into your hearts to dwell there as your only Lord and Master. You have received Him as your life, for you live through Him. And you receive Him day by day as the Bread of Life upon which your soul feeds and as the Water of Life which quenches the thirst of your soul. You have not merely received His offices, His gifts, His Grace, His promises, but you have received *Him*! He is the center of your confidence, the target of your hopes!

The text says that you have received “Christ Jesus the Lord.” Here are three out of His many names and, first, Beloved, you have received Him as *Christ*, the Anointed of God. You see in Him no amateur Savior, uncommissioned—but One sent by the Father, the authorized Representative of the Most High—the Christos, the Messiah, the Sent One, who could rightly apply to Himself the ancient promise, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” Christ came to this world because the Father sent Him. He said to the Jews, “I came down from Heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.” He lived and died here because it pleased the Father for Him to do so. And He is still appointed by the Father to distribute unnumbered gifts to His people. “It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.” You believe that upon Christ, the Spirit rests without measure, that He is anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows, and in receiving Him as the Anointed One, you also have an unction from the Holy

One and, therefore, you also are anointed to be kings and priests unto God. So you have received Him as Christ, the Anointed.

But you have also received Him as *Jesus*, and you love that charming name. No hymn more truly expresses your feelings than that one by John Newton which begins—

***“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
In a Believer’s ears!  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fears.”***

You also sing with Bernard of Clairvaux—

***“Jesus, the very thought of You  
With sweetness fills my breast.  
But sweeter far Your face to see  
And in Your Presence rest.  
Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,  
Nor can the memory find  
A sweeter sound than Your blest name,  
O Savior of mankind!”***

You received Him as your Savior and, therefore, He has saved you from the penalty of sin and He will also save you from the dominion and power of sin. If you are saved, you are saved entirely through Jesus—and you do not need, and you do not desire any other Savior! You look to Jesus for all that can be comprehended in the word, *salvation*. His name means Savior and you have found Him to be a Savior to you. So you have received the anointed Savior, Christ Jesus.

And you have received Him as *the Lord*. You have not accepted Him as merely one of many anointed Prophets, nor as a man sent from God, as John the Baptist was, but you worship Him as the Lord! And oh, how blessed it is to adore the Son of God! We cannot make any terms of peace with those who deny the Deity of Christ, nor ought they to want to be at peace with us, for if Christ is not the Son of God, we are idolaters. And if He is, they are not Christians! There is a great gulf between us and them and we do not hesitate for a moment to say on which side of that gulf we stand. That same Jesus who was nailed to the tree is to us both Lord and Christ. By faith we put our finger into the print of the nails and our hand into His pierced side—and never questioning the fact that He is truly Man, we rejoice to say to Him, as Thomas did, “My Lord and my God.” Jesus Christ is, indeed, to us “very God of very God.” This being so, we have received Him as our Lord to rule and govern us. In spiritual matters He is our only King—we acknowledge no master save Him who is *The Master*, of whom Martha said to her sister Mary, “The Master is come, and calls for you.”

No teacher has any right to impart to us any instruction except that which he has received from the only Infallible Teacher. “He is the head of the body, the Church,” and we recognize no other headship. We joyfully acknowledge that He is our Sovereign Lord in the spiritual realm! He is the absolute Monarch of our soul! He is that perfect Husband who is the true Head of His mystical body, the Church. Oh, that we more fully car-

ried out, practically, in every thought, wish and action of our entire life, all that is implied in receiving Jesus Christ as Lord!

Beloved Friends, as I look round upon you all and gaze into your faces, this question rushes from my heart to my lips—Have all of you received Christ Jesus the Lord? Alas, I am sorrowfully persuaded that there are some of you who have not received Him! He has knocked again and again with those pierced hands of His, at the door of your heart, but you have not let Him in! This fountain of the Water of Life has flowed close to your feet, yet you have not drunk of it. Christ has been set before you as the Bread of Life sent down from Heaven, but you have not eaten of Him—you have refused Him even until now! “No,” you say, “you are too severe in charging us with having refused Christ, for we have not done that!” Well, it seems to me that this is just what you *have* done, but I will put it more softly and say that, at any rate, you have not *received* Him. You have put Him off to a more convenient season which will probably never come to you. O poor Souls, poor Souls, how sad is your state in not having received Christ Jesus the Lord! Leaving out Heaven and eternity for the moment—and speaking only of today—how wretched you must be in not having received Christ! When I see a man who has never seen the sun, I pity him, but not as I pity you who have never seen the Sun of Righteousness! If I heard of a child who had never known a father’s love and who had never looked up with affection into a mother’s face, I would pity that poor orphan, but not as much as I pity you who are living without a Savior! If I knew a man who had never known what health was, but who, from the day of his birth, was always sickly and bowed down with pain and infirmity, I would pity him, but not as I pity you who are sick unto death, yet who will not accept healing from the Great Physician! May God look down upon you, now, not only with pity, as He always does, but also in the power of His Almighty Grace and turn the heart of stone to flesh and lead you to receive Christ Jesus as Lord! That is all you have to do—to receive Jesus as the parched earth receives the refreshing showers, and as the wilted lilies receive the reviving rain drops and lift up their drooping heads again. That is all you have to do—receive Jesus! A child can receive. The feeblest can receive. Yes, one lying at the point of death, the sick man dying of fever may receive the cooling draught that is put to his lips! This is all that is asked of you—that you will *receive* Christ Jesus the Lord! Oh, that you would all receive Him now! God grant that it may be so and He shall have the praise!

**II.** Now, secondly, notice THE COUNSEL GIVEN—“so walk you in Him.” The text not only reminds us of what we have done, but it also tells us what we are now to do!

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, it is not easy to decide whether this counsel is to be regarded as a permission or as a precept—“so walk you in Him.” Taking them either way, the words are a sweet morsel in my mouth. Yet I think I prefer to regard them as a permission. Suppose I had been to Jesus as a poor sinner and that He had saved me and that He had then said to me, “there, you are saved, so go your way. You have

been a prodigal, but you are forgiven. You have shoes on your feet, a ring on your finger and the best robe to cover your nakedness—now go and do what you can for yourself”? Well, it would have been Infinite Mercy that would have welcomed me and pardoned me, but how much more gracious and tender is the Lord’s message, “Come, My child take up your abode with Me and wander away no more.” It is thus that God speaks to all who have believed in Jesus, “You have received Jesus Christ the Lord, so now you may walk in Him and you may always walk in Him! What He was to you at the first, He may be to you, still, and He may be to you forever and ever! Did you at the first eat Him as the Bread of Life to your soul? Then go on still eating Him! Did you spiritually drink of Him as the Water of Life? Then still drink of Him. He is yours forever, so continue to draw from His fullness all that you need! As you have received Him, so keep on receiving Him.” Surely, this is a most gracious permission as well as a very precious precept!

“Walk in Him.” Does not this mean, first, look upon Jesus Christ as your Way to Heaven and walk in Him? Look upon Him as your Forerunner and follow Him. Look upon Him as your Companion and lean upon Him. Look upon Him as your delight and live in Him, abide in Him! The expression, “Walk in Him,” implies action and progress. Let your whole life be practically governed by your union with Christ, let your actions speak of your fellowship with Him. But walking also means progress, so do not stand still in Christ, but go on to know more and more of Him—make advances in the Christian life—“grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” There is also something of the idea of permanence in the precept, “Walk you in Him.” It means go nowhere else, but continue in Him—let your ordinary life and your common conversation indicate your closeness of communion with Him!

“Walk you in Him.” I trust that at least some of us know what it is to “walk in Him.” Though we could not tell to others all that it means, yet it is a blessed fact in our experience and we intend, by God’s Grace, to “walk in Him” as long as we live. I think this is what walking in Him means—to wake up in the morning and to have our first thoughts full of the Savior—to seek His guidance and blessing in everything that is to happen to us during the day, to go down to our morning meal with our heart’s affection fixed upon Jesus, to go off to the business or the workshop in the full consciousness that He is going with us—when our hands are busy and our mind is occupied with our trading or our working, still realizing that our heart is with our Beloved in the secret place where none can follow us, and so, as the hours run on, through the noontide heat, Christ is our shade and shelter, in the cool of the evening His company is our supreme delight and then, as we retire to our bed, our last thought being—

***“How sweet to rest  
Forever on our Savior’s breast!”***

Christian, this ought to be your way of living! And if you are right with God, this is the way in which you actually do live. You “walk in Him.”

What a lovely garden! What a delightful place! The air is balmy, the scenery all around is charming. There is nothing to distract, or disturb, or disgust—everything to delight, gratify and satiate the spirit—so “Walk in Him.” Climb to every lofty hill of His Infinite Love, explore the deepest recesses of His eternal purposes so far as they are accessible to mortal man! And in this way, “as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him.”

**III.** Notice, thirdly, THE MODEL WHICH IS PRESENTED TO US IN THE TEXT. “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him.” The two emphatic words are, “as,” and, “so.” We are to walk in Christ Jesus as we received Him.

There is great safety in going back to first principles. To make sure of being in the right way, it is well to look back to the gate by which we entered the way. You know how, in ordinary life, in the matter of mutual love, we often look back upon the early days of that experience as the sweetest. Not long ago I heard a good man, whose time had been very fully occupied in business so that for many a year he had scarcely been able to have a holiday, say that, when at last he did manage to take one with his wife, it was like his honeymoon. You also recollect how the Lord said to Israel, “I remember you, the kindness of your youth, the love of your espousals, when you went after Me in the wilderness.” God likes us to go back in thought to the time when we began with Him—and I want to take you who are Christians back to your first love of God. Perhaps with some of you, religion has become a very mechanical sort of thing—you have become stereotyped in your religious observances. You need to go back to the place where you first received Christ Jesus the Lord and there refurbish your faith, love and all your other Divine Graces!

So I ask you, how did you receive Christ? Possibly your first answer is, “*I received Him in the depth of sorrow and humiliation of soul.* I had been broken in pieces by the great plow of the Law and was rent and torn asunder by my own consciousness of guilt. I lay before the Cross moaning and roaring like a wounded beast and in my extremity I received Christ as being the very Savior that I needed. I felt myself to be less than nothing and I took Him to be my All-in-All. Shivering in my nakedness through sin, I took His righteousness as my perfect covering. Famished to death, I took Him to be both my life and the food of that life. I grasped Christ in my despair at finding there was nothing else to which I could cling! Out of the great deeps of my soul’s distress, I cast myself upon His mercy, saying—

***“I can but perish if I go,  
I am resolved to try—  
For if I stay away,  
I know I must forever die!”***

Our daily walk in Christ must be very much like that. Not exactly so, for there should be no unbelief in it. As for myself, I must confess that I never realize Christ’s preciousness so much as when I feel myself still to be apart from Him, an undeserving, ill-deserving, Hell-deserving sinner.

Sometimes when our Lord gives us sweet enjoyments, we make too much of them by letting them come between Him and our souls. And when the Holy Spirit bestows upon us certain Graces, we think we are very fine fellows and carry our heads aloft very proudly—instead of giving all the Glory to His holy name. Now, if we ever act like that, we may rest assured that as we go up in our own estimation, Christ will go down—and that would be a sorry thing, indeed! Grow in Grace, but not in self-esteem. Have more faith, but do not boast of having it. Be full of zeal, but not of conceit concerning it. Be as holy as it is possible for you to become, but do not prate and brag about your holiness as some have done. Be not like those who push with horn and with shoulder the weak ones of the flock because they have not attained to such heights as these strong ones profess to have reached—though, possibly, the feebler and humbler ones are really nearer to God than the boasters are! Lie low, Brothers and Sisters, lie low, for what the old Essex farmer used to tell me is true, “If you are one inch above the ground, you are just that inch too high.” So lie low and thus continue to walk in Christ—yourself being *nothing*—and Christ being *everything*. You know that if you get to be something, Christ cannot then be everything to you. But if you are still nothing—and less than nothing in your own estimation—as you sink in self-esteem, your Lord will rise to His right position in your sight and so you will be walking humbly in Him as you ought!

Think again how you received Christ. When you really did lay hold of Him by faith, I am sure that *you received Him with great certainty*. There was no mockery, no sham about your reception of Christ. You were a lost sinner and you were pointed to the only Savior—and you did really and truly look unto Him who said, “Look unto Me, and be you saved.” Whatever else there was in your look, there was intense earnestness in it. There was no pretence or affectation about it, it was very real! Is all your religion as real as that first faith-look at Jesus was? Do you walk in Him as truly and as decidedly as you did that first day? My dear Brother, do you ever pray sham prayers? My dear Sister, do you ever sing sham praises? Is there not a very great risk of our making our religion into a mere shell with no life in it? May God save us from everything that would be such a sham as that and make us as sincere in our walk in Christ as we were in our first reception of Him! I know that I was most anxious to be certain that I had really believed in Jesus to the saving of my soul. I was not satisfied with just one look at Jesus, but I looked, and looked, again and again, with a holy anxiety lest I might possibly have been mistaken and not really have trusted Christ as my Savior. I wish we had more of that sacred anxiety concerning our walking in Christ.

We were not only very sincere in our early repentance and faith, but *our reception of Christ was very vital*. Salvation was to us a matter of life or death. It was not something about which we were only slightly concerned. It would be well if we manifested a similar vitality about our daily walk in Christ. There are some professors whom I know who do not seem

to me to be alive much above their ankles—they have not sufficient vitality to reach up to their knees so as to make them mighty in prayer. They are alive, I hope, but they remind me very vividly of a remarkable but gruesome picture of the Resurrection that I once saw. There were skeletons coming out of the graves, with the bones only partly covered with flesh. One man had a head without any eyes in it. Another was stretching out an arm that was all bone—and the rest of the figures in the picture were of a similar character. It was a strange conception on the part of the painter, yet I fear it was only too true a representation of the spiritual state of many nominal Christians! I hope they are really rising from among the dead, but they have not risen yet into fullness of life. Many professors appear to have a very low vitality, if they are alive at all! Their hearts are hard and stony, their consciences insensitive—sin does not shock them as it shocks the young convert—he is startled and alarmed at the very *appearance* of evil—but *they* have become so callous that they walk unconcerned among scenes that ought to break their hearts! May the Lord save you, beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, from all such callousness as that! May you have the same tender sensitiveness to sin that you had when you received Christ Jesus the Lord. And as you then welcomed Him with warm, loving, overflowing emotion, so may you walk in Him, all your days, as one who is alive from the dead—thoroughly alive—with all your powers and faculties in active exercise and your whole soul brimming over with love to Him!

Did you not also, Beloved, *receive Christ very eagerly*? Have you ever helped to feed a man who had long been without food? If so, you know that it is a great treat to see how eagerly he eats. He does not pick over the meat to see if it is well done—it is all well done to him. He does not leave a scrap of food upon the plate and he looks round to see if there is any more that he can beg. It was in such a fashion that we feasted upon Christ when we first received Him. We had been for months, perhaps even for years, longing with a great heart-ache to find the Savior. And when we did find Him and began to feast upon Him, we thought we never could have enough of Him! Do you recollect how eager you were in those days to go where you could hear the Gospel? You went to a place which was so crowded that you could not get a seat, but you did not mind standing in the aisle and you did not feel tired, then! But now you need a nice soft cushion to sit on and a cushion even for your feet—and you are weary long before the sermon is finished! In those early days you would have walked many miles to hear about Jesus Christ—and even if the preacher’s language was somewhat rough and uncouth, what did you care about that, as long as he faithfully preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified? That is the way in which we should still eagerly walk in Christ, feeling that we can never have too much of His company, longing to be often where He meets with His people, delighting in His worship, charmed with everything He says and does! We received Christ eagerly, so let us walk in Him with the same eagerness and earnestness!

Many of us also received Christ very resolutely. I know that I asked the question, over and over again, “Shall I go to Him?” And at last, when I was almost driven to despair, I cried, “I must, I will—

**“I’ll go to Jesus, though my sin  
Has like a mountain rose.  
I know His courts, I’ll enter in,  
Whatever may oppose.”**

That was how many of us received Christ Jesus the Lord. There were difficulties in our way, but we overcame them, for we were determined to be saved if it was possible. What sacred doggedness, what holy pertinacity will a soul bestow when it is resolved on being saved! Hunger will make a man break through stone walls and iron bars, but a soul that is hungering and thirsting after Christ does not know that there are any walls or bars, so overpowering is its eagerness to get to Him! It was with such eagerness as this that we received Christ Jesus the Lord. Are we just as eager to walk in Him? I know that some of you are sorely tempted—are you standing fast? Are you standing up for Jesus as you used to do when you first knew Him? Are you firm as a rock in your resistance to everything that is opposed to Him and to His Truth? You ought to be! Your song should still be that one of which you were so fond in those early days—

**“Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,  
I’ll follow where He goes.”**

A lion-like spirit was then in you! You would gladly have gone to prison for Christ’s sake, or even to death if He had required it. If somebody had told me, when I was converted, that I should have to go to prison and lie there for 12 years as John Bunyan did if I became a Christian, I verily believe that I would have leaped for joy at the prospect of so high an honor! To be a martyr for the Truth’s sake—the prospect looked glorious—the ruby crown glowed in the sunshine of our ardent anticipation and we envied those who had been privileged to wear it! It was so then. But, Beloved, is it so now? Can you cleave to Christ as tenaciously now as you did then? Can you bear to be in ill repute for His sake? Can you rejoice in being scoffed at because you are a Christian as you did when you received Christ Jesus the Lord? If you cannot, blush and be ashamed and, from henceforth, pray that with the same undaunted courage and determination with which you received Him, you may continue to walk in Him!

I will not weary you by multiplying words, but I must ask whether you do not recollect *how joyfully you received Christ*. Ah, you cannot forget that, for in proportion to your sorrow before, was your joy when you accepted Christ as your Savior. No wonder you sang—

**“Happy day, happy day,  
When Jesus washed my sins away!”**

We are not surprised that Miriam and the women went out with timbrels and with dances when Pharaoh and all his host were drowned in the Red Sea. And we do not marvel at Miriam’s jubilant song, “Sing you to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously,” for our soul took a timbrel and

our feet danced before the Lord as we sang unto Him who had triumphed so gloriously for us! As I go back and remind you of those early joys, I again ask you whether you are as joyous now as you were then? You ought to be a great deal more joyous, for you have had so much more cause to praise the Lord than you had then! Come, Brothers and Sisters, let us go again to Jesus as we went to Him at the first—let us go as poor, guilty, needy sinners to Jesus Christ upon the Cross just as though we had never gone before! If we do so, I can tell you what the consequence will be just as it was at the first. As we—

***“View the flowing  
Of our Savior’s precious blood,  
With Divine assurance knowing  
He has made our peace with God”—***

we shall feel as though we were young converts once again! We may be getting old and gray and, perhaps, cold as well as gray, but we shall become like little children again and we shall shout, “Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!” as the Son of David rides in triumph down the streets of our soul! Oh, that it may be so with many of us here! It ought to be so and it will be so if you walk in Christ Jesus the Lord as you received Him in the hour of your conversion!

I will close my discourse when I have reminded you that when we received Christ Jesus the Lord, *we received the whole of Him*. We took Him for all that we knew of Him and we found that He was much more than we then thought He was. And we did not pick and choose and say, “We will have His pardon, but we will not have His sanctification.” We took the many-sided Christ, the Christ of many glorious Characters, the Christ of ten thousand times ten thousand beauties! We took Christ to teach us, Christ to lead us, Christ to feed us, Christ to cheer us, Christ for us to obey and Christ for us to delight in—we took a whole Christ! And then we gave Him our whole selves. We said, “Lord, take us, body, soul and spirit.” We prayed that the sacrifice might be bound with cords to the horns of the altar forever! We made no bargains with Him—we gave the freehold of our souls to Jesus—and of our bodies, too. And we only asked that we might not have a pulse beating except for Him, or our lungs heaving except as He was our very life. And we took Christ—at least I know I did—for better or worse, in health or in sickness, to have and to hold so that even death should never part us! We put our hand in His and asked Him to take us and keep us forever. And we took Him and said, “We will hold to You and will not let You go.” Since then there has been many a tug from Satan, who has tried to drag us away from Christ, or to make us think that Christ was going away from us—but we have managed to hold to Him to this hour! Perhaps you feel as though you had only got a hold of the hem of His garment. If so, try to get a firmer hold on Him! Gasp Him, hold Him by the feet, throw your arms about Him and tell Him that without a smile from Him, your spirit cannot rest! Tell Him that you are sick in love and need His Presence, and must have it! And beg Him, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, to come to you.

Say unto Him, “My Lord, if You love me, come and show Your love. If, indeed, there is between You and me a union of an eternal nature, come to me! Be not a stranger to Your own flesh, but be now as You were of old. Come to me again and let Your left hand be under my head while Your right hand does embrace me.” Oh, for more of these blessed hungerings and longings! Beloved, we will never let Christ go! We took Him forever and we will hold Him forever! And, blessed be His name, He will hold us forever! We are in His hands and none can take us out. There shall we be when earth and Heaven are in a blaze! There shall we be when He shall sit upon His Judgment Seat! And there shall we be world without end. Amen!

I leave this sermon with God’s people, but I cannot help adding that I do earnestly pray that all of you may receive Christ Jesus the Lord. Oh, come to Him tonight! He is willing that you should have Him—and every soul that wills to have Christ may have Him, for, “the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is thirsty come. And whoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.” Amen, and Amen.

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
1 JOHN 3:10-21.**

**Verses 10-12.** *In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil: whoever does not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loves not his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that Wicked One, and slew his brother. And why did he slay him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.* Some people try to deceive us with the notion that all men are the children of God, but John, writing under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, shows how false that idea is! Holiness and love distinguish the children of God from the children of the devil!

**13.** *Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hates you. As Cain hated Abel, so worldlings hate the saints whose holiness is a continual rebuke to the ungodly.*

**14-16.** *We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.* [See Sermon #2556, Volume 44—LIFE PROVED BY LOVE—Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.] *He that loves not his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer: and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us* [See Sermons #2656, Volume 46—THE DEATH OF CHRIST FOR HIS PEOPLE and #2959, Volume 51—GOD’S LOVE TO THE SAINTS—Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.] *and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.* Such self-sacrifice as this is the very highest form of love to the brethren and is a following of the example of Christ, who “laid down his life for us.”

**17, 18.** *But whoever has this world’s goods and sees his brother has need and shuts up his heart of compassion from him, how dwells the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in Truth.* Love that consists only of words is utterly worthless. If it is true love, it must prove itself by kind deeds and gracious actions.

**19.** *And hereby we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.* The love that will pass this test will bring a restful assurance of peace to the heart.

**20-22.** *For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart condemns us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatever we ask, we receive of Him because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.* It is not everyone who can have whatever he chooses to ask of God in prayer. This privilege is only granted to those who “keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” [See Sermon #1103, Volume 19—THE CONDITIONS OF POWER IN PRAYER—Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.]

**23.** *And this is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment.* Faith and love—faith in Christ and love to one another—are here most happily joined together! Let us never put them asunder.

**24.** *And he that keeps His commandments dwells in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit which He has given us.* Though this great Truth of our dwelling in God and God dwelling in us is a great mystery, it is a mystery concerning which we need not be in doubt if we will learn of the Holy Spirit what He delights to teach us!

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307

**PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON  
TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.**

# LIFE AND WALK OF FAITH

## NO. 483

**SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 7, 1862,  
BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

***“As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord,  
so walk you in Him.  
Colossians 2:6.***

OUR nature is fond of change. Although man was made in the image of God at first, it is plain enough that any trace of immutability which he may once have possessed has long ago departed. Man, unrenewed, could he possess the joys of Heaven, would in time grow weary of them and crave for change. When the children of Israel in the wilderness were fed on angels' food, they murmured for variety and groaned out, “Our soul loathes this light bread.” It is little wonder, then, that we need cautions against shifting the ground of our hope and the object of our faith.

Another evil principle will work with this love of change in our hearts and produce much mischief—our natural tendency to build upon our own works. For a time that pernicious habit is cured by conviction of sin. The Law, with its sharp axe, cuts down the lofty cedar of fleshly confidence and withers all its verdure. But, since the root still remains, at the very scent of water it sprouts again and there is good need to set the axe going with all its former edge and weight. When we think legality quite dead, it revives, and, linking hands with our love of change, it tempts us to forsake our simple standing upon Christ, the Rock of Ages. It urges us to advance to a something which it decorates before our eyes with fancied colors and makes out, to our feeble understandings, to be better or more honorable to ourselves.

Though this will certainly be again beaten down in a Christian, for he will meet with trouble after trouble when once he goes astray from his first path, yet again the old secret desire to *be* something, to *do* something, to have some little honor by performing the works of the Law, will come in and we shall have need to hear the voice of Wisdom in our hearts saying to us, “As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him.” Persevere in the same way in which you have begun, and, as at the first, Christ Jesus was the source of your life, the principle of your action, and the joy of your spirit, so let Him be the same even till life's end—the same when you walk through the valley of the shadow of death and enter into the joy, and the rest, which remain for the people of God.

In trying to teach this very useful, though simple lesson, I shall, in the plainest possible language, first of all talk a little of the text *by way of exposition*. Then, secondly, *by way of advocacy*. And then, thirdly, *by way of application*.

I. Oh that the gracious Spirit, who alone can lead us into all the Truth of God, would aid me while I endeavor to open up this verse BY WAY OF EXPOSITION. In expounding the text, we readily break it up into two

parts—here is the life of faith—receiving Christ Jesus the Lord. Here is, secondly, the walk of faith—so walk you in Him.

1. The Holy Spirit here reveals to us *the life of faith*—the way by which you and I are saved, if saved at all. Mark, carefully, that it is represented as *receiving*. Now the word, “receiving,” *implies the very opposite of anything like merit*. Merit is purchasing—merit might be called making by labor, or winning by valor. But receiving is just the accepting of a thing as a *gift*. The eternal life which God gives His people is in no sense whatever the fruit of their exertions. It is the gift of God. As the earth drinks in the rain, as the sea receives the streams, as night accepts light from the stars, so we, giving nothing, partake freely of the Grace of God.

The saints are not, by nature, wells or streams. They are but cisterns into which the living water flows. They are but as the empty vessel. Sovereign mercy puts them under the pipe and they receive Divine Grace upon Divine Grace till they are filled to the brim. He that talks about winning salvation by works—he that thinks he can earn it by prayers, by tears, by penance, by mortification of the flesh, or by zealous obedience to the Law—makes a big mistake. For the very first principle of the Divine life is not giving out, but *receiving*. It is that which comes *from Christ into me* which is my salvation. Not that which springs out of my own heart, but that which comes from the Divine Redeemer, and changes, and renews my nature. It is not what I give out but what I *receive*, which must be life to me.

The idea of receiving, again, seems to imply in it *a sense of realization*, making the matter *a reality*. One cannot very well receive a shadow. We receive that which is substantial. Gold, silver, precious stones—such things we can receive. Estates, riches, bread, water, food, raiment—all these are things which are substances to us, and therefore it becomes possible for us to *receive* them. We do not receive a dream. We do not receive, again, I say, a shadow. We do not speak of receiving a specter. We do not receive a phantom. There is something real in a thing that is received.

Well now, so is it also in the life of faith. We realize Christ. While we are without faith, Christ is a name to us, a Person that may have lived a long while ago, so long that His life is only a history to us now! By an act of faith Christ becomes a real Person in the consciousness of our heart, as real to us as our own flesh, and blood, and bones—and we speak of Him and think of Him as we would of our brother, our father, our friend. Our faith gives a substance to the history and idea of Christ, puts real solidity into the spirit and name of Christ—and that which to the worldly man is but a phantom, a thing to hear about and talk about—becomes to us a thing to taste and handle, to lay hold upon and to receive as real and true.

I know, you that are unconverted, think all these things an idle tale. But you that are saved, you who have received Christ—you know that there is substance here—and shadow everywhere else. This has become to you the one grand reality, that God is in Christ reconciling you unto Himself. But receiving means also a third thing, that is *getting a grip of it, grasping it*. The thing which I receive becomes my own. I may *believe* it to be real, but that is not *receiving* it. I may believe, also, that if I ever do get

it, it must be given to me, and that I cannot earn it for myself. But still that is not *receiving* it. Receiving is the *bona fide* taking into my hands, and appropriating to myself as my own property that which is given to me.

Now this is what the soul does when it believes on Christ. Christ becomes *my* Christ. His blood cleanses *my* sin, and it is cleansed. His righteousness covers *me*, and I am clothed with it. His Spirit fills me, and I am made to live by it. He becomes to me as much mine as anything that I can call my own. No, what I call my own here on earth is not mine. It is only lent to me, and will be taken from me. But Christ is so mine, that neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to rob me of Him. Oh, I hope, dear Friends, you have that blessed appropriating faith which says, "Yes, He is not another man's Christ, He is *my* Christ," I hope you can look into His face today and say, "*My* Beloved, who loved *me* and gave Himself for me."

I hope you do not talk of these things as I might talk of my lord So-and-So's park, and admire its beauties, while I, myself, have no right to one acre of the many thousands within the fence. But I trust, on the other hand, you can say—"The blessings and promises of the Lord, my God, are all my own. Whatever I read of in the Covenant of Grace that is good, that is comely, that is desirable, I have heard a voice say in my ears, "Lift up now your eyes and look to the north and the south, to the east and the west: all this have I given *you* to be your possession forever and ever by a covenant of salt."

Now put these three things together and I think you have the idea of receiving Christ. To receive Him is to have Him as the result of God's free gift. To realize Him. And then to appropriate Him to yourselves. The word "receive" is used in some ten or a dozen senses in Holy Scripture. Five of them will suffice my purpose just now. To receive is often used for *taking*. We read of receiving a thousand shekels of silver, and of receiving money, garments, sheep and oxen. Perhaps in this sense we understand the words of the Master—"No man can receive anything unless it is given him from above." And that other sentence—"To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

We take Christ into us—to return to my old simile—as the empty vessel takes in water from the stream—so we receive Christ. The love, life, merit, nature, and Grace of Jesus freely flow into us, as the oil into the widow's vessels. But the word is also used in Scripture to signify *holding that which we take in*. Indeed, a vessel without a bottom could hardly be said to receive water. I do not suppose anyone would talk of a sieve receiving water except in a mock sense. But the life of faith consists in holding within us that which Christ has put into us, so that Jesus Christ is formed in us the hope of glory. By faith it comes in. By faith it is kept in. Faith gives me what I have, keeps what I have. Faith makes it mine, faith *keeps* it mine. Faith gets hold of it with one hand, and then clasps it with both hands with a grasp that neither death nor life can loose.

Then, receiving sometimes means in Scripture simply *believing*. "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." We read of receiving false prophets, that is, believing them. Now, to receive Christ is to believe Him. He says, "I can save you." I receive that. He says, "I will save you." I

receive that. He says, "Trust Me and I will make you like Myself." I receive that. Whatever Jesus says, I believe Him, and receive Him as true. I make His words so true to myself that I act upon them as being true, and regard them not as a word that may *possibly* be true but which *must* be true, even if Heaven and earth should pass away. This is receiving Christ—believing what He has said.

Receiving, also, often signifies in Scripture *entertaining*. Thus the barbarous people at Melita received Paul and his companions kindly and kindled a fire. Ah, after we have once found all in Christ to be our own and have received Him into ourselves by faith, then we entreat the Lord to enter our hearts and sup with us. We give Him the best seat at the table of our souls. We would feast Him on the richest dainties of our choicest love. We ask Him to abide with us from morn till eve. We would commune with Him every day and every hour of the day. We entertain Him. We have a reception chamber in our hearts and we receive Christ.

And then, once again, receiving in Scripture often signifies *to enjoy*. We hear of receiving a crown of life which fades not away. That is, enjoying it, enjoying Heaven, and being satisfied with all its bliss. Now, dear Friends, when we receive Christ, there is intended in this an enjoying of it. I am only now talking the simplicities of our faith, but I do want to make them very personal to you. Are you thus enjoying Christ? If you had a crown you would wear it. You have a Christ—feed on Him. If you were hungry and there was bread on the table, you would eat. Oh, eat and drink, Beloved, of your Lord Jesus Christ! If you have a friend, you enjoy his company—you have a Friend in Christ. Oh, enjoy His conversation! Do not leave Him, like a bottle of cordial for the fainting, sealed up from us.

Let him not be as some choice dainty all untasted, while you are hungry. Oh, receive Christ, for this is the very Heaven and rest of the soul. His flesh is meat, indeed. His blood is drink, indeed. Never did angels taste such Divine fare. Come here, Saints, and satisfy yourselves in Him. To take Him into one's self, to hold Him there, to believe every word He says, to entertain Him in our hearts, and to enjoy the luscious sweetness which He must confer upon all those who have eaten His flesh and have been made to drink of His blood—this it is, to receive Christ.

But we have not brought out the real meaning of this life of faith yet till we dwell upon another word. As you have received. Received what? Salvation may be described as the blind receiving sight, the deaf receiving hearing, the dead receiving life. But Beloved, Beloved, here is a thought here—oh that you may get hold of it! We have not only received these things but we have received CHRIST. "As you have received *Christ Jesus the Lord*." Do you see it? It is true that He gave us life from the dead. He gave us pardon of sin. He gave us imputed righteousness. These are all precious things—but do you see we are not content with them?

We have received *Christ Himself*! The Son of God has been poured out into us, and we have received Him, and appropriated Him. Mark, I say, not merely the blessings of the Covenant, but *Himself*! Not merely the purchase of His blood, but He Himself, from whose veins the blood has flowed, has become ours. And every soul that has eternal life is this day a possessor of Christ Jesus the Lord. Now we will put this, also, personally

to you. Have I received *Christ*, that is the *Anointed*? My soul, have you seen Christ as the Anointed of the Father in the Divine decree to execute His purposes? Have you seen Him coming forth in the fullness of time wearing the robes of His priesthood, the Anointed of the Father?

Have you seen Him standing at the altar offering Himself as a Victim, an anointed Priest, anointed with the sacred oil by which God has made Him a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec? My Soul, have you seen Jesus going within the veil and speaking to Your Father and to His Father as One whom the Father has accepted, of whom we can speak, in the language of David, as our shield and God's Anointed? Oh, it is a delight, indeed, to receive Christ not as an unsent Prophet, not as a man who came of His own authority, not as a teacher who spoke His own words, but as One who is *Christos*, the Anointed, the Anointed of God, ordained of the Most High, and therefore most certainly acceptable!

As it is written, "I have laid help upon One that is mighty, I have exalted One chosen out of the people. It pleased the *Father* to bruise Him, He has put Him to grief." Delightful is the contemplation of Christ under that aspect! Soul, do you thus receive the Messiah of God? But the text says, "Christ *Jesus*." Now Jesus means a Savior. *Christ* is His relation to God, *Jesus* His relation to *me*. Have I received Christ in His relationship to *me* as a Savior? My Soul, has Christ saved you? Come, no "ifs" and "ands" about it. Have you received Him as your Savior? Could you say in that happy day when your faith closed with Him, "Yes, Jesus, You have saved me"?

Oh, there are some professors of religion who do not seem to have received Christ as *Jesus*. They look upon Him as One who may *help* them to save themselves, who can do a great deal for them, or may *begin* the work, but not complete it. Oh, Beloved, we must get a hold of Him as one that has saved us, that has finished the work. What? Don't you know that you are this day whiter than the driven snow because His blood has washed you? You are this day more acceptable to God than unfallen angels ever were, for you are clothed in the perfect righteousness of the Divine One. Christ has wrapped you about with His own righteousness. You are saved! You have received Him as God's Anointed. See that you receive Him as Jesus, your Savior.

Then, again, it is clear that saving faith consists also in receiving Him *as He is in Himself, as the Divine Son*. "You have received Christ Jesus *the Lord*." Those who they say cannot believe in His Deity have not received Him. Others theoretically admit Him to be Divine, but He is never a subject of confidence as such. They have not received Him. But I trust I speak to many hundreds this morning who willingly accept His Godhead and say, "I entertain no doubt about His Deity and, moreover, on that I risk my soul. I do take Him into my heart as being God over all, blessed forever, Amen. I kiss His feet while I see His humanity. But I believe that, since those feet could tread the waters, He is Divine.

"I look up to His hands, and as I see them pierced I know that He is human. But as I know that those hands multiplied the loaves and fishes till they fed five thousand, I know that He is Divine. I look upon His corpse in the tomb, and I see that He is Man. I see Him in the resurrection, and I

know that He is God. I see Him on the Cross, suffering, and I know that He is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh. But I hear a voice which says, 'Let all the angels of God worship Him.' 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.' And I bow before Him and say, 'Oh Lord, You Son of God, and son of Mary, I receive You as Christ Jesus *the Lord*.'

Now this is all very plain talking, you will say. And I remind you that souls are saved by very plain truths, and the dealings of men's souls with Christ are not carried on in learned or metaphysical terms. We do believe, and so take Christ Jesus the Lord into us, and by that act of faith, without any doing of our own, we are completely saved.

I shall only make this further remark here, that the Apostle speaks of this as a *matter of certainty* and goes on to argue from it. Now we do not argue from a supposition. I must have you clear, dearly Beloved in the Lord, that this is a matter of certainty *to you*. We can hardly get to the next point unless you can say, "I have received Jesus." The verse runs, "As, or since, *you have* received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk you in Him." We must not alter it into, "Since *I hope* I have," "Since *I trust* I have." You either have or have not.

If you have not, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God and cry to Him for His great gift. But if you have, O, dear Friends, do not let it be a question with you, but say, "Yes, yes, yes, I can say, once and for all, I have received Him. Poor, weak, and worthless though I am, I do put my humble seal to the fact that God is true, and I trust in Him who is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Him." This is the life of faith.

**2.** Now, in expounding the text, our second point was *the walk of faith*. "Since you have received Him, walk in Him." Walk implies, first of all, *action*. Do not let your reception of Christ be a mere thing of thought to you, a subject only for your chamber, and your closet—but act upon it all. If you have really received Christ, and are saved, act as if you were saved—with joy, with meekness, with confidence, with faith, with boldness. Walk in Him—do not sit down in indolence—but rise and act in Him. Walk in Him. Carry out into practical effect that which you believe.

See a man who has received an immense fortune, his purse is bursting, and his caskets are heavy. What does he do? Why, he behaves like a rich man. He sees a luxury which pleases him, and he buys it. There is an estate he desires, and he purchases it. He acts like a rich man. Beloved Brethren, you have received Christ—act upon it. Do not play the beggar, now that boundless wealth is conferred upon you!

Walking, again, implies *perseverance*. Not only being in Christ *today*—that would be standing in Him and falling from Him. But being in Him tomorrow, and the next day, and the next, and the next, and the next—walking in Him all your walk of life. I remember Matthew Henry, speaking about Enoch walking with God, says he did not only take a turn or two up and down with God, and then leave Him, but he walked with God four hundred years. This implies perseverance. You have received Christ—persevere in receiving Him. You have come to trust Him—keep on trusting Him. You hang about His neck as a poor, helpless sinner—remain hanging there. In other words, abide in Him.

Walking implies *habit*. When we speak of a man's walk and conversation, we mean his habits, the constant tenor of his life. Now, dear Friends, if you and I sometimes enjoy Christ, and then forget Him, if sometimes we say He is ours and soon loose our hold, that is not a habit. We do not *walk* in Him. But if you have received Him, let it be your habit to live upon Him, keep to Him—cling to Him, never let Him go—live and have your being in Him. This walking implies a *continuance*. There is no notice given in the text of the suspension of this walking, but there must be a continual abiding in Christ. How many Christians there are who think that in the morning and evening they ought to come into the company of Christ, but then they may be in the world the rest of the day?

Ah, but we ought *always* to be in Christ, that is to say, all the day long, every minute of the day. Though worldly things may take up some of my thoughts, yet my soul is to be in a constant state of being in Christ, so that if I am caught at any moment, I am in Him. At any hour, if anyone should say to me, "Now, are you saved?" I may be able still to say, "Yes." And if they ask me for an evidence of it, I may, without saying so, prove it to them by the fact that I am acting like a man who is in Christ, who has Christ in him, has had his nature changed by receiving Christ's nature, and has Christ to be his one end and aim. I suppose, also, that walking signifies *progress*. So walk in him—proceed from Divine Grace to Grace—run forward until you reach the uttermost limit of knowledge that man can have concerning our Beloved. "As you have received Him walk in Him."

But now I want you to notice just this. It says, "Walk you *in Him*." Oh, I cannot attempt to enter into the mystery of this text—"Walk *in Him*!" You know if a man has to cross a river, he fords it quickly and is out of it again at once. But you are to suppose a person walking *in* a certain element always, *in Christ*. Just as we walk in the air, so am I to walk in Christ. Not sometimes, now and then coming to Him and going away from Him, but walking in Him as my *element*. Can you comprehend that? Not a soul here can make anything out of that but the most silly jargon, except the man who, having received the inner spiritual life, understands what it is to have fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

Dear Friends, in trying to open up that point just for a moment, let us notice what this walking in Christ must mean. As Christ was at first when we received Him *the only ground of our faith*—so as long as we live, we are to stand to the same point. Did you not sing the other day when you first came to Him—

**"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all,  
But Jesus Christ is my All in All!"?**

Well, that is how you are to continue to the end. We commence our faith with—

**"Nothing in my hands I bring,  
Simply to the Cross I cling."**

When you are old with honors, when you are covered with fame, when you have served your Master well, still come in just the same way with—

**"A guilty weak and helpless worm,  
On Christ's kind arms I fall,  
He is my strength and righteousness,**

### ***My Jesus and my All***

Let not your experience, your sanctification, your graces, your attainments, come in between you and Christ. But just as you took Him to be the only pillar of your hope at first, so let Him be even to the last.

You received Christ, again, as *the substance of your faith*. The infidel laughed at you, and said you had nothing to trust to. But your faith made Christ real to you. Well, now, just as the first day when you came to Jesus you no more doubted the reality of Christ than you did your own existence, so walk in Him. Well can I remember that first moment when these eyes looked to Christ! Ah, there was never anything so true to me as those bleeding hands, and that crown of thorns on His head. I wish it were always so, and indeed, it ought to be. As you have received Christ really, so keep on realizing and finding substance in Him.

And remember that day, Beloved, when Christ became to us *the joy of our souls*? Home, friends, health, wealth, comforts—all lost their luster that day when He appeared, just as stars are hidden by the light of the sun. He was the only Lord and giver of life's best bliss, the one well of living water springing up unto everlasting life. I know that the first day it mattered not to me whether the day itself was gloomy or bright. I had found Christ! That was enough for me. He was my Savior. He was my All. I do think that that day I could have stood upon the fire wood of Smithfield to burn for Him readily enough.

Well now, just as you received Him at first as your only joy, so receive Him still, walking in Him, making Him the source, the center, yes, and the circumference, too, of all your souls' range of delight, having your all in Him. So, Beloved, that day when we received Him, we received Him as *the object of our love*. Oh, how we loved Christ then! Had we met Him that day, we would have broken the alabaster box of precious ointment, and poured it upon His head. We would have washed His feet with our tears, and wiped them with the hairs of our head.

Ah, Jesus, when I first received You, I thought I should have behaved far better than I have. I thought I would spend, and be spent for You, and should never dishonor You or turn aside from my faith and devotedness and zeal. But ah, Brethren, we have not come up to the standard of our text—walking in Him as we have received Him. He has not been by us so well beloved as we dreamed He would have been. I take it, then, to be the meaning of our text, as Christ Jesus the Lord was at the first All in All to you, so let Him be while life shall last.

**II.** I shall be very brief upon THE ADVOCACY OF THIS PRINCIPLE, for surely you need no urgent persuasion to cleave unto such a Lord as yours. In advocating this principle, I would say, first of all, suppose, my Brethren, you and I, having been saved by Christ, should now begin to walk in someone else, what then? Why, *what dishonor to our Lord!* Here is a man who came to Christ and says he found salvation in Him. But after relying upon the Lord some half-a-dozen years, he came to find it was not a proper principle, and so now he has begun to walk by feelings, to walk by sight, to walk by philosophy, to walk by carnal wisdom. If such a case could be found, what discredit would it bring upon our Holy Leader and Captain!

But I am certain no such instance will be found in you, if you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Have you not up till now found your Lord to be a compassionate and generous Friend to you, and has not simple faith in Him given you all the peace your spirit could desire? I pray you, then, unless you would stain His glory in the dust, as you have received Christ, so walk in Him.

Besides, *what reason have you to make a change?* Has there been any argument in the past? Has not Christ proved Himself all-sufficient! He appeals to you today—"Have I been a wilderness unto you?" When your soul has simply trusted Christ, have you ever been confounded? When you have dared to come as a guilty sinner, and believed in Him, have you ever been ashamed? Very well, then, let the past urge you to walk in Him. And as for *the present*, can that compel you to leave Christ? Oh, when we are hard beset with this world or with the severer trials within the Church, we find it such a sweet thing to come back! Pillow our head upon the bosom of our Savior. This is the joy we have today—that if we are in trial—we are saved in Him. And if we find this today to be enough, why should we think of changing!

I will not forswear the sunlight till I find a better, nor leave my Lord until a brighter Lover shall appear. And, since this can never be, I will hold Him with a grasp immortal, and bind His name as a seal upon my arm. As for *the future*, can you suggest anything which can arise that shall render it necessary for you to tack about, or strike sail, or go with another captain in another ship? I think not. Suppose life to be long—He changes not. Suppose you die—is it not written that, "neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"?

You are poor. What better than to have Christ who can make you rich in faith? Suppose you are sick. What more do you want than Christ to make your bed in your sickness? Suppose you should be maltreated and mocked at, and slandered for His sake—what better do you want then to have Him as a Friend who sticks closer than a brother? In life, in death, in judgment—you cannot conceive anything that can arise in which you would require more than Christ bestows.

But, dear Friends, it may be that you are tempted by something else to change your course for a time. Now what is it? Is it the wisdom of this world, the cunning devices and discoveries of man? Is it that which our Apostle mentions as philosophy? The wise men of the world have persuaded you to begin questioning. They have urged you to put the mysteries of God to the test of common sense, reason and so forth, as they call it, and not lean on the inspiration of God's Word. Ah, well, Beloved, it is wisdom, I suppose, which philosophy offers you. Well, but have you not that in Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge? You received Christ at first, I thought, as being made of God unto you wisdom, and sanctification, and righteousness, and so on. Well, will you cast Him off when you have already more than all the wisdom which this philosophy offers?

Is it *ceremonies* that tempt you? Has the priest told you that you ought to attend to these, and then you would have another ground of confi-

dence? Well, but you have that in Christ. If there is anything in the circumcision of the Jews, you have that, for you are circumcised in Him. If there is anything in Baptism—as some think that to be a saving ordinance—you have been buried with Him in Baptism. You have that. Do you want life? Your life is hid with Him. Do you want death? You are dead with Christ, and buried with Him. Do you want resurrection? He has raised you up with Him. Do you want Heaven? He has made you sit together in heavenly places in Him.

Getting Christ, you have all that everything else can offer you. Therefore be not tempted from this hope of your calling, but as you have received Christ, so walk in Him. And then, further, do you not know that your Jesus is the Lord from Heaven? *What can your heart desire* beyond God? God is infinite. You cannot want more than the infinite. “In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Having Christ, you have God. And having God, you have everything. Well might the Apostle add to that sentence, “And you are complete in Him!”

Well, then, if you are complete in Christ, why should you be beguiled by the bewitcheries of this world to want something besides Christ? If resting upon Him, God is absolutely yours, and you are, therefore, full to the brim with all that your largest capacity can desire, oh, why should you thus be led astray, like foolish children, to seek after another confidence and another trust? Oh, come back, you Wanderer! Come you back to this solid foundation and sing once again with us—

**“On Christ the solid rock I stand,  
All other ground is sinking sand.”**

**III.** And now, last of all, a few words BY WAY OF APPLICATION “So walk you in Him.” One of the first applications shall be made with regard to some who complain of a want of communion, or rather, of those of whom we ought to complain, since they injure us all by their distance from Christ.

There are some of you who never have much communion with Christ. You are members of the Church and very decent people, I dare say, in your way. But you do not have communion with Christ. Ask some professors—“Do you ever have communion with Christ?” They would be obliged to say—“Well, I do not know that my life is inconsistent. I do not think anybody could blame me for any wrong act towards my fellow man. But if you come to that, whether I have ever had communion with Christ, I am compelled to say that I have had it now and then, but it is very seldom—it is like the angels’ visits—few and far between.”

Now, Brethren, you have received Christ, have you not? Then the application of the principle is as you have received Him, so walk in Him. If it were worth while for you to come to Him at first, then it is worth while for you always to keep to Him. If it were really a safe thing for you to come to Him and say, “Jesus, you are the way,” then it is a safe thing for you to do now. And if that were the foundation of blessedness to you, to come simply to Christ, then it will be the fountain of blessedness to you to do the same now. Come, then, to Him *now*.

If you were foolish in trusting Him at the first, then you are wise in leaving off doing so now. If you were wise, however, in approaching to Christ years gone by, you are foolish in not standing by Christ now.

Come, then, let the remembrance of your marriage unto the Lord Jesus rebuke you! And if you have lost your fellowship with Jesus, come again to His dear body wounded for your sake and say, "Lord Jesus, help me from this time forth as I have received You, day by day to walk in You."

There are many of you who complain of *a want of comfort*. You are not so comfortable as you would like to be and why? Why, you have sinned. Yes, yes, but how did you receive Christ. As a saint? "No, no," you say, "I came to Christ as a sinner." Come to Him as a sinner now, then. "Oh, but I feel so guilty." Just so, but what was your hope at first? Why, that guilty though you were, He had made an atonement and you trusted in Him. Well, you are still guilty—do the same as you did at first—walk in Him, and I cannot imagine a person without comfort who continually makes this the strain of his life, to rest on Christ as a poor sinner, just as he did at first.

Why, Lord, You know the devil often says to me, "You are no saint." Well, then, if I am not a saint, yet I am a sinner—and it is written—"Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Then—

***"Just as I am and waiting not,  
To rid my soul of one foul spot,  
To Him whose blood can cleanse each blot,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."***

Why, you cannot help having comfort if you walk with your Surety and Substitute as you did at the first, resting on Him and not in feelings, nor experience, nor graces, nor anything of your own—living and resting alone on Him who is made of God unto you all that your soul requires.

There is yet another thing. There are many Christians whose lives really *are not consistent*. I cannot understand this if they are walking in Christ. In fact, if a man could completely walk in Christ, he would walk in perfect holiness. We hear an instance, perhaps, of a little shopkeeper who puffs and exaggerates as other shopkeepers do—he does not exactly tell a lie, but something very near it. Now I want to know whether that man was walking in Christ when he did that. If he had said to himself, "Now I am in Christ," do you think he would have done it?

We hear of another who is constantly impatient, always troubled, fretting, mournful. I want to know whether that man is really walking in Christ as he walked at first, when he is doubting the goodness, the Providence, the tenderness of God. Surely he is not! I have heard of hard-hearted professors who take a Christian Brother by the throat with, "Pay me what you owe." Do you think they are walking in Christ when they do that? We hear of others, when their Brothers have need, shut up the heart of their compassion—are mean and stingy. Are they walking in Christ when they do that?

Why, if a man walks in Christ, then he so acts as Christ would act. For Christ being in him, his hope, his love, his joy, his life—he is the reflex of the image of Christ. He is the glass into which Christ looks. And then the image of Christ is reflected, and men say of that man, "He is like his Master. He lives in Christ." Oh, I know, dear Brethren, if we lived now, as we did the first day we came to Christ, we should live very differently from what we do. How we felt towards Him that day! We would have given all

we had for Him! How we felt towards sinners that day! Lad that I was, I wanted to preach and—

***“Tell to sinners round,  
What a dear Savior I had found.”***

How we felt towards God that day! When we were on our knees, what pleading there was with Him! What a nearness of access to Him in prayer! Oh, how different! How different with some now! This world has with rude hands brushed the bloom from the young fruit. Is it true that flowers of Divine Grace, like the flowers of nature, die in the autumn of our piety? As we all get older, ought we to be more worldly? Should it be that our early love, which was the love of our espousals, dies away? Forgive, O Lord, this evil, and turn us anew unto You—

***“Return, O holy Dove! return,  
Sweet messenger of rest!  
We hate the sins that made You mourn,  
And drove You from our breast.  
The dearest idol we have known,  
Whatever that idol be,  
Help us to tear it from Your throne,  
And worship only You.  
So shall our walk be close with God,  
Calm and serene our frame—  
So purer light shall mark the road  
That leads us to the Lamb.”***

“As you have received Him walk in Him,” and if you have not received Him, oh, poor Sinner, remember He is free and full—full to give you all you need—and free to give it even to you. Let the verse we sung be an invitation to you—

***“This fountain, though rich, from charge is quite clear;  
The poorer the wretch, the more welcome here—  
Come, needy and guilty; come, loathsome and bare;  
Though leprous and filthy, come just as you are.”***

Trust in God’s anointed—that is receive Him—and then, having trusted Him, continue still to trust Him. May His Spirit enable you to do it and to His name shall be glory forever and ever.

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# CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

## NO. 381

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON TUESDAY EVENING, APRIL 9, 1861,  
BY REV. HUGH STOWELL BROWN,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

***“Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God who has raised Him from the dead.”  
Colossians 2:12.***

IT is the firm belief of almost all Christian people that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, before He left the earth, instituted two ordinances, namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper—ordinances which were to be observed by His disciples throughout every age on to the end of the world. Perhaps, indeed, I ought to say that all Christian people without any exception whatever, acknowledge the appointment to which I have just referred. Even the Society of Friends, although it rejects the outward and visible signs, nevertheless believes in those great principles which those signs are intended to symbolize, viz., the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the communion of the soul with Christ.

By almost all Christians in every age of the world, the observance of the outward sign as well as the recognition of the inward grace has been regarded as part of the will of the Lord Jesus Christ. On this occasion we have to do only with the ordinance of Baptism and to this I wish to draw your candid and careful attention. The ground upon which this ordinance is founded is the command of our Savior addressed to His disciples just before He ascended to Heaven when He said, “Go you, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Now if this is a command of Christ, (and I am not aware that the genuineness of the passage in which it appears has ever been called into question), then, of course, it is the duty of all Christian people according to their convictions as to the nature and meaning of this command to observe and to maintain it on to the end of time.

I think it may also be asserted that with the exception of the Society of Friends, all Christians regard the ordinance of Baptism as one in which water is to be employed in some way or other and very rightly so, because if Baptism is altogether inward and spiritual—the Baptism of the Holy Spirit—then we must believe that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a Baptism which one man cannot administer to another. The very fact that the Baptism mentioned in the Scripture is a Baptism which one man *can* administer to another, is sufficient to prove that in this Baptism there is some outward, visible, material rite, ceremony, or ordinance which Christian people are to observe.

Thus far, with the exception of the Society of Friends, I believe we are all agreed that the ordinance of Baptism does imply the use and application of water in some way or other. So far we all, or nearly all, travel together. But at this point, the body of Christians to which we belong feel compelled to pursue a different course from that which is adopted by their

Brethren. The very name we bear indicates that there is something or other in connection with the ordinance of Baptism in which we do not agree with the great majority of Christian people. And for the information of such as may not be thoroughly well informed upon this point, (and I by no means cast the slightest slur or rejection on any man's intelligence if I suppose him to be a little uninformed upon this point, for very extensive ignorance with regard to it prevails) I shall in a very few words try to explain the difference or differences which exist—between us and other Christians upon this matter.

The majority of Christian people believe that so far as the outward rite is concerned, the conditions of the ordinance are fulfilled when water, in however small a quantity, is poured or sprinkled upon the candidate. We, on the other hand, believe that the outward conditions of the ordinance are *not* fulfilled unless the candidate is wholly immersed in water. Again, (and this is by far the most important point of difference), the very great majority of Christian people think infant children are fit and proper subjects for this ordinance. We, on the other hand, believe that none are fit and proper subjects for the ordinance of Baptism, excepting such as really believe and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior and their King.

You will perceive that the difference resolves itself into two questions—a question with regard to the *mode* of this ordinance and a question with reference to the *subjects*. These two questions, “How ought Baptism to be administered?” and, “to whom ought Baptism to be administered?”—these are the questions to which we in our consciences feel compelled to offer answers which differ very materially from those which are given by other Christian people. Again let me explain this matter and set in as plain terms as possible. We believe that this ordinance should never be administered apart from the entire immersion of the candidate in water and we also believe that none should be candidates for this ordinance excepting those who avow their faith in Christ.

And here let me observe that the very common notion that we are in the habit of practicing adult Baptism is utterly a mistake. We do not contend for the Baptism of adults. We contend for the Baptism of *believers*. Show us a child however young who believes in Christ and we gladly accept him. But if a man as old as Methuselah were to come to us in unbelief, we should say to him, “Sir, your age certainly entitles you to our respect, but it gives you no manner of claim to Baptism as ordained by Jesus Christ.”

But now, perhaps, someone will exclaim, perhaps in scorn, perhaps in great surprise, “Who are you that you presume to differ from the general verdict of the Christian world? Who are you that you so pertinaciously maintain these crotchety notions of yours, when all the world is against you and when there is not only the decision of the Church of Rome, against which we should ourselves rebel, but the voice of the Church of England, the voice of the Church of Scotland the voice of the Lutheran Church, the Presbyterians, the Methodists and the Congregationalists, all against you and the most able Divines of the Christian world all testifying that you are in error? Who are you, that you should thus set up your opinions against everybody else? Call a solemn assembly—canvass the Christian world and certainly for one hand held up in favor of your opin-

ions there will be a thousand held up to their decided and utter condemnation.”

Well, we do not choose to put it to the vote in this way. We have not such entire faith in the infallibility of majorities as to submit our religious convictions to any such tribunal. If the Copernican system of astronomy had been put to the vote two hundred and fifty years ago, it would have had a smaller minority than our views would have if put to the vote now. If the doctrine of justification by faith had been put to the vote four hundred years ago, the “Nos” would have had it. If the Truth of Christianity were now submitted to the vote of the entire world, there would be somewhere about five hundred *millions* against it. And further, let the voters be all Christian people, let the suffrage be confined to those who really believe in Christ and then if you as a Church of England man, or you as a Methodist, or you as a Congregationalist, or you as a Presbyterian, submit your views of Church-government and some other things, depend upon it you would as certainly be defeated as we should be if we submitted Baptism to the decision of such a council as that.

I hope that no one is so silly as to suppose that we are necessarily in error because we are in the minority—for let this be borne in mind—especially by the worshipper of majorities, that every great Truth was at one time held by a very small minority, if indeed it is not held by a small minority now. Every great Truth, whether in the province of religion, or in the domain of science, or in the region of politics, is at first and for a very long time held by small minorities. And in all the currency of Proverbs, there is no more pernicious maxim than that, “what everybody says must be true.”

But of course you will ask our reasons for maintaining this opinion. I think we have just as good a right to ask your reasons for maintaining the opposite opinion. Galileo had just as good a right to ask his opponents why they believed the world did not move, as they to ask him why he believed it did. However you ask for our reasons and I shall endeavor to give those reasons as clearly and as briefly as I can. We ought to have good reasons, because I can assure you it has never been much to our secular comfort and advantage that we hold those views. These views have never done us very much good, considered in a merely secular or worldly sense. We are not bound to them by any golden chain. They have not been made plain and clear and attractive to us by rich benefices and comfortable livings.

Our opinions are not endowed with prelaties and pretender stalls, with manses and glebes and royal bounties. Thank God, whatever people may choose to say of us, they cannot say we are Baptists for the love of filthy lucre. One thing is certain, “the root of all evil” is not likely to draw much nourishment from the soil of Baptist ministerial stipends. We must of course state our reasons and I say they ought to be somewhat substantial reasons. Well, then, we go on this principle mark you—that the only appeal is to the Word of God.

This is a principle in which every holy and sound-hearted Protestant must agree with us. It is his principle as much as ours and it is the only principle that will save him from all the errors and superstitions of

Romanism. So that, taking the matter into the court of God's Word only, it signifies very little to us what may have been said by such-and-such a council, or such-and-such a Church, or such-and-such a reverend father—it greatly simplifies the matter when it's understood that we intend to submit this question to the Word of God and to the Word of God only.

And I say to every Protestant here that he must accept the principle and act upon it. If he begins to refer to fathers and churches and councils, well then, let him take care. He may rely upon it—on such a principle he will not be able to stand for one moment. If he thinks with such weapons to vanquish us, let him rest assured that he will very soon be vanquished himself by the same. It may be that the charge from such ordinance shall destroy us, but depend upon it, the recoil will destroy the man who has the temerity to fire it.

This principle, then, will be agreed in by every Protestant, excepting those who in these days are beginning to protest Scripture itself. But every sound-hearted, honest-minded Protestant will go with us in saying that the Word of God is the only tribunal to which we can go. This being the case, let us see how the matter stands.

It is alleged by us, then, that in the ordinance of Baptism the candidate should be wholly immersed in water. And now, if we were disposed and if we recognized any other authority than Scripture, we might refer to the law of the Church of England, which is most distinctly to the effect that excepting in cases of certified weakness, immersion shall be the mode of administering this ordinance and the Church of England man, at all events, has nothing to say against the adoption of this practice. It is his practice as much as ours. It is his law as much as ours. His prayer book tells him we are right.

The large fonts, three feet in diameter, which he sees in so many parish churches, tell him we are right. And he knows that in this respect we are the only faithful Church of England people in this land. We might also refer to the testimony of the ancient Church and the practice of the olden time, with regard to which it may be said with perfect certainty that in the first ages *immersion* was the commonly accepted mode. But of course we appeal to the Scriptures and appealing to the Scriptures, we find that Baptism is, as our text informs us, a burial and resurrection with Christ—that it is a sign and symbol of the believer's participation in Christ's burial and resurrection—and this, I think as plainly as possible, shows us what the mode was in ancient times.

This, indeed, is generally admitted by Divines who still maintain that this mode is not binding upon Christians at the present time. But surely, if Baptism is to be a representation of burial and resurrection there must be something in the ordinance itself which shall be suggestive of such a Truth. And then again, we appeal to the meaning of the word. This word Baptism has not been translated in our Scriptures excepting in one or two instances, in which it appears in the form of the word "wash" or "washing," and in these cases the idea of immersion, if not absolutely required, is at all events perfectly admissible and involves no incongruity. And if you search the Scriptures through you will not find a single passage in

which this word, whether it is employed literally or figuratively, does not suggest, or may not suggest the idea of immersion.

When we consider that Philip and the eunuch “went down both of them into the water.” That our Savior “went up straightway out of the water” after John had baptized Him. That John “was baptizing near Salim because there was much water there,” I think it is very evident that something more than aspersion, or pouring of water must be implied. And if we consult trustworthy authorities for the meaning of this word we shall find that in all cases it either may or must imply the idea of immersion. I lately read a very valuable paper by a most scholarly Divine who tells us that he has thoroughly investigated every instance in which the word can be found whether in the fathers or in the classics.

He gives us upwards of two hundred cases in the great majority of which the word must mean immersion and in every one of which it may have and probably really has, that signification. Indeed, almost all scholarly men are agreed that this is the meaning of the word and not only so, but also that this was the mode that was adopted in the Apostolic age. These things are not disputed, or are scarcely disputed. Men do ask why should you adhere to this mode? And that is a question we shall have to consider presently. But they scarcely dispute anywhere that this mode was ordained by Christ and practiced in the Apostolic age. And therefore, if you ask, “Why do you immerse in Baptism?” I say because Baptism must, in the very nature of things, be a representation setting forth figuratively the burial and resurrection of Christ and because to immerse and to immerse only, is the meaning of this word baptize.

But again, our more important difference with our Christian Brethren is that we decline to accept as candidates for the ordinance all but those who avow their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now here, although the practice of Christendom is very much against us, I think that even in that practice there are some points that tell very strongly in our favor. For example Baptism is called a Sacrament. This word is scarcely recognized among us I believe, but still let us examine it. Baptism is regarded as a Sacrament. What is a Sacrament? I suppose it is an oath. Now would you administer an oath to an infant child? Is there common sense in such a procedure as that? You would provoke laughter if you were to take your infant child before a Justice of the Peace and there administer to it an oath to the effect that he should to the end of his days be a faithful subject and servant of the queen.

And is there anything more rational than this, when you take an infant child to a minister of God’s Word, that to that child an oath may be administered by which it shall swear fealty to the Captain of our Salvation? But you say it is not to the infant that the oath is administered at all. It is to the sponsors. Well then, I want to know to whom the Sacrament is administered. The oath is administered to the sponsors. The Baptism is then administered to the sponsors, for the Baptism and the oath are one. But it would seem as though the ordinance were divided. The water is administered to the child and the oath is administered to the sponsors. There is something rather like confusion here.

If Baptism is a Sacrament and a Sacrament an oath, then in administering Baptism to a child, you are administering an oath to a child. But surely every oath ought to be administered to such and such only as understand the nature of an oath and also give a solemn assent to the propositions that are embodied in it. And thus if the word Sacrament is to be applied to Baptism at all, I accept it then and I submit that it protests and protests most strongly against the administration of this ordinance to any except to those who understand and assent to the principles which are connected with it. Although our appeal is to Scripture, our Paedo-Baptist friends must really not suppose that the testimony of the Church is all in their favor, for certainly for two or three centuries if not more, the Baptism of infant children was not the general practice of the Christian church.

It was opposed by Tortellini at the latter end of the second century or the beginning of the third. And at a far later date than this, we find Baptism administered to persons of mature years. I do not wish to press into our service such cases as that of Constantine, who was baptized late in life. He was born a heathen and he appears to have continued practically a heathen of the very worst stamp to the last. The mistake in his case was not that he was baptized so late, but that he was baptized at all. As he was baptized during his last illness, his Baptism I presume was clinical and therefore administered by aspersion and those who are in favor of this mode are perfectly welcome to this sprinkled Pagan.

I am very glad that the ordinance in its Scriptural form was never disgraced by having Constantine for a subject. But we find that several of the most eminent and pious fathers of the Church were not baptized until they had arrived at maturity and were thoroughly Christian men. In the fourth century flourished Gregory of Nazianzum, Ambrose of Milan, Jerome, Chrysostom and Augustine. These eminent men, who were afterwards such great theologians, were all of them the sons of Christian parents, at least of Christian mothers and yet not one of them was baptized until mature age and until each of them had strong religious convictions. In fact, none of them were baptized until they were truly converted to Jesus Christ.

The case of Gregory peculiarly in point. Gregory of Nazianzum was the son of a Christian bishop. His pious mother Nona, dedicated him to God from his very birth and yet when was he baptized? When he was thirty years old! The instance of Augustine is perhaps still more remarkable. Augustine was the object of his pious mother's deepest solicitude, his conversion was the thing nearest and dearest to her heart and yet she did not have him baptized. When he was a grown-up lad, he was attacked with a very dangerous illness and expressed a strong desire for Baptism and yet the ordinance was deferred and the great Augustine was not baptized until he was a man thirty-two years old and was fully imbued with the knowledge and spirit of the Gospel of Christ.

Now mark you, I do not say that these cases prove that there was no such thing as infant Baptism in the fourth century and it is for no such purpose I adduce them, but they do prove this—that Christian mothers such as Nona and Monica and Anthusa—Christian women of the very

highest intelligence and piety, did not in that age deem it necessary that their infant children should be baptized—but they left the matter to be one of personal profession when their children should have a faith to profess.

But still we would appeal to the Scriptures and when we come to consult God's Word, strange as it may appear, there is not one passage from the beginning to the end which indicates the Baptism of any but professed believers in Christ. It is true that households were baptized and it is said that there might have infant children in those households. It is a sufficient answer to this to say that there might *not* have been any infants in those households. As to the Philippian jailer, we read that, "he believed in God with all his house." As to the house of Stephanas, we read, "they had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints"—and, as to Lydia, there is not the slightest evidence that she was either a wife or mother.

And in fact, so far as historical narrative is concerned, there is not a single incident in Scripture that leads us to suppose that any but professed believers in Christ were baptized. It would have been very strange if such an incident had turned up anywhere, seeing that our Lord's commission runs in this order—"Go you, teach all nations, baptizing them. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." And we read that Peter says, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you." And again, he says, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" Does it not appear that he would have anticipated an objection and would have allowed an objection if there had been no evidence of conversion to God?

And Paul says, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Is not this the work of an intelligent and believing man? Or to come to our text, Paul says that we are, "Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also we are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised Him from the dead." The meaning of this passage seems to be this—We are buried and risen with Christ through the *faith* of the operation of God, through *faith* in God's operation, God's work, energy and power, as manifested in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. That is to say those persons evidently were baptized, buried and raised with Christ through their faith in the fact that God's energy or power had raised Jesus Christ from the dead. The fact of Christ's resurrection is evidently attached to Baptism here.

And the Apostle Peter says, "Baptism does also now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." That is to say, those persons who have been baptized are persons who have the answer of a good conscience towards God through Christ's resurrection—through faith in Christ's resurrection they now have the consciousness of the forgiveness of sins. And so faith in the resurrection of Christ, is represented as an essential and indeed the chief element of Christian Baptism.

These then, are some of our reasons for holding these views. If you ask why we immerse, we say, "Because this is the undisputed—or all but undisputed—sole meaning of the Word and because apart from immersion, there is no sign of burial and resurrection with Christ." And if you ask,

“Why do you baptize only those that believe?” We say, “Because we can discover no trace in God’s Word of the baptism of any other and we think, that as Baptism is a profession of a man’s faith in Christ, this profession ought never to be made excepting by such as really are the subjects of the faith that is thus professed.”

And now, if anything can be advanced to show that any other but immersion is really the meaning of the word and if any case can be had from the Scriptures, either directly or by implication, showing that any but believer’s were baptized, we give this matter up. We have no interest to subserve but the cause of Truth. Of course many objections are urged against these views of ours. To some of these objections, for we shall not have time to notice them all, I shall now briefly direct attention.

I have heard it said by some and I dare say you have heard it too, that the administration of this ordinance by immersion is scarcely consistent with decency. With decency! There are some people in the world, who I suppose would advocate the omission of the first chapter from the Epistle to the Romans. There are some people who must think it would be a very proper thing to blot the Seventh Commandment from the Decalogue, for it is scarcely decent. And they ought to go in for an expurgated edition of the Sermon on the Mount and that I hope would satisfy them.

My dear Friends, Christ ordained and his Apostles practiced this ordinance of immersion—most certainly they did. There is no dispute about that. There is dispute whether the ordinance is obligatory in this form at the present day, but really there is no dispute that this was commanded and that this was done. Do you think that our Lord Jesus Christ would ever have sanctioned anything that bordered in the slightest degree on indecency? I have only one word to say to such objectors and it is this, “To the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled.”

But it is a strong point, or supposed to be a strong point, that on the day of Pentecost three thousand people were baptized and how could they all be immersed. Well, why not? The only objections I can imagine are these—a lack of water and a lack of time. But to suppose that there was a deficient water supply—to suppose this from all that we know and especially from all that we do not know about ancient Jerusalem, appears to me to be a great absurdity. And as to the want of time—if the Apostles alone had baptized these three thousand, there certainly would be something rather formidable in the objection.

But it would seem that the Apostles were not in the habit of baptizing many and that they often gave this work to others—and on that occasion there might have been a hundred administrators of Baptism, those who were first baptized might baptize others and in this way the administration to the whole three thousand might very easily be accomplished before the sun went down upon the day of Pentecost. “Ah, but,” say some, “there is a passage in the first Epistle to the Corinthians that you cannot get over. It is said that the Israelites ‘were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.’ How can that be a case of immersion?”

Well, I might ask you, how could it be a case of anything else? Undoubtedly it was a case of immersion. When you think of the cloud, you

must not think of a small pillar of cloud suspended high above the people and always going before them. It is written in one of the Psalms, "He spread His cloud for a covering." And they passed under the cloud, the channel of the Red Sea, with the waters piled up on either hand—this constituted the huge baptistery for the people and the cloud was the element in which they were baptized. As plainly as possible it was a case of immersion in the cloud.

But again, there are many who say, "Well, after all what does it really matter—if a man has been baptized by the Spirit of God and is really regenerated and born again and has his sins washed away by the blood of Christ—the outward and visible sign is a thing of very little importance." Well, if it is such a matter of indifference whether you adopt this or that mode, I should say it would be as well to follow the Society of Friends and adopt neither one nor the other. But you do believe there is some external rite—well, then—surely the external rite should be that which does set forth figuratively the very Truth intended by the ordinance. In the language of symbols, forms are everything—forms give those symbols all their meaning and therefore it is not altogether an unimportant matter that Baptism, signifying burial and resurrection with Christ, should indicate this even in its very form and mode.

But there are also objections to our baptizing none but believers. Infants, it is said, should be baptized, not that there is any positive and direct proof of this in God's Word, still it may be inferred. For instance. "They brought infants to Jesus." What did they bring them for? That He might put his hand upon them and pray for them. Yet it is inferred by many that our Savior was in the habit of baptizing infants because they brought infants to Him that He might touch them and bless them! The opposite inference is the one I should be prepared to draw, for if our Savior were in the habit of baptizing infants the disciples certainly would not have rebuked those that brought the infants to Jesus, because such an act would have been quite a matter of course.

On this incident, Jeremy Taylor remarks, "To infer from such a passage as this that infants should be baptized only proves that there is a great want of better arguments." But again—it is said Baptism came in the place of circumcision and since infants were circumcised, infants ought to be baptized. Now it appears to me to be altogether a matter of assumption that Baptism came in the place of circumcision. There is nothing in God's Word that states this. And let me particularly call attention to this fact. It is well known to every reader of the Acts and the Epistles that a great controversy arose in the early church with reference to this matter of circumcision—certain men went down to Antioch and said to the Christians there, "Unless you are circumcised you cannot be saved."

The church at Jerusalem met to consider this matter and they sent their decision. Now, if Baptism is come in the place of circumcision, of course the way in which common sense would settle the question would be this, "No, you need not be circumcised, because you have been baptized and Baptism has come in the place of circumcision." But in the decision which the church at Jerusalem sent to the church at Antioch there is not the slightest allusion to any such substitution. Then again, Paul was

perpetually arguing against those who were insisting upon the importance of circumcision—if Baptism is substituted for that institution, Paul’s short and easy method of silencing every objector would have been this, “No, these people have been baptized and that is the Christian circumcision.”

But what does Paul say?—we read what he says in the verse which precedes our text. He says, “In whom”—that is, in Christ—“In whom also you are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” Now observe, “In whom you are circumcised with a circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” The circumcision of Christ is the Christian circumcision, is that which has come in the place of the old circumcision and this Christian circumcision is a circumcision, “made without hands.”

Will any man in his senses say that this is Baptism? Christian circumcision is something that is accomplished without human agency. Baptism is not an ordinance made or administered without hands. Moreover, he says, with reference to this matter, that we are circumcised “in the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh,” which is certainly the work of an intelligent, conscientious, believing and God-fearing man. In one word, if you want to know what the Christian equivalent for circumcision under the new dispensation is, it is conversion to God. It is this and it is nothing else.

If Baptism has come in the place of circumcision, on what principle then did Paul circumcise Timothy? If this idea of the substitution of Baptism for circumcision is correct, then ought not Paul to have said, “In Christ Jesus circumcision avails nothing, neither uncircumcision, but Baptism?” Ought he not to have said, “We are the circumcised—we who have been baptized”? But what he does say is this, “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but the keeping of the Commandments of God,” and, “We are the congregation who worship God in one Spirit and who rejoice in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.”

Evidently, then, those who have received the Christian circumcision are those who keep the Commandments of God, who worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus—and these conditions are certainly applicable to none excepting those who are *believers* in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore I would say there seems to be no fairness in arguing from the one institution to the other. Only consider this fact, that in a controversy which this supposed idea of Baptism having come in the place of circumcision would have settled in a moment, there is no allusion to such mode of settling the question and I think that we are led to infer, with the most absolute certainty, that it is altogether a baseless assumption that circumcision is represented by Baptism.

No, in the Christian dispensation, if there is any equivalent, any succession to the circumcision of the old covenant, it is conversion to God—it is the circumcision of the *heart*, it is the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh. *That* is the Christian circumcision. But it will be said by some, “You make a great deal too much of this ordinance of Baptism.”

Well, I am free to confess that there may be here and there a good Brother who makes rather too much of this ordinance. Yet this I certainly can say, from a somewhat extensive knowledge of our denomination, that in almost every case you will find that the ordinance of Baptism is held by us in a most thorough and lowly subordination to the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the work of atonement by His sacrifice and death, to the influence and the indwelling of the Divine Spirit, to the necessity of repentance and of faith, to the importance of a life of personal holiness and to every other great principle of the holy faith which we profess.

I do not think that we are fairly charged with making too much of this ordinance. When we say of this ordinance that it regenerates the soul—when we say that herein persons are made “members of Christ, children of God and heirs of the kingdom of Heaven”—when we rush with all haste to baptize the sick and the dying and when we refuse to accord to those who die unbaptized, the rites, the decencies, the charities of Christian burial—*then* tell us, for indeed we shall deserve to be told—that we do most monstrously exaggerate the importance of this ordinance!

But you shall go through the length and breadth of this realm and you shall visit all the Baptist churches in the States of America and on the continent of Europe and nowhere will you find such sentiments or such practices prevailing among the Baptist people. I trust we make no more of this ordinance and no less than is made of it in God’s Word. We do not baptize our own infant children and this, I think, is evidence enough that we do not very grossly exaggerate the importance of this institution.

Still you say, “You do not regard it as essential to salvation and therefore why do you make this the ground of separation from your Brethren?” My dear Friend, are you a Congregationalist? You do not believe that your Congregational polity is essential to salvation—why then do you not join the Episcopal communion? Are you a Methodist? You do not think the Conference is to save your soul—why do you not return to the bosom of the Established Church? Are you a Free Church of Scotland man? You will admit that people can be saved in the old Church yet. Then why did you make such a fuss about that Disruption business? I do not blame you for the Disruption, not by any means—perhaps you did what was perfectly right.

A thing may not be essential and yet it may be very far from unimportant. We cannot but regard infant Baptism as the main root of the superstitious and destructive dogma of baptismal regeneration, to which as Protestants we are opposed. We cannot but regard infant baptism as the chief cornerstone of State Church, to which as Dissenters we are opposed. We cannot but regard infant Baptism as unscriptural and to everything that is unscriptural we, as disciples of Jesus Christ, must be opposed. And we do trust that all who differ from us and however widely they may differ, will still admit that we are only doing what is right in maintaining what we believe to be the Truth of God with reference to this matter.

Up to now it has been in disgrace and scorn and ridicule and oftentimes in persecution that these principles have been held. Up to now we have been a sect everywhere spoken against. Probably the first martyr burnt in England for religion and certainly the last, was a Baptist. And

others had trials of cruel mocking and scourging, yes and of bonds and imprisonments—and became destitute, afflicted and tormented. We cannot glory in our numbers, we cannot glory in our power, we cannot glory in our wealth. But we can glory in the faith and constancy by which those who went before us were enabled by Divine grace to sustain the infliction of the most grievous wrongs—wrongs which were all the more keenly felt because they were received at the hands of fellow-Christians, fellow-Protestants and even fellow-Puritans.

Up to now we have been few in number and have been oftentimes violently and bitterly opposed—nor do I think that there is now any very brilliant prospect of our rising to denominational greatness and basking in the sunshine of popular applause. And indeed, when I see what the effect of such greatness and applause has been upon some Christian churches, I am disposed to say, “God defend us from power and popularity, for these are more dangerous foes than all the contumely and persecution and straitened circumstances with which we have had to struggle in the times gone by.”

I do hope and verily believe that we have a far purer object in view than mere denominational aggrandizement and that we shall be content, as heretofore we have been content, come evil report or good, to have the testimony of a clear conscience that according to the best of our knowledge and to the utmost of our power we have faithfully tried to maintain God’s Truth against the commandments and traditions of men.

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# LIFE AND PARDON

## NO. 2101

**DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, AUGUST 25, 1889,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

***“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh,  
has He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses.”  
Colossians 2:13.***

THE teaching of this verse is much the same as that in preceding verses—but the Apostle does not hesitate to dwell again and again upon the important matters of quickening and forgiveness. These lie in the foundation. Ministers of Christ cannot too often go over the essential points—their hearers cannot too often hear vital Truths of God. Our frail memories and dull understandings require line upon line, precept upon precept, in reference to fundamental Truths—our apprehension of them is far too feeble, and can never be too vivid.

To find instances of the work of God in quickening souls and in pardoning sins, Paul does not look far afield. In the text he says, “And you,” and, according to the Revised Version, he repeats the word further on, and the passage runs thus, “You, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did He quicken together with Him.” He points personally to the saints at Colossi. We are not about to consider a prophecy to be fulfilled in the millennium, neither are we speaking of matters which concern the unknown dwellers in the moon.

No. The theme belongs to you. To you, I say, if indeed you are the people of God. You are specimens of the Divine Work—you has He quickened, you has He pardoned. It is profitable for us to be engaged upon matters which concern us. I shall speak to you of those things which I have tasted and handled of the good Word of Life, and it is my firm belief that, to the most of you, these matters are familiar in your mouths as household words. If not, I grieve over you. Let none of us be content unless the works of the Holy Spirit are manifest in us. What good is it to me if another man receive life and pardon, if I am cast to death and lie under condemnation?

Press forward, my Beloved, to a personal enjoyment of these chief blessings of the Covenant of Grace—life in Jesus, forgiveness through His blood. Let every part of the sermon have a finger pointed at yourselves. Hear it speak to you, even to you.

In the text we have the conjunction of two things—quickenings and forgiveness. We will consider these things in connection with each other. Their order it may be difficult to lay down—in the text they are described as if they were the same thing. Which comes first, the impartation of the new life, or the blotting out of sin? Is not pardon first? Does God pardon a dead man? How can He give life, which is the proof of pardon, to the man who is not forgiven? On the other hand, if a man has not spiritual life suf-

ficient to make him feel his guilt, how can he cry for pardon? And if it is unsought, how shall it be received?

A man may be spiritually alive so as to be groaning under the pollution and the burden of sin, and yet he may not have received, by faith, the remission of sins. In the order of our experience, the reception of life comes *before* the enjoyment of pardon. We are made to live spiritually and so we are made to repent, to confess, to believe, and to receive forgiveness. First, the life which sighs under sin, and then the life which sings concerning pardon. Misery is first felt—and then mercy is received.

Following the line of experience, we shall notice, concerning the favored ones of God, first, what they were—"You, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh." Secondly, we shall note what has been done in them—"Has He quickened together with Him." And then, thirdly, what He has done for them—"Having forgiven you all trespasses." May the Holy Spirit lead us into these Truths of God and give us the life of God, and the rest of faith!

**I.** First, then, consider WHAT THEY WERE. Beloved, they were all by nature children of wrath, even as others. There is no distinction in the condition of natural men before the Law. We all fell in Adam. We are all gone out of the way and have all become unprofitable. Any difference which now exists has been made by Divine Grace. But by nature we are *all* in the same condemnation and all tainted by the same depravity.

Where were we when the Lord first looked on us? Answer—We were dead according to the sentence of the Law. The Lord had said, "In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die." And Adam did die the moment that he ate of the forbidden fruit—and his posterity died in him. What is natural death? It is the separation of the body from the soul, which is its life. What is spiritual death? It is the separation of the soul from God, *who* is its life. It had been the very life of Adam to be united to God. And when he lost his union of heart with God, his spirit underwent a dreadful death.

This death is upon each one of us by nature. Above this comes in the dreadful fact, that, "He that believes not is condemned already." The position of every Unbeliever is that of one who is dead by Law. As far as the liberties and privileges and enjoyments of heavenly things are concerned, he is written among the dead. His name is registered among the condemned. Yet, Beloved, while we are under the sentence of death, the Lord comes to us in almighty Grace and quickens us into newness of life, forgiving us all trespasses!

Are you trembling because of your condemned condition under the Law? Do you recognize the tremendous Truth of God that death is the sure and righteous result of sin? Then to you, even to you, the life-giving, pardoning Word is sent in the preaching of the everlasting Gospel. Oh that you may believe and so escape from condemnation!

These favored people were dead through the action of their sin. Sin stupefies and kills. Where it reigns, the man is utterly insensible to spiritual truth, feeling, and action. He is dead to everything that is holy in the sight of God. He may have keen *moral* perceptions, but he has no *spiritual* feelings. Men differ widely as to their moral qualities. All men are not alike

bad, especially when measured in reference to their fellow men. Some may even be excellent and praiseworthy, viewed from that standpoint. But to *spiritual* things all men are alike dead.

Look at the multitude of our hearers—to what purpose do we preach to them? You may declare the wrath of God against the godless but what do they care? You may speak of Jesus' love to the lost—how little it affects them! Sin is not horrible, and salvation is not precious to them. They may not controvert your teaching. But they have no sensible apprehension of the Truth of God—it does not come home to them as a matter of any consequence. Let eternal things drift as they may, they are perfectly content so long as they can answer those three questions—“What shall we eat? What shall we drink? And how shall we be clothed?”

No higher question troubles their earth-bound minds. They may entertain some liking towards theological study and Bible teaching, as a matter of education. But they do not view the Truths of God revealed in Scripture as matters of overwhelming importance. They trifle. They delay. They set on one side the things which make for their peace. Their religion has no influence upon their thoughts and actions—they are dead. Sin has slain them. I see them mingled with this great congregation like corpses sitting upright among the living. I look out upon the masses of this vast city and upon the innumerable hosts of populous countries and I see a measureless cemetery, a dread domain of death. A region without life.

One point must be noticed here, which makes this spiritual death the more terrible—they are dead but yet *responsible*. If men were literally dead, then they were incapable of sin. But the kind of death of which we speak involves a responsibility none the less, but all the greater. If I say of a man that he is such a liar that he cannot speak the truth, do you therefore think him blameless? No. But you judge him to be all the more worthy of condemnation because he has lost the very sense which discerns between a truth and a lie.

If we say of a certain man, as we have had to do, “He is a rogue ingrained. He is so tricky that he cannot deal honestly but must always be cheating”—do you, therefore, excuse his fraud and pity him? Far from it. His inability is not physical, but *moral* inability, and is the consequence of his own persistence in evil. The Law is as much binding upon the morally incapable as upon the most sanctified in nature. If, through a man's own perversity, he wills to reject good and love evil, the blame is with himself. He is said to be dead in sin—not in the sense that he is irresponsible—but in the sense that he is so evil that he will not keep the Law of God.

If a man were brought tomorrow before the Lord Mayor and he were accused of theft, suppose he should say, “My Lord, I ought to be set free, for I am such a rascal that I cannot see an article in a shop but what my fingers itch to lay hold upon it!” Would not the judge give such a worthless person all the more punishment? O Sinners, dead in sin, you are not so dead as thereby to be free from the guilt of breaking God's Commandments and rejecting Christ. Rather you heap upon yourselves mountains of guilt every day that you abide in this condition.

The ungodly are so dead as to be careless as to their state. Indeed, all gracious things are despised of them. Sometimes they attend religious services. But they get angry if the preacher presses them too hard. I have known them vow that they will never hear the man again because he is so personal. Pray, Sirs, what is a preacher to be, but personal? If he shoots, is he to have no target and take no aim? What is our very office and business but to deal personally with you about your sins?

In ungodly men there is an utter recklessness as to their condition before God. They know that they may die. They know that if they die they will be lost. But they try to forget these facts. The ostrich is said to bury its head in the sand so as not to see the hunter, and then to fancy that it is safe. Thus do men fancy that, by forgetting the danger, they escape it. Some of you have lived in carelessness until gray hairs are on your head. Will you still risk your souls? Alas, you look more anxiously after a battered sixpence, which you miss from your pocket, than after your immortal soul! If you miss a ring from your finger while sitting here, you are more concerned about *it* than about your eternal destiny.

How foolish! How dead are you to all just judgment and prudence! It is your *soul*, your own soul, your only soul, your never-dying soul, to which we beg you to pay attention—and yet you can hardly have patience with us. If a prisoner in the condemned cell had no sort of care whether he should be set free or hanged, but could even joke about the scaffold and the executioner, you would feel that only by an extreme act of mercy could such a person be pardoned. No, if he cares nothing for the penalty, let him bear it—so man would say—and there would be justice in it. Yet God spoke not so in reference to some of us. For while we were in a condition of callousness the Grace of God came to us and by quickening us, gave us to be anxious and led us to pray.

The text adds that we were dead in the uncircumcision of our flesh. I need not dwell upon the external figure here employed. Its meaning is clear enough. The uncircumcision of our flesh means that we were not in covenant with God—it shows, also, the abiding of our filthiness upon us—the willingness of our souls to be aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, without God in the world. This is where we were in the uncircumcision of our flesh. And yet the Grace of God found us out. Oh, I could paint the man! He is anxious about this world, but what does he care for the world to come? He is a master of his own trade and he prospers in it.

But for his God and His service, he spares not an hour's consideration. He cries, "The Covenant of Grace, what is that?" And he turns on his heel, like Pilate, when he had said, "What is truth?" As to having any sense of the constant Presence of God, and his deep indebtedness to God, and of the sweetness of being pardoned, and the bliss of enjoying the love of God, and walking with God—he has no notion, or, at best, he cries, "Oh, yes, that is all very fine for those who have nothing else to do. Let them find delight in it if they can!"

To him God is nothing. Heaven is nothing. Hell less than nothing. He passes by Calvary, itself, where God in human flesh is bleeding out redemption and it is nothing to him. The wail from the Cross he never

hears, though it asks him this question—"Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by? Behold and see if there is any sorrow like unto My sorrow!" What cares he for the wounds of his soul's best Lover? He has no concern about any purchase made by the Redeemer, or of any death especially on his behalf, or any resurrection with Christ which he may hope to enjoy. The man is dead to faith and glory and immortality. The low and the groveling charm him, but the pure and the noble find him dead to their claims.

Yet to such, even to such, does Sovereign Grace approach. Unbought, unsought—it comes according to that word of Scripture, "I am found of them that sought Me not."

Again, spiritually, the ungodly are dead and utterly incapable of obtaining life for themselves. Could any of you, with the utmost diligence, create life, even the lowest form of it? To a man who is dead, could you impart life? You might galvanize his limbs into a kind of motion. But real *life*, the pulsing of the heart, the heaving of the lungs—could you create it? You know you cannot! Much less can the dead man himself create life within himself. The man without Christ is utterly unable to quicken himself. We are "without strength," unable to do anything as of ourselves and while we are in this condition, Divine Grace comes to us.

Alas, there remains one more point! Man may be described as dead and becoming corrupt. After a while the dead body shows symptoms of decay—this is vice in its beginning. Leave the corpse where it is, and it will become putrid, polluting the air and disgusting every sense of the living. "Bury my dead out of my sight," is the cry of the most affectionate mother or wife. And so it is with many ungodly men. Some of them are restrained from the grosser vices, just as Egyptian bodies were, by spices, preserved from rottenness. By example, by instruction, by fear, by surroundings—many are kept from the more putrid sins, and therefore are not so obnoxious to *society*.

Towards God they are dead as ever. But towards man they are no more objectionable than the mummies in yonder cases in the British Museum. But this embalming of the dead with spices of morality has not been carried out with hosts of those around us. They rot above ground—their blasphemies pollute the air, their lewdness infects our streets, their revelry makes nights hideous. The tendency of dead flesh is towards the corruption which shows itself in loathsome actions. The mercy is, that where even *this* has taken place, where the foul worm of vice has begun its awful work in drunkenness, in blasphemy, in dishonesty, or in uncleanness of life—even *there* the quickening Spirit can come!

As life came to Lazarus, who had been dead four days, so can spiritual life come to those who have fallen into the noisomeness of open transgression. Leaving this painful matter, let us be filled with deep humility. For such were we in days not long since—but let us also be filled with hope for others. For He who quickened us can do the same for them.

**II.** And now, secondly, WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN US? What has God worked?

We have been quickened. To tell you, exactly, how quickening is worked in us, is quite beyond my power. The Holy Spirit comes to a man when he is dead in sin and He breathes into him a new and mysterious life. We do not know how we receive our natural life—how the soul comes into the body we know not. Do you suppose that spiritual life in its beginning will be less mysterious? Did not our Lord say, “The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound thereof but can not tell from where it comes and where it goes: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit”? You know not the way of the Spirit, nor how He breathes eternal life.

We know, however, that as soon as life comes, our first feeling is one of pain and uneasiness. In the case of persons who have been nearly drowned, when they begin to revive they experience very unpleasant sensations. Certainly the parallel holds good in spiritual things. *Now*, the man sees sin to be an exceedingly great evil. He is startled by the discovery of its foulness. He was told all about it and yet he knew nothing to purpose. But now sin becomes a load, a pain, a horror. As dead, he felt no weight. But as quickened, he groans beneath a load. Now he begins to cry, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?”

Now the angels see him on his knees in private. Behold, he prays! “God be merciful to me, a sinner,” is his hourly sigh. Now, also, he begins to struggle against his evil habits—he addicts himself to Bible reading, to praying, and to hearing the Word of God. He is for awhile desperately earnest. Alas, he goes back to his old sins! Yet he cannot rest—again he seeks the Lord. With some men a large part of their early spiritual life has been taken up with agonizing strivings and painful endeavors to free themselves from the chains of sin. They have had to learn their weaknesses by their failures. But the Grace of God has not failed. Some, even for years after their conviction by the Spirit of God, have had no comfortable sense of pardon but very much conflict with sin—still, the life of God has never been utterly quenched within them.

Their struggles have proved that the heavenly germ was alive and was painfully resisting the forces of evil. Men themselves act as if they tried to put out the light which Divine Grace has kindled. But they cannot effect their purpose. When once they have been disturbed in their nest, the Lord has not allowed them to settle down in it again. Their once sweet sin has become bitter as wormwood to them. We have known men under conviction go further into sin to drown their convictions—just as a whale, when harpooned, will dive into the depths. But they come up again and again are wounded—they cannot escape.

In the biography of a man of God, who in his early days was a terrible drunkard, we find that, in struggling against intoxication, he was frequently beaten. And there appears in his diary a long blank of which he says, “Four years and a half elapsed and no account rendered! What can have been the cause of this chasm? Sin! Yes, sin of the blackest dye, of the deepest ingratitude to the Father of mercies!” The wanderer was restless and unhappy in sin. The life within was, like Jonah, thrown into the depths of the sea. But it hated its condition and struggled to rise out of it. God will not leave the life He has given, even under the worst conditions.

But quickening leads to far more than this. By-and-by the new life exercises its holy senses and is more clearly seen to be life. The man begins to see that his only hope is in Christ and he tries humbly to hide himself beneath the merit of the Lord Jesus. He does not dare to say, "I am saved," but he deeply feels that if ever he is saved, it must be through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus. Now, also, he begins to pray, pleading the precious blood. Now he hopes and his hope looks only through the windows of his Lord's wounds. He looks for mercy only through the atoning sacrifice.

By-and-by he comes to trust that this mercy has really come to him and that Jesus had him on His heart when He suffered on the tree. By a desperate effort he throws himself on Christ and determines to lie at His feet and, if he must perish, to perish looking unto Jesus. This is a glorious resolve. See him after a while, as he rises up into peace and joy and consecration! His life now being joined to that of his Lord, he rejoices that he is never to be separated from Him. I think I hear him say, "I see it all now. The Lord Jesus bore my sin and carried it away. I died because He died. I live because He lives. The Lord accepts me, because He accepts His Son and thus I am 'accepted in the Beloved.'"

From now on the quickened man tries to live for Christ, out of gratitude. This is the nature of the life he has received. He strives to grow up into Christ, and to become like his Lord in all things. From now on he and his Lord are linked together in an everlasting union and the cause of Jesus is the one thing for which he lives and for which he would be content to die. Blessed be God, I am not talking any new things to you—you know what I mean! For these forty years have I felt these things and many of you have felt them longer, still. At first the struggling light within you revealed to you nothing but your darkness—but now you see Jesus and see yourselves alive in Him with a life eternal and heavenly. Blessed be the Lord who has raised Jesus from the dead and has quickened us in Him and with Him!

**III.** Now we come to the third point, upon which I pray for a renewed unction from the Holy One. Let us consider, in the last place, WHAT HAS BEEN DONE FOR US—"Having forgiven you all trespasses."

Believing in Christ Jesus, I am absolved. I am clear, I am clear before the Lord. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." This is the most joyful theme that I can bring before you. And I want you to notice, first, that pardon is a Divine act. "Having forgiven all trespasses." Who does that? Why, He that quickened you! is exclusively the Lord's own—and the same God who gives us spiritual life also grants us pardon from His Throne.

He sovereignly dispenses pardons. We need not go to any human priest to seek absolution, for we may go at once to God, who alone has sovereign right to execute the death sentence or to pardon the offender. He alone can grant it with sure effect. If any man should say, "absolvo te," (I absolve you), I would take it for what it was worth and its worth would not be much. But if HE says it, who is the Law-giver and the supreme King. If HE says it, against whom I have offended, then am I happy, indeed. Glory

be to His name, who is a God ready to pardon! What bliss I have received in receiving forgiveness from God!

Oh, my Hearer, if you have done wrong to your fellow man, ask his forgiveness, as you are bound to do. And if you get it, be thankful and feel as if a weight were removed from your conscience. But, after all, what is this, compared with being forgiven *all* trespasses by God, Himself? This can calm the ruffled sea of the soul—yes, still its fiercest tempest. This can make you sleep at nights, instead of tossing to and fro upon a pillow, which conscience turns to stone beneath your aching head. This gives the gleaming eye, the beaming face, the bounding heart. This brings Heaven down to earth and lifts us near to Heaven. The Lord has blotted out our sins, and thus He has removed the most bitter fountain of our sorrows. Pardon from God is a charter of liberty, a testament of felicity. God's pardon is a gift most free.

Look at the text and note that this pardon comes to persons who are dead in sin. They were utterly unworthy, and did not even seek mercy. The Lord who comes to men when they are dead in sin, comes to quicken them and to pardon them. Not because they are ready but because HE is ready. Hearken, O Man! If in your bosom there is at this moment a great stone instead of a heart of flesh—if you are paralyzed as to all good things. If there is only enough life in you to make you feel your terrible incapacity for holiness and fellowship with God, yet God can pardon you—even as you are and where you are. We were in that condition, my Brethren, when the Lord came to us in love. “When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”

We saw that Jesus died, we believed in Him as able to save, by His Grace, and we received the forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness is free. The Lord looks for no good thing in the sinner. But He *gives* him every good thing. O my Hearer, if the Lord looked for good in you, He could not find it. He looks for nothing you can *do*, or nothing you can *feel*, or nothing you can *resolve to do or feel*. But He shows mercy because He delights in mercy. He passes by iniquity, transgression and sin, because it is His nature to be gracious. The cause of Divine pardon is in God, Himself, and in His dear Son. It is not in you, O Sinner!

Being dead in the uncircumcision of your flesh, what can you do? He quickens you and He pardons you. Yes, He is All in All to you. Wonders of Divine Grace! When I get upon this subject I do not need to give you illustrations, nor to use choice phrases. The glorious fact stands forth in its own native beauty—infinite pardon from an infinite God—given because of His own mercifulness and the merit of His beloved Son—and not because of anything whatsoever in the man whom He pardons. “But the man repents,” says one. Yes, I know. But God *gives* him repentance. “But he confesses sin.” Yes, I know it. For the Lord leads him to acknowledge his trespasses. All and everything which looks like a condition of pardon, is also *given* by the Free and Sovereign Grace of God—and given freely—without money and without price.

I want you to notice how universal is this pardon in reference to all sin—“Having forgiven you all trespasses.” Consult your memory and think

of all your trespasses, if you dare. That one black night! Has it left a crimson spot, indelible, never to be concealed? In many instances one special sin breeds more distress than a thousand others. That crime has left a deeper scar than any other. In vain you cry, "Out, hideous spot!" Should you wash that hand, it would stain ten thousand Atlantics, and it would remain a scarlet spot, never to be erased forever. No process known to men can wash out the stain.

But God's infinite mercy can put away that hideous, unmentionable crime, and it shall be as though it had never been. Possibly, however, you do not so much remember any one transgression as the whole heap of them. Certainly, a multiplicity of minor sins heaped together, tower upward like a great Alp, although no *one* offense may seem so notable as to demand mention. We have sinned every day and every hour and almost every moment of every hour—how numberless our transgressions! Our sins of omission are beyond all computation. But all these, too many for you to remember, too many for me to number, are forgiven to the man in Christ—"Having forgiven you *all* trespasses"—ALL, not one excepted. You have sins not yet known nor confessed—but they are forgiven. For the blood cleans from all sin.

I should like to help your memory by reminding you of your sins before conversion. Blessed is he whose sin is covered. One does not wish to uncover it. "Lord, remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions." The child of God, who has long been rejoicing in faith, has need still to pray that. For our sins may vex our bones long after they have been removed from our consciences—the consequences of a sin may fret us after the sin, itself, is forgiven.

Then think of your sins *after* conviction. You were struck down on a certain day with a great sense of sin and you hurried home and cried upon your knees, "O God, forgive me!" Then you vowed you would never do the like again. But you did. The dog returned to his vomit. You began to attend a place of worship. You were very diligent in religious duties. But all of a sudden you went back to your old companions and your old ways. If your sin was drink, you thought you had mastered it and could be very moderate. But a fierce thirst came upon you, which you could not resist—and you were soon as drunken as ever. Remember this with shame.

Or it may have been a more deliberate backsliding. And deliberation greatly adds to the sin of sins. Without being particularly tempted, you began to hanker after your old pleasures and almost to despise yourself for having denied yourself their indulgence. I know a man who was present at a Prayer Meeting and was so worked upon that he prayed. But afterwards he said that he would never go into such a place again, for fear he should again be overcome. Think of being afraid to be led aright—ashamed to go to Heaven!

Ah, Friends, we have been bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke, dogs that have slipped their collars, horses that have kicked over the traces. Sins after conviction, as doing despite to Divine Love, are very grievous trespasses. Like the moth, you had your wings singed in the candle and yet you flew back to the flame—if you had perished in it, who could have

pitied you? Yet, after such folly, the Lord had mercy on you—"Having forgiven you ALL trespasses."

A still worse set of sins must be remembered—sins after conversion—sins after you have found peace with God, after you have enjoyed high fellowship with Jesus. O Brothers and Sisters, these are cruel wounds for our Lord! These are evils which should melt us to tears, even to hear of them. What? Pardoned, and then sin again! Beloved of the Lord, and still rebelling! You sang so sweetly—

***"Your will be done; Your will be done"***

and then went home and murmured! You talked to others about evil temper, and yet grew angry. You are old and experienced, and yet no boy could have been more imprudent! O God, we bless You for the morning and evening lamb. For Your people need the sacrifice perpetually! We need a morning sacrifice, lest the night has gathered anything of evil. And we require an evening sacrifice for the sins of the day.

Dwell for awhile upon the large blessing of the text. Whatever your sins may have been, if you are a Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, God has quickened you together with Him and has forgiven you all trespasses. He pardons most effectually. Ask God about your sins and He says, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more!" If God Himself does not remember them, they are most effectually removed. Ask Holy Scripture where they are and Hezekiah tells you, "You have cast all my sins behind Your back." Where is that? God sees everything, and everywhere, and therefore everywhere is before His face. If, therefore, He casts our sins behind His back, He throws our sins into "the nowhere"—they cease to exist.

"In those days, says the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for and there shall be none. And the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." Surely this is enough to set all the bells of your heart ringing! Remember, also, dear Friends, that this pardon is most perfect. He does not commute the punishment but He pardons the crime. He does not pardon, and then confine for life, nor pardon today and punish tomorrow—this were not worthy of a God. The pardon is given and never revoked—the deed of Divine Grace is done and it can never be undone. God will not remember the sin which He has blotted out, nor condemn the offender whom He has absolved.

O Believer, the Lord so fully absolves you, that all your sins, which might have shut you out of Heaven, shall not hinder your way there! All that sin of yours, which might have filled you with despair, shall not even fill you with dismay. The Lord shall wipe the tears from your eyes, as He has washed the sins from your person. Even the very stain of sin shall be removed. Remember what He says of scarlet and crimson sins. Does He say, "I will wash them so that nothing shall remain beyond a pale red"? Does He say, "I will wash them till nothing shall remain but a slight rosy tint"? No! He says, "They shall be as wool: I will make them white as snow." The Almighty Lord will do His work of remission in an absolutely perfect style, and not a shadow of a spot shall remain.

Here is a point that I must dwell upon for a moment, namely, that this pardon shall be seen to be perfectly consistent with Justice. If I were par-

doned and felt that God had weakened the foundations of His moral government by winking at evil, I should feel insecure in my pardoned state—and should have no rest. If the Justice of God were in the least infringed by my forgiveness, I should feel like a felon towards the universe and a robber of God. But I bless God that He pardons sin in strict connection with Justice.

Behold the costly system by which this was effected. He Himself came here in the Person of His dear Son. He Himself became man, and dwelt among us. He Himself took the load of His people's sin. He bore the sin of many and was made a curse for us. He put away both sin and the curse by His wondrous sacrifice. The marvel of Heaven and earth, of time and eternity, is the atoning death of Jesus Christ. This is the mystery that brings more glory to God than all creation and all Providence. How could it be that He should be slain for sinners, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God?

To finish transgression and make an end of sin was a labor worthy of His Godhead—and Christ has perfectly achieved it by His sufferings and death. You had no fiction before you when, just now, you sang concerning Him—

***“Jesus was punished in my place,  
Without the gate my Surety bled  
To expiate my stain—  
On earth the Godhead deigned to dwell,  
And made of infinite avail  
The sufferings of the man.”***

Now are we justly forgiven. And the Throne of God is established. By His death as our Substitute, our Lord Jesus has set forth the righteous severity of God as well as His boundless mercy.

To us Justice and Mercy seemed opposed, but in Jesus we see them blended. We bless the Lord for His atoning sacrifice. We feel an infinite satisfaction in the fact that none can dispute the validity of a pardon which comes to us signed by the hand of the eternal King—and counter-signed by the pierced hand of Him who bore our sins in His own body on the tree—and gave for those sins a complete vindication of the Law which we had broken.

Note well the last consideration upon this point of the forgiveness of all trespasses. It ought to make you feel unutterably happy. From now on your pardon is bound up with the glory of Christ. If your pardon does not save you, then Christ is no Savior. If, resting in Him, your sins are not forgiven, then He undertook a fruitless errand when He came to save His people from their sins. Every drop of Christ's blood demands the eternal salvation of every soul that is washed in it. The Godhead and Manhood of Christ and all the glory of His Mediatorship, stand up and claim for every Believer that he shall be delivered from sin. What? Did He bear sin and shall we bear it, too?

No—if the Lord has found in Him a ransom, His redeemed are free. Since to save me, who was once dead in sin, and in the uncircumcision of my flesh—and now has become the glory of Christ, I am sure I shall be saved, for He will not tarnish His own name. O Believer, to bring you

home without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, has become the ambition of your Savior and He will not fail, or be discouraged. He will neither lose His lifework, nor His death throes. God forbid! And yet this must be, unless you, who are quickened together with Him, shall be found at the last without fault before the Throne of God.

Now, let us just think of this—we are forgiven. I do not mean all of you. For if you are out of Christ, you have no part in this grand absolution. May the Lord have mercy upon you, quicken you today and bring you to Christ! But as many as are trusting in Christ and so are living in union with Him, you are forgiven. A person who has been condemned by the Law and then has received a free pardon, walks out of the prison and goes where he pleases. There is a policeman. Does he fear him? No, he has a free pardon, and the policeman cannot touch him. But there are a great many persons who know him and know him to be guilty. That does not matter. He has a free pardon and nobody can touch him. He cannot be tried again, however guilty he may have been. The free pardon has wiped the past right out.

Now, today, Child of God, you begin anew—you are clean—for He has washed you and has done the work right well. We have washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, therefore shall we be before the Throne of God and praise Him. What could we do less than praise Him day and night? When shall we ever stop? When we are in His temple, free from all danger of future sin and trial, we will forever praise Him who has forgiven us all trespasses. I charge you, let us meet in Heaven, all of us.

Some have dropped in here this morning from all parts of the country and from America. And we may never meet again on earth. Let us meet around the Throne in Heaven and sing, “unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.” God grant that we may. Who wants to be left out? Is there one person here who would like to be shut out in that day? I pray you, enter in at once—

***“Come guilty souls and flee away  
Like doves to Jesus’ wounds;  
This is the welcome Gospel-day,  
Wherein Free Grace abounds.”***

Adapted from *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307

# DEATH AND ITS SENTENCE ABOLISHED

## NO. 2605

A SERMON  
 INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, JANUARY 15, 1899.  
 DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
 AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,  
 ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, OCTOBER 14, 1883.

*“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His Cross.”*  
*Colossians 2:13, 14.*

IT tends to excite gratitude in our hearts if we remember what the Lord has done for us. It is not wrong for us to think of all that we still need from God, but it would be exceedingly ungrateful if we were to forget what we have already received. By far the greater part of salvation is already ours and though, in some respects, we have not yet attained, neither are already perfect, yet in other respects we are complete in Christ Jesus. If we are truly believers in Christ, we are already saved—we are not merely in a salvable state, but we have really obtained salvation. In Christ we are delivered from the curse of the Law of God and we have an eternal inheritance already secured to us. I must not dwell on that blessed theme. I only mention it, in passing, to remind you that it encourages our gratitude if we remember what the Lord has done for us.

It also stimulates us to hope for more blessings in the future. It puts a keener edge upon our prayers and helps us to plead with greater confidence, for we feel that, inasmuch as God has already given us so much and done so much for us, He will perfect that which concerns us, and will not forget the work of His own hands. The remembrance of what the Lord has done for us is also quite sure to inflame our love. We cannot be cold-hearted if we continue to remember God's goodness to us. We must be glad in the Lord and, with that gladness, there must come fervent love to Him who has worked all these things on our behalf and brought us into the blessed estate of those who are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation!

This morning, [Sermon #1744, Volume 39—*Where the “If” Lies*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>] I talked to those who were seeking the Savior. They had their turn, then, so now I am going to speak to those who have found the Lord. Ah, dear Friends, how precious He is to you! I want you to see what He has done for you—what God the everlasting Father has done for you through Jesus Christ His Son—that you may come and sit at His feet in adoring love and feel your hearts burn within you as you meditate upon the riches of His amazing Grace. Our text speaks of two things which God has done for us through Christ Jesus. First, there is *the removal of the death within us*: “And you,

being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has He quickened together with Christ, having forgiven you all trespasses.” The second thing is *the removal of the handwriting which was against us*. This we have in the 14<sup>th</sup> verse. “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His Cross.”

Before I come to the subject of my discourse, I want every child of God whom I am addressing to feel, “The preacher’s talk is to be about *me* and about what Christ has done for *me*,” for, remember, dear Friends, that the work of Christ is as distinctly on behalf of each Believer as if he were the only object of Divine Love in the whole universe! And while it is true that Christ’s work concerns all His people—and it is a very great comfort that it is so—yet it is also true that it concerns each one of His people and it is all the property of each one. I want you, just now, to eat your own morsel, to claim your own portion and to take home to your own heart what God has given to you by a Covenant of salt, and so given it to you that it can never be taken from you!

**I.** First, then, the Lord has done this for all of us who believe in Him—**HE HAS REMOVED OUR INWARD SPIRITUAL DEATH.**

Turn to the text to see *what this death was*. “You being dead in your sins.” We were all, then—the regenerate as well as the rest of mankind—“dead in trespasses and sins.” What kind of death was this? Certainly it was not *physical* death. We lived, moved and had our being. We exercised our wills and did as we pleased in our enmity and opposition to God. The Lord does not treat men as if they were sticks and stones, nor does He ever regard them as such. They are alive, and when they sin, they sin most sadly of their own accord.

Neither was our death a *mental* death, for the ungodly can think as well as others, and they have all the powers of reason unless, indeed, they have dulled and destroyed them by certain forms of sin which produce that result. Alas, there are some of the most acute minds in the world that are not reconciled to God. The men are alive enough as to their minds, yet they are truly said to be dead! I could almost wish, for some people, that it *was* a mental death rather than the kind of death they have, since now the quickness of their intellect only helps them to increase their guilt and to multiply the reasons for their condemnation.

And yet again, as it is not a physical death, nor a mental death, so neither is it a *moral* death. Man is not so dead that he sins without guilt, or lives without responsibility. No man who remains out of Christ is without guilt on that account. He who continues an unbeliever may not say that he cannot help it—it is his fault and his sin that he does not believe. Indeed, our Lord told His disciples that the Comforter would convince the world of sin for this very reason—“Because,” He said, “they believe not on Me.” To Nicodemus, our Lord also said, “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believes on Him is not condemned: but he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” O dear Hearers, if I could believe that you were mere machines, or that you had drifted along the stream of time like some stray timber on a Canadian river. If I believed

that you could not in any way help yourselves, but were the mere creatures of your circumstances, then I might be comfortable concerning you, for you would be exempt from criminality. But it is not so—you are men and women living before the living God and you are responsible to Him for your actions and your words—and even for the thoughts and imaginations of your heart! For every rejection of His Gospel you will have to give account at the Last Great Day. And if you remain out of Christ, that account will seal your doom forever.

The kind of death here spoken of is *spiritual* death—death as to higher things than can be grasped by the hands, or seen with the eyes, or comprehended by the natural mind. Only the spiritual man knows what spiritual things are, for they have to be spiritually discerned. You would not think of teaching a horse the wonders of astronomy because there is no mind in the horse that could learn that science! Neither can we, of ourselves, teach spiritual things to our fellow men, because, until they are born again, born from above, they do not possess the faculty with which they can grasp spiritual things. Our Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh”—and therefore can only lay hold of the things that are fleshly. “And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”—and until a man is born of the Spirit, he is without the faculty of understanding and enjoying spiritual things.

As far as spiritual things are concerned, man’s understanding is dead. He can comprehend the highest and most wonderful of sciences, but he cannot—or, what is tantamount to it, he *will* not—understand the things of God. He turns on his heels and says, “I cannot make out what you mean.” No, we know that you cannot, and we are not surprised at your lack of apprehension, for it is just what the Bible leads us to expect. We even find those who consider themselves to be learned divines rejecting the Gospel and saying that it is not consistent with their philosophy. We never thought that it was—and we never imagined that they could receive the Gospel until they are converted and become as little children. The great reason why men reject the Gospel is because they are not born again. Because they have not received the life of God into their souls. If they had, they would understand it so as to delight in it. But the understanding, spiritually, is under a cloud of night which the Word of God calls “death.”

So also is the human will dead to spiritual things. When a person is literally dead, he cannot will to come to life. Neither does any man ever will to come to Christ till the Spirit of God gives him that will, for his natural will is exerted in quite another direction, as our Lord said to the Jews, “You will not come to Me that you might have life.” The will is a slave, it is held in chains, it is set on mischief and resolved not to subject itself to the will of the Most High. Not morally, nor mentally, but spiritually, the will of man is dead!

So, too, is it true of the affections that they are dead to spiritual things. Men, in their unregenerate state, will not love that which is good. Alas, they will not love Christ. He is altogether lovely, yet unrenewed men see nothing in Him that they should love. Holiness, purity, the will of God—all these things are worthy of being loved, yet men do not love

them. No, they love the very opposite until the Grace of God comes and quickens them.

Now, Brothers and Sisters, is not all this a true description of what we were before the Spirit of God begin to deal with us in His regenerating power? Were we not dead to all spiritual things? Some of you used to come to the House of God, but you were here just as so many corpses might have been. You used to visit where there were Christian people, but you could not understand what they said about their experience. You had no enjoyment in their joys, neither did you sorrow in their sorrows. There was a deep gulf between you and them—and the secret was that you were *natural* men and they were *spiritual* men! You loved not the things which they loved, even as they took no delight in the things which charmed you, for you were in a condition of spiritual death.

Consider, next, dear Friends, *what that spiritual death involved*. The text puts it thus—“You being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh.”

First, we were dead in sin. No, I quoted the text wrongly, for we were dead in our *sins*—the word is in the *plural*. They were our own sins, not the sins of our fate or destiny, or of our circumstances and surroundings, but *our own sins*. We willingly committed them. As the result of our death to everything that was holy, good and spiritual, we sinned and we took pleasure in sin. We repeated our old sins and we devised and invented new sins! They were, with an emphasis, our sins, our own actual, real, personal sins!

These sins were very varied according to our condition and temperament. Some went after one sin, others after another. Some were quiet and gentle sinners, so that many persons thought that they were holy. Others were noisy outrageous sinners who were a nuisance to the parish in which they lived. Some were sinners under some sort of fear, but they would have sinned more if they had dared to do so. Others had cast off all fear, both of God and man, and plunged headlong into rioting, wantonness and all manner of unmentionable crimes. All these sins were accompaniments of spiritual death—they were just what winding-sheets are to dead men. There, then, is the picture of what we were and of what the unregenerate are—“dead in trespasses and sins”—lying there wrapped in the cerements of sin. We were surrounded, covered with sin, getting ready in that condition to soon be carried out to the eternal burial, to the place “where their worm dies not, and where the fire is not quenched.” That is how I was by nature! That is how you were, Brothers and Sisters, who are now alive unto God. You may, perhaps, have seen an Egyptian mummy, bound from head to foot with the wrappings appertaining to death—so it was with you. Your sins were about your head, your heart, your hands, your feet! Sins surrounded you everywhere—and there you lay, as the text says—“dead in your sins.”

Now let us see *how we were delivered*. And as we lay our hands on our hearts and think of what God has done for us, let us prepare to bless and magnify His name. “You, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has He quickened”—He has made you to live—“you has He quickened together with Him.” God, by His Grace, has made you to live in Christ. Do you not feel the difference between what you were

and what you now are? Can you imagine what a change there would be if a dead man who had been lying in his grave clothes could suddenly sit upright, or rise out of the shell in which the undertaker had placed him? What a contrast between the state of death and the state of life! That is a very faint figure of the difference between what we now are and what we used to be. Do you not realize it, Brothers and Sisters? The things you once despised, you now value. And the things you then passed by with a sneer, you would now live for and die for! You used to hear about these things and it often seemed dull work to listen to a sermon. But now there is music in it from the first word to the last. That Bible of yours used to be like an old will to you, and old wills are very dry reading, but now you have found the record of a great legacy left to yourself and, oh, it is blessed work to read the will now—you could sit and study it all day long!

Praying, also, used to be hard work. You managed to mutter, in a dead way, a few dead words, but prayer is now quite another thing with you—your whole spirit is alive when you draw near to God in supplication. In fact, you are a changed man altogether! I suppose that if you were to meet your old self, he would hardly know you, for you are so greatly altered. I daresay he would say to you, “Come, old fellow, let us go to the theater, or turn into this beer-shop, or let us go home and find some way of amusing ourselves.” You would reply, “No, Sir. I cut your acquaintance a long time ago and I do not mean to have anything to do with you, so you may go about your business as soon as you like. I am not what I was, for I have been crucified with Christ—and I am dead, and my life is hid with Christ in God.” There was one of the old saints who used to keep company with a woman in his ungodly days, and when he was converted, she met him in the street, and said to him, “Austin, you know me.” “Well,” he said, “yes, I do. But I am not Austin any longer. At least I am not the person that I used to be.” Oh, it is a blessed thing when we can feel that we are not what we once were! True, we are not yet what we want to be and we are not what we shall be, but we are not what we used to be—and we shall never again be what we used to be! The Grace of God will prevent that, now that we have been quickened.

But how are we quickened? Paul says that God has quickened us together with Christ. And by this he means, first, that we have been quickened mystically by Christ’s Resurrection. That morning when Christ Jesus rose from the dead, all His people rose in Him! The sun was not yet up, but the Prince of Life and Glory had lingered long enough in the sepulcher, so, awaking into life through Divine power, He began to unwrap Himself from the cerements of the tomb. He laid the napkin by itself for your use and mine, that we may wipe our eyes when our dear friends are taken away. But He took the grave clothes and put them together, that He might leave the house ready furnished against the time when we should be carried there—our last bed being thus supplied by Him with all the furniture we shall need when our time comes to sleep in it. Then He waited a while till the sheriff’s officer came down to set the hostage free, for the angel descended from Heaven, the stone was rolled away and Jesus breathed the sweet morning air again. He that had been dead arose and left the tomb, no more to die! And, in that hour, everyone who

is in Him was virtually made to rise. The resurrection of all whom He represented was guaranteed by His Resurrection, as He said to His disciples, "Because I live, you shall live also." That is the result of the mystical union between Christ and His people.

But, as a matter of fact, and practically, you and I began to live, spiritually, *when we became united to Christ by faith*. Do you remember that glad hour when you first believed in Him, trusted Him, put your soul into His hands? Ah, then it was that you began to really live! Oh, what a difference that saving faith makes in us! In our Savior's parable about the two builders, there is one expression that seems to me very significant. Luke's account of it runs thus—"Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings, and does them, I will show you to whom he is like: he is like a man which built an house, and dug deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream bent vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that hears, and does not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."

Did you notice, as I quoted the words, that in the second instance Christ left out all about coming to Him? Yet that coming to Him is the essential thing. If you come to Him and hear His Words, and do them, you will have a rock for the foundation of your eternal building, and it will stand any storm that may beat upon it. But if you do not come to Christ, even though you hear His Words, that hearing can be of no permanent profit to you. Indeed, it will really increase your condemnation! It is the coming to Him, the getting into union with Him which settles and decides the all-important point in connection with our new life. So, then, it was when we became one with Christ by an act of living faith that we were quickened, blessed be His holy name forever and ever! If we do, indeed, possess this new life, let us show it! Let us prove, by our conduct and conversation, that we are no longer numbered among the dead, that we have risen with Christ and cannot go back to the tomb! We will have nothing to do with whitewashing the outside of our old sepulcher. We have left the outside and the inside, too, and now we live unto God and have done forever with the old state of death. I have set forth all too feebly the great work of God in removing the death that was within us, but if you feel that my words are true concerning you, your heart will beat high with devout thanksgiving to the quickening Spirit who has worked this great miracle in you!

**II.** Now I come, secondly, to notice the great deed of Christ in THE REMOVAL OF THE HANDWRITING THAT WAS AGAINST US.

Consider, dear Friends, *what this handwriting was*. When a man has some charge or insinuation against him merely whispered about and floating in the air, he hardly knows what it is. And, perhaps, if he is a sensible man, he does not care much what it is, but he lets it fly about till it flies away. But when he has an accusation made against him in black and white—when there is a handwriting against him, a charge written down and laid before the court, an indictment upon which he is to be tried—that is a most serious matter. Handwriting, especially in legal matters, is generally more accurate than mere speech, and there is,

against every ungodly man, something written with the finger of God which he cannot deny, for it is absolutely true. Handwriting also abides. The old Latin proverb says, "*Litera scripta manet*," that which is written remains. Be very careful as to what you put into black and white because it may be brought against you many years after you have written it—when you may think very differently concerning it. There is, against every unconverted man, a handwriting which will remain and which will be brought up against him at the great Day of Judgment. It is not a mere baseless rumor floating about, but something tangible which will last and which cannot be removed except by the almighty power of God.

What is meant, in our text, by "*he handwriting of ordinances that was against us*"? I cannot give all the meaning in a word, but, does it not mean, first, that the moral law, which we have broken, has written out a curse against us? Each of the Ten Commandments has, as it were, united with the rest to draw up an indictment against us. The First Commandment says, "He has broken me." The Second cries, "He has broken me." The Third, "He has broken me," and the whole 10 together have laid the same charge against each one of us! That is the handwriting of the Law of God condemning every man of woman born while he remains in a state of nature. The Jews, you remember, came under another law—the Ceremonial Law. Did that Ceremonial Law draw up an indictment against them? Was it not intended to rid them of sin? I answer, No! There was a lamb slain every morning and that sacrifice must have reminded at least some of them that a perpetual atonement was provided, but, as with an undertone of thunder, it also reminded them all that such an atonement was still needed, that, after a thousand years of the offering of lambs, sacrifices were still required! There was ordained a Day of Atonement with specially solemn ceremonies, but what did that day say to the Jews? That an atonement was provided? No, but that an atonement was still needed, for, as soon as ever that year was up, the atonement had not been made and they must have *another* Day of Atonement!

The Apostle Paul expressly says, "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." There was a perpetual remembrance of sin in every one of the offerings under the Ceremonial Law. I need not stay to speak of them in detail, but they were intended—the most of them, at any rate—to continually remind men that sin was *not* washed away. Thus all the ceremonies drew up a handwriting and said to the Jews, and to us, too, "You need an atonement by blood. You are guilty and there is no hope of your ever coming to God except by a sacrifice which these rams and bullocks represent, but the place of which they cannot possibly fill."

Then there is another "handwriting of ordinances that was against us." I think there is written across the very face of Nature the great Truth of God that man has sinned. Sin has so marred the world which God made perfect that none can go through it without feeling inconvenience and often sorrow and pain. There are some men who pass through the world as though it were a burning fiery furnace threatening their destruction. Why howls the blast upon the sea and dashes the galleon

upon the rocks? Why have we earthquake, tornado, cyclone, and the like? Why, because man is a sinner! And there is a handwriting in the very ordinances of Nature written, as it were, mystically upon the wall, as it was at Belshazzar's feast—and this is what it says, "You are weighed in the balances, and are found lacking." There is also another handwriting to the same effect—for God's works always sing the same tune—that is, the handwriting of conscience within the heart. Conscience writes, "You have sinned. You have done the things which you ought not to have done, and you have left undone the things which you ought to have done." And if conscience is permitted to write in its own bold and, it sets down this terrible message, "You are lost, ruined and undone! The wrath of God has gone out against you." This is "the handwriting of ordinances" which is in every part of God's creation, though, alas, many are unable or unwilling to read it!

Now let us ask, concerning this "handwriting of ordinances," *what is to become of it?* It will certainly be impossible for us to answer it, for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." There may be some men here who know of little pieces of handwriting that have cost them a great deal of trouble. A so-called friend came to see you—it would have been a good thing for you if it had been your worst enemy, for you might have been more on your guard against him. Your friend wanted just a little help for a time—he could not meet a certain liability just then, so he asked you merely to put your name on the back of a piece of paper. You would never see that document again—he would be quite able to meet it in three months—there was really no risk in the matter. The plausible man said, "You have only to put your name there. You will never be called upon in the least degree. I have plenty of money and have only to call it in when I need any, so it will be all right." You were persuaded by him and, like a fool, put your name at the back of his bill. You knew that you had not the money guaranteed by that paper, yet you promised to pay it! You did not believe that text in the Bible which tells you that, "He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that hates suretyship is sure."

I do not know when that bill will come due. Perhaps it will be next week, but I know that you are feeling uncommonly uncomfortable about it as you sit there in your pew—and well you may! You say that you will never do such a thing again—it is not likely that you will have the opportunity to do so, but you will find that it is sufficient to have that one piece of handwriting against you—your own handwriting, too! It will be brought home to you sooner or later, you will see it again! Do not comfort yourself with the foolish idea that you will get off Scot free, for you will not. Such a case as that rarely or never occurs. You have given the bond and the man who holds it will, like Shylock, demand his pound of flesh! And the worst of it is that the bond is one of your own making and you voluntarily incurred the debt. I wish I could tell you how to get clear of it, but I am glad that I can tell you how to get free from a worse bond even than that—one into which you have entered through your sin—the bond of your own indebtedness to the infinite Justice of God for all your rebellions against His Law, all your breaches of His Divine Covenant! You

have sinned against Him and it is all down in black and white in the handwriting that is against you.

Now listen, dear Friends. The Lord Jesus Christ has done this for all of us who are believers in Him. First, He has taken that handwriting and He has blotted it out, as our text says, “blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us.” The Greek original has the meaning of smearing over or expunging the handwriting so as to make it illegible as a document to be produced against us. With His own atoning blood, the Lord Jesus Christ has discharged all our debt! As believers in Him, there is nothing whatever due from us to the justice of Almighty God, for Christ has paid it all. We cannot, therefore, be punished for our sin, for that would be unjust, since God will not and cannot punish, first the Substitute, and then the sinners for whom that Substitute bled and died. God’s justice cannot demand the payment twice—

***“First my bleeding Surety’s hand,  
And then again at mine.”***

Christ became the Surety of all who believe in Him and He was made to smart for it. But, by the carrying out of His suretyship, He discharged all your liabilities at the bar of God if you are a Believer and, therefore, He smeared over, expunged, erased, obliterated the handwriting of ordinances that was against you—and it can never again be laid to your charge. This was the Truth that inspired that brave challenge of the Apostle Paul, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?”

Christ has done something more than this for us. Look at the text again—“blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way.” First it is blotted out. Then it is taken away, lest the blotting out should not prevent it from being read—for you can sometimes trace through an erasure what was written there, and you say, “Oh, yes, I see what the entry was—‘So-and-so, so many pounds in debt.’” Yes, but Christ says, “You need not worry yourselves about that handwriting, for I will take it away.” So He removes the document, itself, out of sight! It lay in the court against you, but Christ first obliterated it and then took the accusation itself—the indictment, the charge upon which you were to be tried—and put it out of the way!

Perhaps someone says, “But, possibly, after all, He may bring the accusation up again. He may only have hidden it for a while and laid it by that He may bring it out against me some other day. And when it is produced, some expert will examine it with his glass and through all the blotting he will make out the original charge and say, ‘This man was guilty of such-and-such crimes.’” “No,” says Christ, “He shall not do that, for I will let you see where I put the handwriting. I will take it quite out of the way, but I will fasten it up where you can see it”—“nailing it to His Cross.” Ah, that is glorious! Just as Christ was fastened to the tree by those dreadful Roman nails, so has He nailed up all the sins of His people! And all that could be laid to their charge! I have heard that they used to drive a nail through the Bank of England notes when they were cashed—a hole was made right through the center and they could never be used again. And our blessed Lord has driven the nails right through

the accusation that was against His people—and there you can see the handwriting hanging up upon His Cross!

First He blotted it out. Then He took it out of the way and, finally, He nailed it up to His Cross and there it still is, its accusing and condemning power forever gone! Now, child of God, sit down and say to yourself, “As to all the sins I have ever committed, whatever they may have been, inasmuch as I believe in Jesus, the record is crossed out and, consequently, the very parchment upon which it was written (to use that figure) has been taken out of the way. And of that I may be quite sure that an end has been made of it, once and for all—my Lord has nailed it, as a crucified thing which He has put to death with Himself upon the tree of Sacrifice, and now it has no power to alarm or annoy me.”

What better way can there be of abolishing a debt than by paying it? And Christ has paid your debts and mine. What better way can there be of putting an end to sin than by bearing the punishment which was due to sin? The punishment which was due to sin was for us to lie forever under the wrath of God, but, owing to the majesty of Christ’s Divine Person, the suffering which He endured upon the Cross was accepted as an equivalent for all that suffering which we deserved to endure forever! All the wrath due to Christ’s people was condensed into that one cup of which He began to drink in Gethsemane. As He put His lips to it, and tasted it, so terrible was it that it covered Him with a bloody sweat! But He never ceased to drink until He turned the chalice upside down and not one black drop was found lingering there. At that one tremendous draught of love, the Lord had drunk damnation dry for all His people! And “there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” How could there be any when Christ endured it all?

O Beloved Friends, go in thought to Calvary, and with joyful hearts trust in the Crucified! The great transaction is done, and done forever! He has blotted out the handwriting that was against you and put it away, “nailing it to His Cross.” All this is true of everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, trust yourself with Him, now, and my text shall be true of you at this moment and true forever! “You, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His Cross.” God bless you all, for our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake! Amen.

## **HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK—307, 430, 406.**

### **EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: COLOSSIANS 2:6-23; 3:1-3.**

**Colossians 2:6.** *As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him.* That is, keep on as you began. Christ was enough for you when, as poor, guilty sinners, you came and trusted Him, so keep on trusting Him in the same way as you did at the first. Do not try to live by feeling, after having lived by faith. Do not begin to live upon outward forms and ceremonies after having found salvation by Grace through

faith. “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him.”

**7.** *Rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.* Christians are to make progress in the heavenward road, but they are not to have any other foundation for their faith than they had at the beginning of their Christian career. We are still to stand fast as we stood at the first. We are to be rooted, grounded, “established in the faith,” keeping to the old Truth of God that saved our souls, and laying hold upon the same Savior with greater tenacity every hour of our lives. We are not to be like chaff driven before the wind—forever moving—but to be like the cedars of Lebanon, firmly rooted and withstanding the heaviest storms.

**8.** *Beware lest any man spoil you.* Or, “rob you.”

**8.** *Through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.* Cleave to Christ, Beloved! Go no further than He leads you and turn not away from Him either to the right hand or to the left. In Him are contained all the riches of Grace and all the treasures of knowledge. If you would become truly wise, seek to know more of the wisdom of God in Christ Jesus.

**9, 10.** *For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power.* You have everything in Christ that you ought to need. You are fully furnished, completely supplied and equipped for all future service. You need not go to Christ for the supply of some of your needs and then go elsewhere for the supply of other needs, but, “you are complete in Him.”

**11.** *In whom also you are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.* Anything good that there was in Judaism, you have secured to you in Christ. Whatever there was of blessing and privilege in the Covenant mark in the flesh of those whom God made to be His people in the olden time, you have handed on to you by the death of Christ.

**12-15.** *Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His Cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.* The Lord Jesus Christ has done everything for His people—fought their battle, won their victory and, on their behalf, celebrated the triumph in the streets of Heaven, “leading captivity captive.” What more, then, do we need? Surely Christ is enough for us!

**16.** *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days.* Do not put yourself under the bondage of any rules and regulations that may be made by men. If you choose to do anything, or to abstain from something else because you judge it to be right and beneficial, do so. Christ is your only Ruler and Leader—and if He does not command anything, let it not matter to you who does command it.

**17.** *Which are a shadow of things to come.* All this regard for meats, drinks, holy days and new moons is but a shadow—what is the great substance that is all-important?

**17, 18.** *But the body is of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels.* Do not be beguiled by those who tell you that you ought to pay reverence to angels, saints and I know not what besides. One day is called St. Matthew's and another is St. Michael's. And one, I suppose, is St. Judas's day—there are all sorts of supposed saints, some of whom are never mentioned in the Bible and about whom nobody ought to care at all! "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels."

**18-20.** *Intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increases with the increase of God. Therefore if you are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are you subject to ordinances?* Such ordinances as these—

**21, 22.** *(Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using) after the commandments and doctrines of men?* I have actually seen this text quoted as though it stood as a matter of teaching—"Touch not; taste not; handle not"—whereas the Apostle here means, "Why are you subject to such ordinances of men when Christ has set you free from them all? If, with a view to the good of your fellow men, you choose not to touch, or taste, or handle, you will act very wisely. But, as far as your own conscience is concerned, do not submit to any merely human regulations as to your manner of life."

**23.** *Which things have, indeed, a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh.*

**Colossians 3:1** *If you then are risen with Christ.* Leave all these outward rituals, formalities and ordinances of men.

**1-3.** *Seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307

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# CHRIST TRIUMPHANT

## NO. 273

**DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, SEPTEMBER 4, 1859,  
BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.**

***“And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”  
Colossians 2:15.***

To the eye of reason the Cross is the center of sorrow and the lowest depth of shame as Jesus dies a malefactor's death. He hangs upon the gallows of a felon and pours out His blood upon the common mount of doom with thieves for His companions. In the midst of mockery, jest, scorn, ribaldry and blasphemy, He gives up the ghost. Earth rejects Him and lifts Him from her surface. Heaven affords Him no light, but darkens the midday sun in the hour of His extremity. Deeper in woe than the Savior dived, imagination cannot descend. A blacker calumny than was cast on Him satanic malice itself could not invent. He hid not His face from shame and spitting—and what shame and spitting it was!

To the world the Cross must ever be the emblem of shame—to the Jew a stumbling block and to the Greek foolishness. How different, however, is the view which presents itself to the eyes of Faith. Faith knows no shame in the Cross except the shame of those who nailed the Savior there. It sees no ground for scorn, but it hurls indignant scorn at Sin, the enemy which pierced the Lord. Faith sees woe, indeed, but from this woe it marks a fount of mercy springing. It is true it mourns a dying Savior, but it beholds Him bringing life and immortality to light at the very moment when His soul was eclipsed in the shadow of Death. Faith regards the Cross not as the emblem of shame, but as the token of Glory!

The sons of Belial lay the Cross in the dust but the Christian makes a constellation of it and sees it glittering in the seventh Heaven. Man spits upon it but Believers, having angels for their companions, bow down and worship Him who ever lives though once He was crucified. My Brethren, our text presents us with a portion of the view which Faith is certain to discover when its eyes are anointed with the eye-salve of the Holy Spirit. It tells us that the Cross was Jesus Christ's field of triumph! There He fought and there He conquered, too.

As a victor on the Cross He divided the spoil. No, more than this—in our text the Cross is spoken of as being Christ's triumphal chariot in which He rode when He led captivity captive and received gifts for men! Calvin thus admirably expounds the last sentence of our text—“The expression in the Greek, allows, it is true, of our reading, ‘in *Himself*.’ The connection of the passage, however, requires that we read it otherwise; for what would be meager as applied to Christ, suits admirably well as ap-

plied to the Cross. For as Paul had previously compared the Cross to a signal trophy or show of triumph in which Christ led about His enemies, so he now also compares it to a triumphal car in which He showed Himself in great magnificence. For there is no tribunal so magnificent, no throne so stately, no show of triumph so distinguished, no chariot so elevated as is the gallows on which Christ has subdued Death and the devil, the Prince of Death—no, more—has utterly trodden them under His feet”

I shall, this morning, by God’s help, address you upon the two portions of the text. First, I shall endeavor to describe *Christ as spoiling His enemies on the Cross*. And having done that I shall lead your imagination and your faith further on to see *the Savior in triumphal procession upon His Cross*, leading His enemies captive and making a show of them openly before the eyes of the astonished universe.

**I.** First, our faith is invited, this morning, to behold *CHRIST MAKING A SPOIL OF PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS*. Satan, leagued with sin and death, had made this world the home of woe. The Prince of the power of the air, not content with his dominions in Hell, must need invade this fair earth. He found our first parents in the midst of Eden. He tempted them to forego their allegiance to the King of Heaven and they became at once his bond-slaves—bond-slaves forever, if the Lord of Heaven had not interposed to ransom them.

The voice of mercy was heard while the fetters were being riveted upon their feet, crying, “*You shall yet be free*. In the fullness of time there shall come One who shall bruise the serpent’s head and shall deliver his prisoners from the house of their bondage.” Long did the promise tarry. The earth groaned and travailed in its bondage. Man was Satan’s slave and heavy were the clanking chains which were upon his soul. At last, in the fullness of time, the Deliverer came forth born of a woman. This infant Conqueror was but a span long. He lay in the manger—He who was one day to bind the old dragon and cast him into the bottomless pit and set a seal upon him!

When the old serpent knew that his enemy was born, he conspired to put Him to death. He leagued with Herod to seek the young child that he might destroy Him. But the Providence of God preserved the future Conqueror—He went down into Egypt and there He was hidden for a little season. And when He had come to fullness of years, He made His public advent and began to preach liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that were bound. Then Satan again shot forth his arrows and sought to end the existence of the woman’s Seed. By different means he sought to slay Him before His time.

Once the Jews took up stones to stone Him, nor did they fail to repeat the attempt. They sought to cast Him headlong down from the brow of a hill. By all manner of devices they labored to take away His life but His hour was not yet. Dangers might surround Him but He was invulnerable till the time was come. At last the tremendous day arrived. Foot to foot the Conqueror must fight with the dread tyrant. A voice was heard in Heaven, “This is your hour, and the power of darkness.” And Christ Himself ex-

claimed, "Now is the crisis of this world; now must the Prince of Darkness be cast out."

From the table of communion the Redeemer arose at midnight and marched forth to the battle. How dreadful was the contest! In the very first onset the mighty Conqueror seemed to be vanquished. Beaten to the earth at the first assault, He fell upon His knees and cried, "My Father, if it is possible let this cup pass from Me." Revived in strength, made strong by Heaven, He no longer quailed and from that hour never did He utter a word which looked like renouncing the fight. All red with bloody sweat from the terrible skirmish, He dashed into the thick of the battle! The kiss of Judas was, as it were, the first sounding of the trumpet.

Pilate's bar was the glittering of the spear. The cruel lash was the crossing of the swords. But the Cross was the center of the battle! There, on the top of Calvary, must the dread fight of eternity be fought! Now must the Son of God arise and gird His sword upon His thigh. Dread defeat or glorious conquest awaits the Champion of the Church. Which shall it be? We hold our breath with anxious suspense while the storm is raging. I hear the trumpet sound! The howls and yells of Hell rise in awful clamor! The pit is emptying out its legions! Terrible as lions, hungry as wolves and black as night the demons rush on in myriads. Satan's reserve forces, those who had long been kept against this day of terrible battle, are roaring from their dens. See how countless are their armies and how fierce their countenances! Brandishing his sword the arch fiend leads the van, bidding his followers fight neither with small nor great, save only with the King of Israel!

Terrible are the leaders of the battle. Sin is there and all its innumerable offspring spitting forth the venom of asps and sinking their poison fangs in the Savior's flesh. Death is there upon his pale horse and his cruel darts rend their way through the body of Jesus even to His inmost heart. He is "exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." Hell comes, with all its coals of juniper and fiery darts. But chief and head among them is Satan—remembering well the ancient day when Christ hurled him from the battlements of Heaven he rushes with all his malice yelling to the attack!

The darts shot into the air are so countless that they blind the sun. Darkness covers the battlefield and like that of Egypt it was a darkness which might be felt. Long does the battle seem to waver, for there is but One against many. One Man—no, listen, lest any should misunderstand me—one GOD stands in battle array against ten thousands of principalities and powers! On, on they come and He receives them all. Silently at first He permits their ranks to break upon Him, enduring terrible hardness to spare a thought for shouting.

But at last the battle cry is heard. He who is fighting for His people begins to shout, but it is a shout which makes the Church tremble. He cries, "I thirst!" The battle is so hot upon Him and the dust so thick that He is choked with thirst! He cries, "I thirst!" Surely, now, He is about to be defeated! Wait awhile—do you see yon heaps? All these have fallen beneath His arm and for the rest, fear not the issue! The enemy is but rushing to

his own destruction! In vain his fury and his rage, for look, the last rank is charging, the battle of ages is almost over!

At last the darkness is dispersed. Hark how the Conqueror cries. "It is finished!" And where are His enemies now? They are all dead! There lies the king of terrors, pierced through with one of his own darts! There lies Satan with his head all bleeding, broken! Yonder crawls the broken-backed Serpent, writhing in ghastly misery! As for Sin, it is cut in pieces and scattered to the winds of Heaven! "It is *finished*," cries the Conqueror, as He came with dyed garments from Bozrah, "I have trodden the wine-press alone, I have trampled them in My fury and their blood is sprinkled on My garments." And now He proceeds to *divide the spoil*.

We pause here to remark that when the spoil is divided it is a sure token that the battle is completely won. The enemy will never suffer the spoil to be divided among the conquerors as long as he has any strength remaining. We may gather from our text, of a surety, that Jesus Christ has totally routed, thoroughly defeated once and for all and put to retreat all His enemies or else He would not have divided the spoil.

And now, what does this expression mean of Christ *dividing* the spoil? I take it that it means, first of all, that *He disarmed all His enemies*. Satan came against Christ—he had in his hand a sharp sword called the Law, dipped in the poison of sin so that every wound which the Law inflicted was deadly. Christ dashed this sword out of Satan's hand and there stood the Prince of Darkness unarmed! His helmet was split it two and his head was crushed as with a rod of iron! Death rose against Christ. The Savior snatched his quiver from him, emptied out all his darts, cut them in two, gave Death back the feather end but kept the poisoned barbs from him that he might never destroy the ransomed.

Sin came against Christ—but Sin was utterly cut in pieces. It had been Satan's armor bearer, but its shield was cast away and it lay dead upon the plain. Is it not a noble picture to behold all the enemies of Christ—no, my Brothers and Sisters—all *your* enemies and *mine*, totally disarmed? Satan has nothing left, now, with which he may attack us! He may attempt to injure us but wound us he never can, for his sword and spear are utterly taken away! In the old battles, especially among the Romans, after the enemy had been overcome it was the custom to take away all their weapons and ammunition. Afterwards they were stripped of their armor and their garments, their hands were tied behind their backs and they were made to pass under the yoke. Now, even so has Christ done with Sin, Death, and Hell—He has taken their armor, spoiled them of all their weapons and made them all to pass under the yoke—so that now they are *our* slaves and we in Christ are conquerors of them who were mightier than we!

I take it this is the first meaning of dividing the spoil—total disarming of the adversary. In the next place, when the victors divide the spoil they carry away not only the weapons but all the treasures which belong to their enemies. They dismantle their fortresses and rifle all their stores so that in future they may not be able to renew the attack. Christ has done

the like with all His enemies. Old Satan had taken away from us all our possessions. Satan had added Paradise to his territories. All the joy, happiness and peace of man, Satan had taken—not that he could enjoy them himself, but that he delighted to thrust us down into poverty and damnation.

Now, all our lost inheritances Christ has gotten back for us! Paradise is ours and *more* than all the joy and happiness that Adam had, Christ has brought back to us. O robber of our race, how are you spoiled and carried away captive! Did you despoil Adam of his riches? The second Adam has taken them from you! Did you cut the whole earth asunder and cause the waster to become desolate? The second Adam has defeated you—now shall the needy be remembered and again shall the meek inherit the earth! “Then is the prey of a great spoil divided, the lame take the prey.”

Moreover, when victors divide the spoil, it is usual to take away all the ornaments from the enemy—the crowns and the jewels. Christ on the Cross did the like with Satan. Satan had a crown on his head, a haughty diadem of triumph. “I fought the first Adam,” he said. “I overcame him and here’s my glittering diadem.” Christ snatched it from his brow in the hour when He bruised the serpent’s head. And now Satan cannot boast of a single victory—he is thoroughly defeated!

In the first skirmish he vanquished manhood, but in the second battle Manhood vanquished him! The crown is taken from Satan. He is no longer the prince of God’s people. His reigning power is gone! He may tempt, but he cannot compel. He may threaten, but he cannot subdue for the crown is taken from his head and the mighty are brought low. O sing unto the Lord a new song, all you His people! Make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms all you His redeemed, for He has broken in sunder the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron! He has broken the bow and cut the spear in sunder! He has burned the chariots in the fire! He has dashed in pieces our enemies and divided the spoil with the strong!

And now, what does this say to us? Simply this. If Christ on the Cross has spoiled Satan, let us not be afraid to encounter this great enemy of our souls. My Brethren, in all things we must be made like unto Christ. We must bear our cross and on that cross we must fight as He did with Sin, Death and Hell! Let us not fear. The result of the battle is certain, for as the Lord our Savior has overcome once, even so shall we most surely conquer in Him. Be you, none of you afraid with sudden fear when the Evil One comes upon you. If he accuse you, reply to him in these words—“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?”

If he condemns you, laugh him to scorn, crying—“Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yes rather has risen again.” If he threaten to divide you from Christ’s love, encounter him with confidence—“I am persuaded that neither things present nor things to come nor height nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” If he lets loose your sins upon you dash the Hell dogs aside with this—“If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” If Death should

threaten you, shout in his very face—"O Grave! Where is your sting? O Death! Where is your victory?"

Hold up the Cross before you! Let that be your shield and buckler and rest assured that as your Master not only routed the foe but afterwards took the spoil, it shall be even so with you! Your battles with Satan shall turn to your advantage. You shall become all the richer for your attacks. The more numerous they shall be the greater shall be your share of the spoil! Your tribulation shall work patience and your patience experience—and your experience hope—a hope that will not make you ashamed. Through much tribulation shall you inherit the kingdom and by the very attacks of Satan shall you be helped the better to enjoy the rest which remains for the people of God.

Put yourselves in array against sin and Satan. All you that bend the bow shoot at them—spare no arrows, for your enemies are rebels against God! Go up against them—put your feet upon their necks—fear not, neither be dismayed, for the battle is the Lord's and He will deliver them into your hands! Be very courageous remembering that you have to fight a dragon without a sting! He may hiss, but his teeth are broken and his poison fangs extracted. You have to do battle with an enemy already scarred by your Master's weapons. You have to fight with a naked enemy! Every blow you give him tells upon him for he has nothing to protect himself with!

Christ has stripped him naked, divided his armor and left him defenseless before his people. Be not afraid. The lion may howl, but he can never tear you in pieces. The enemy may rush in upon you with hideous noise and terrible alarms, but there is no real cause for fear. Stand fast in the Lord! You war against a king who has lost his crown. You fight against an enemy whose cheekbones have been crushed and the joints of whose loins have been loosed. Rejoice, rejoice in the day of battle, for it is for you but the beginning of an eternity of triumph!

I have thus endeavored to dwell upon the first part of the text. Christ on the Cross divided the spoil and He would have us do the same.

**II.** The second part of our text refers not only to the dividing of the spoil but to THE TRIUMPH. When a Roman general had performed great feats in a foreign country, his highest reward was that the Senate should decree him a triumph. Of course there was a division of spoil made on the battlefield where each soldier and each captain took his share. But every man looked forward rapturously to the day when they should enjoy the *public* triumph. On a certain set day the gates of Rome were thrown open, the houses were all decorated with ornaments and the people climbed to the tops of the houses or stood in great crowds along the streets.

The gates were opened and by-and-by the first legion began to stream in with its banners flying and its trumpets sounding. The people saw the stern warriors as they marched along the street returning from their blood-red fields of battle. After one half of the army had thus advanced, your eyes would rest upon one who was the center of all attraction—riding in a noble chariot drawn by milk-white horses—there came the conqueror

himself, crowned with the laurel crown and standing erect! Chained to his chariot were the kings and mighty men of the regions which he had conquered.

Immediately behind *them* came part of the booty. There were carried the ivory and the ebony and the beasts of the different countries which he had subdued. After these came the rest of the soldiery, a long, long stream of valiant men all of them abating the triumphs of their captain. Behind them came banners—the old flags which had floated aloft in the battle—the standards which had been taken from the enemy.

And after these, large painted emblems of the great victories of the warriors. Upon one there would be a huge map depicting the rivers which they had crossed, or the seas through which the navy had found their way. Everything was represented in a picture and the populace gave a fresh shout as they saw the memorial of each triumph. And then, behind, together with the trophies, would come the prisoners of less eminent rank. Then the rear would be closed with the sound of trumpets adding to the acclamation of the throng. It was a noble day for old Rome! Children would never forget those triumphs! They would estimate their years from the time of one triumph to another. High holiday was kept. Women cast down flowers before the conqueror and he was the true monarch of the day.

Now, our Apostle had evidently seen such a triumph, or read of it, and he takes this as a representation of what Christ did on the Cross. He says, “Jesus made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” Have you ever thought that the Cross could be the scene of a *triumph*? Most of the old commentators can scarcely conceive it to be true. They say, “This must certainly refer to Christ’s Resurrection and Ascension.” But, nevertheless, so says the Scripture, even on the Cross, Christ enjoyed a triumph! Yes, while those hands were bleeding the acclamations of angels were being poured upon His head! Yes, while those feet were being torn with the nails, the noblest spirits in the world were crowding round Him with admiration!

And when upon that blood-stained Cross He died in unutterable agonies, there was heard a shout such as never was heard before for the ransomed in Heaven—and all the angels of God with loudest harmony chanted His praise! Then was sung, in fullest chorus, the song of Moses, the servant of God and of the Lamb, for He had, indeed, cut Rahab and sorely wounded the dragon. Sing unto the Lord for He has triumphed gloriously! The Lord shall reign forever and ever, King of kings, and Lord of lords!

I do not feel able, however, this morning, to work out a scene so grand and yet so contrary to everything that flesh could guess as a picture of Christ actually triumphing on the Cross—in the midst of His bleeding, His wounds and His pains—actually being a triumphant victor and admired of all. I choose, rather, to take my text thus—the Cross is the ground of Christ’s ultimate triumph. He may be said to have really triumphed there because it was by that one act of His—that one offering of *Himself*—that

He completely vanquished all His foes and forever sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. In the Cross, to the spiritual eye, every victory of Christ is contained. It may not be there in fact, but it is there *virtually*—the germ of His glories may be discovered by the eye of faith in the agonies of the Cross. Bear with me while I humbly attempt to depict the triumph which now results from the Cross.

Christ has forever overcome all His foes and divided the spoil upon the battlefield. And now, even at this day is He enjoying the well-earned reward and triumph of His fearful struggle. Lift up your eyes to the battlements of Heaven, the great metropolis of God! The pearly gates are wide open and the city shines with her jeweled walls like a bride prepared for her husband. Do you see the angels crowding to the battlements? Do you observe them on every mansion of the celestial city, eagerly desiring and looking for something which has not yet arrived?

At last there is heard the sound of a trumpet and the angels hurry to the gates—the vanguard of the redeemed is approaching the city. Abel comes in alone, clothed in crimson garb, the herald of a glorious army of martyrs! Hark to the shout of acclamation! This is the first of Christ's warriors, at once a soldier and a trophy, that have been delivered. Close at his heels there follow others who in those early times had learned the coming Savior's fame.

Behind them a mighty host may be discovered of patriarchal veterans who have witnessed to the coming of the Lord in a wanton age. See Enoch still walking with his God and singing sweetly—"Behold the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints." There, too, is Noah who had sailed in the ark with the Lord as his Pilot. Then follow Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel and David—all mighty men of valor. Harken to them as they enter! Every one of them waving his helmet in the air, cries, "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His blood, unto Him be honor, and glory, and dominion, and power, forever and ever!"

Look, my Brothers and Sisters, with admiration upon this noble army! Mark the heroes as they march along the golden streets everywhere meeting an enthusiastic welcome from the angels who have kept their first estate. On, on they pour, those countless legions—was there ever such a spectacle? It is not the pageant of a day, but the "show" of all time! For 4,000 years on streams the army of Christ's redeemed! Sometimes there is a short rank, for the people have been often diminished and brought low, but soon a crowd succeeds, and on, on, still on they come, all shouting, all praising Him who loved them and gave Himself for them!

But look! He comes! I see His immediate herald clad in a garment of camel's hair and a leather girdle about his loins. The Prince of the House of David is not far behind! Let every eye be open! Now, mark, how not only angels, but the redeemed, crowd the windows of Heaven! He comes! He comes! It is Christ Himself! Lash the snow-white coursers up the everlasting hills. "Lift up your heads, O you gates and be lifted up, you everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in." Look, He enters in the midst of acclamations. It is He! But He is not crowned with thorns. It is He! And

though His hands wear the scars, they are stained with blood no longer. His eyes are as a flame of fire and on His head are many crowns! And He has on His vesture and on His thigh written, KING of KINGS and LORD OF LORDS. He stands tall in that chariot which is paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem! Clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, He stands proclaimed the emperor of Heaven and earth! On, on He rides and louder than the noise of many waters and like great thunders are the acclamations which surrounds Him!

Look how John's vision is become a reality, for now we can see for ourselves and hear with our ears the new song whereof He writes, "They sung a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for You were slain and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. And You have made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders—

"And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. And the four beasts said, amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshiped Him that lives forever and ever."

But who are those at His chariot wheels? Who are those grim monsters that come howling in the rear? I know them! First of all there is the arch enemy. Look at the old serpent, bound and fettered, how he writhes his ragged length along! His azure hues all tarnished with trailing in the dust! His scales despoiled of their once-vaunted brightness. Now is captivity led captive and death and Hell shall be cast into the Lake of Fire! With what derision is the chief of rebels regarded. How is he become the object of everlasting contempt. He that sits in the Heaven's does laugh—the Lord does have him in derision.

Behold how the serpent's head is broken and the dragon is trampled under foot. And now regard attentively yon hideous monster, Sin, chained hand in hand with his satanic sire. See how he rolls his fiery eyeballs! Mark how he twists and writhes in agonies. Mark how he glares upon the holy city but is unable to spit his venom there, for he is chained and gagged and dragged along, an unwilling captive at the wheels of the Victor. And here, too, is old Death, with his darts all broken and his hands behind him—the grim king of terrors—he, too, is a captive! Hark to the songs of the redeemed, of those who have entered into Paradise, as they see these mighty prisoners dragged along!

"Worthy is He," they shout, "To live and reign at His Almighty Father's side, for He has ascended up on high, He has led captivity captive and received gifts for men." And now behind Him I see the great mass of His

people streaming in. The Apostles arrive in one goodly fellowship hymning their Lord. And then their immediate successors—and then a long array of those who, through cruel mocking and blood, through flame and sword, have followed their Master. These are those whom the world was not worthy, brightest among the stars of Heaven! Regard, also, the mighty preachers and confessors of the faith, Chrysostom, Athanasius, Augustine and the like.

Witness their holy unanimity in praising their Lord! Then let your eyes run along the glittering ranks till you come to the days of Reformation. I see in the midst of the squadron Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli, three holy brothers! I see just before them Wickliffe, Huss and Jerome of Prague, all marching together. And then I see a number that no man can number, converted to God through these mighty reformers who now follow in the rear of the King of kings and Lord of lords! And looking down to our own time I see the stream broader and wider. For many are the soldiers who have in these last times entered into their Master's triumph. We may mourn their absence from us, but we must rejoice in their presence with the Lord.

But what is the unanimous shout? What is the one song that still rolls from the first rank to the last? It is this—"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever!" Have they changed the tune? Have they supplanted His name by another? Have they put the crown on another head or elevated another hero into the chariot? Ah, no—they are content, still, to let the triumphant procession stream along its glorious length—still to rejoice as they behold fresh trophies of His love, for every soldier is a trophy, every warrior in Christ's army is another proof of His power to save and His victory over death and Hell!

I have not time to enlarge further, or else I might describe the mighty pictures at the end of the procession—for in the old Roman triumphs the deeds of the conqueror were all depicted in paintings—the towns he had taken, the rivers he had passed, the provinces he had subdued, the battles he had fought were represented in pictures and exposed to the view of the people—who with great festivity and rejoicing accompanied him in throngs, or beheld him from the windows of their houses and filled the air with their acclamations and applauses.

I might present to you first of all the picture of Hell's dungeons blown to atoms. Satan had prepared deep in the depths of darkness a prison house for God's elect but Christ has not left one stone upon another. On the picture I see the chains broken in pieces, the prison doors burnt with fire and all the depths of the vast deep shaken to their foundations. On another picture I see Heaven open to all Believers. I see the gates that were fast shut heaved open by the golden lever of Christ's Atonement.

I see on one, another picture, the grave despoiled. I behold Jesus in it, slumbering for awhile and then rolling away the stone and rising to immortality and glory. But we cannot stay to describe these mighty pictures of the victories of His love. We know that the time shall come when the

triumphant procession shall cease—when the last of His redeemed shall have entered into the city of happiness and of joy—and when, with the shout of a trumpet heard for the last time, He shall ascend to Heaven and take His people up to reign with God, even our Father, forever and ever, world without end.

Our only question, and with that we conclude, is, have we a good hope through Divine Grace that we shall march in that tremendous procession? Shall we pass under review in that day of pomp and glory? Say, my Soul, shall you have an humble part in that glorious pageant? Will *you* follow at His chariot wheels? Will you join in the thundering hosannas? Shall your voice help to swell the everlasting chorus? Sometimes I fear it shall not. There are times when the awful question comes—what if *my* name should be left out when He should read the muster roll?

Brothers and Sisters, does not that thought trouble you? But yet I put the question again. Can you answer it? Will you be there—shall you see this pomp? Will you behold Him triumph over sin, death and Hell at last? Can you answer this question? There is another, but the answer will serve for both—do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Is He your confidence and your trust? Have you committed your soul to His keeping? Reposing on His might can you say for your immortal spirit—

***“Other refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless soul on You?”***

If you can say that, your eyes shall see Him in the day of His glory—no, you shall *share* His glory and sit with Him upon His throne even as He has overcome and sat down with His Father upon His throne! I blush to preach as I have done this morning on a theme far beyond my power, yet I could not leave it unsung, but, as best I might, sing it. May God enlarge your faith and strengthen your hope! May He inflame your love and make you ready to be made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light so that when He shall come with flying clouds on wings of wind, you may be ready to meet Him and may with Him ascend to gaze forever on the vision of His Glory!

May God grant this blessing, for Christ’s sake. Amen.

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# A WARNING TO BELIEVERS

## NO. 3466

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*“Let no man beguile you of your reward.”*  
*Colossians 2:18.*

THERE is an allusion here to the prize which was offered to the runners in the Olympic games. And at the outset it is well for us to remark how very frequently the Apostle Paul conducts us by his metaphors to the racecourse. Over and over again he is telling us so to run that we may obtain, bidding us to strive and, at other times, to agonize, and speaks of wrestling and contending. Ought not this make us feel what an intense thing the Christian life is—not a thing of sleepiness or haphazard, not a thing to be left, now and then, to a little superficial consideration? It must be a matter which demands all our strength, so that when we are saved there is a living principle put within us which demands all our energies and gives us energy over and above any that we ever had before! Those who dream that carelessness will find its way to Heaven have made a great mistake. The way to Hell is neglect, but the way to Heaven is very different. “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” A little matter of neglect brings you to ruin, but our Master’s words are, “*Strive* to enter in at the straight gate, for many, I say unto you, shall seek”—merely seek—“to enter in, and shall not be able.” Striving is needed more than seeking! Let us pray that God the Holy Spirit would always enable us to be in downright, awful earnest about the salvation of our souls. May we never count this a matter of secondary importance, but may we seek first and beyond everything else, the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. May we lay hold on eternal life—may we so run that we may obtain.

I would press this upon your memories because I observe—observe it in myself as well as in my fellow Christians, that we are often more earnest about the things of this life than we are about the things of the life to come. We are all impressed with the fact that in these days of competition, if a man would not be run over and crushed beneath the wheels of the Juggernaut of poverty, he must exert himself. No man now seems able to keep his head above water with the faint swimmer strokes which our forefathers used to give. We have to strive—and the bread that perishes has to be labored for. Shall it be that this poor world shall engross our earliest thoughts and our latest cares, and shall the world to come have only now and then a consideration? No! May we love our God with all our heart, and all our soul, and all our strength—and may we lay our

body, soul and spirit upon the altar of Christ's service—for these are but our reasonable sacrifices to Him.

Now the Apostle, in the text before us, gives us a warning which comes to the same thing, however it is interpreted. But the passage is somewhat difficult of rendering and there have been several meanings given to it. Out of these there are three meanings which have been given of the text before us which are worthy of notice. "Let no man beguile you of your reward" The Apostle, in the first place, may mean here—

**I. LET NO MAN BEGUILE ANY OF YOU** who profess to be followers of Christ, *of the great reward that will await the faithful at the last.*

Now, my Brothers and Sisters, we have, many of us, commenced the Christian race, or we profess to have done so—but the number of the starters is far greater than the number of the winners! "They that run in a race, run all, but one receives the prize." "Many are called, but few are chosen." Many commence, apparently, in the Christian career, but after a while, though they did run well, something hinders them that they do not obey the Truths of God and they go out from us because they were not of us, or if they had been of us, doubtless they would have continued with us. Now we may expect, now that we have commenced to run, that *some will come and try to turn us out of the racecourse openly*—not plausibly and with sophistry—but with an open and honest wickedness. Some will tell us plainly that there is no reward to run for, that our religion is all a mistake, that the pleasures of this world are the only things worth seeking, that there are delights of the flesh and the lusts thereof, and that we should do well to enjoy them. We all meet the Atheist with his sneer and with his ringing laugh. We shall meet with all kinds of persons who will, to our faces, tell us to turn back, for there is no Heaven, there is no Christ, or, if there is, it is not worth our while to take so much trouble to find Him. Take heed of these people! Meet them face to face with dauntless courage. Mind not their sneers. If they persecute you, only, reckon this to be an honor to you—for what is persecution but the tribute which wickedness pays to righteousness? And what is it, indeed, but the recognition of the Seed of the woman when the seed of the serpent would gladly bite His heel?

But the Apostle does not warn you so much against those people who openly come to you in this way. He knows that you will be on the alert against them. He gives a special warning against some others who would beguile you—that is to say—*who will try to turn you out of the right road, but who will not tell you that they mean to do so.* They pretend that they are going to show you something better than what you have, to teach you something that you knew not before, some improvement upon what you have here learned. In Paul's day there were some who took off the attention of the Christian from the worship of God to the worship of angels. "Angels," they said, "these are holy beings. They keep watch over you—you should speak of them with great respect." And then, when they grew bolder, they said, "You should ask for their protection." And then after a little while they said, "You should worship them. You should make them intermediate intercessors!" And so, step by step, they went on and estab-

lished an old heresy which lasted for many years in the Christian Church—and which is not dead, even now—and thus the worship of angels crept in.

And now-a-days you will meet with men who will say, “That bread upon the Table—why, it represents the body of Jesus Christ to you when you come to the Lord’s Supper. Therefore you ought to treat that bread with great respect.” By-and-by they will get a little bolder, and then they say, “As it represents Christ, you may worship it, pay it respect as if it were Christ.” By-and-by it will come to this, that you must have a napkin under your chin, lest you should drop a crumb. And they will say it would be very wicked if a drop of the sacred wine should cling to your moustache when you drink! And there will be the directions which are given in some of the papers coming out from the High Church party—absurdities which are only worthy of the nursery—about the way in which the holy bread is to be eaten and the holy wine is to be drunk—bringing in idolatry—sheer, clear idolatry, under the pretence of improving upon the too bare simplicity of the worship of Christ! Be careful of the very first step, I pray you.

Or, perhaps, it may come to you in another shape. One will say to you, “The place in which you worship—is it not very dear to you? That seat where you have been accustomed to sit and listen, is it not dear?” And your natural instincts will say, “Yes.” Then it will go a little farther. “That place is holy—it ought never to be used for anything but worship.” Then a little farther it will be, “Oh, that is the House of God,” and you will come to believe that, contrary to the words which you know are given to you by the Holy Spirit, that God dwells not in temples made with hands—that is to say, in these buildings—and you will have, by degrees, a worship of places, and a worship of days, and a worship of bread, and a worship of wine! And then it will be said to you, “Your minister, has he not often cheered you? Well then, you should reverence him—call him, ‘Reverend.’” Go a little farther and you will call him, “Father.” Yet a little farther and he will be your confessor! Get a little farther and he will be your infallible Pope! It is all done step by step! The first step seems to be very harmless, indeed. Indeed, it is a kind of voluntary humility! You look as if you were humbling yourselves and were paying reverence to these things for God’s sake—whereas the objective is to get you to pay reverence to *them*, instead of to *God*—and here the Apostle’s words come in, “Let no man beguile you of your reward.” They will often attack you in that insidious manner by setting up other objects of reverence besides those which spiritual men worship!

So, too, they will, by slow degrees, try to *insinuate a different way of living from that which is the true life of the Christian*. You who have believed in Jesus are saved. Your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake. You are accustomed to go to Jesus Christ constantly to receive that washing of the feet of which He spoke to Peter when He said, “He that is washed needs not except to wash his feet, for he is clean every whit.” You go to Him with, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” But there will be some who will come in and tell you

that to live in that way by a simple faith in Jesus Christ is not, perhaps, the best way. Could you not get a little farther? Could you not lead the life of those recluses who mortify the flesh in such a way that at last they come to have no sins, but commence to be perfect in themselves? Could you not begin, at least in some degree, to commit your soul's care to some priest, or to some friend? And instead of making every place holy and every day a holy day, would it not be well to fast on such-and-such days in the week, to scrupulously observe this rule and the other rule and walk by the general opinion of the ancient Church, or by the *Anglicanum Directorium*, or some one of those books which profess to show how they used to do it a thousand years ago? All this may have a great show of wisdom, antiquity and beauty—there may be a semblance of everything that is holy about it and names that should never be mentioned without reverence may be appended to it all—but listen to the Apostle as he says, “Beware lest any man beguile you of your reward,” for if they get you away from living upon Christ as a poor sinner from day to day by simple confidence in Him, they *will beguile you of your reward!*

There is another party who will seek to beguile you of your reward *by bringing in speculative notions instead of the simple Truths of God's Word*. There is a certain class of persons who think that a sermon is a good one when they cannot understand it and who are always impressed with a man whose words are long! And if his sentences are involved, they feel, poor souls, that because they do not know what he is talking about, there is no doubt that he is a very wise and learned man! And after a while, when he does propound something that they can catch at, though it may be quite contrary to what they have learned at their mother's knee or from their father's Bible, yet they are ready to be led off by it! There are many men, now-a-days, who seem to spend their time in nothing else but in spinning new theories and inventing new systems. They gut the Gospel, taking the very soul and heart out of it, and leave nothing but the mere skin and outward bones. The life and marrow of the Gospel is being taken away by their learning, by their philosophies, by their refinements, by their bringing everything down to the test of this wonderfully enlightened 19<sup>th</sup> Century, to which we are all, I suppose, bound to defer! But a voice comes to us, “Let no man beguile you of your reward.” Stand fast to the old Truths of God—they will outlast all these philosophies! Stand fast to the old way of living—it will outlast all the inventions of men! Stand fast by Christ, for you need no other object of worship but Himself!

The Apostle gives us this warning, “Let no man beguile you of your reward,” reminding us that these persons are very likely to beguile us. They will beguile us *by their character*. Have I not often heard young people say of such-and-such a preacher who preaches error, “But he is so good a man!” That is not the point. “Though we, or an angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” If the life of the man should be blameless as the life of Christ, yet if he preaches to you other than the Gospel of Jesus Christ, take no heed of him! He wears but the sheep's clothing,

and is a wolf, after all. Some will plead, “But such-and-such a man is so eloquent.” Ah, Brothers and Sisters, may the day never come when your faith shall stand in the words of men! What is a ready orator, after all, that he should convince your hearts? Are there not ready orators caught any day for everything? Men speak, speak fluently, and speak well in the cause of evil! And there are some that can speak much more fluently and more eloquently for evil than any of our poor tongues are ever likely to do for the right! But words, words, words, flowers of rhetoric, oratory—are these the things that saved you? Are you so foolish that having begun in the spirit by being convicted of your sins, having begun by being led simply to Christ and putting your trust in Him—are you now to be led astray by these poetic utterances and flowery periods of men? God forbid! Let nothing of this kind beguile you!

Then there will be added to these remarks that the man is not only very good and very eloquent, but *that he is very earnest—he seems very humble-minded*. Yes, and of old they wore rough garments to deceive, and in the context of the text we find that those persons were noted for their voluntary humility and their worship of angels! Satan knows very well that if he comes in black, he will be discovered, but if he puts on the garb of an angel of light, then men will think he comes from God and so will be deceived. “By their fruits you shall know them.” If they give you not the Gospel—if they exalt not Christ, if they bear not witness to salvation through the precious blood, if they do not lift up Jesus Christ as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness—have nothing to do with them, speak they as they may! “Let no man beguile you of your reward.” Through it should happen to be your relative, one whom you love, one who may have many claims on your respect—let no man, let no man, however plausible may be his speech or eminent his character—beguile you of your reward!

Recollect, you professors, you lose the reward *if you lose the road to the reward*. He that runs may run very fast, but if he does not run the course, he wins not the prize. You may believe false Doctrine with great earnestness, but you will find it false, for all that! You may give yourself up indefatigably to the pursuit of the wrong religion, but it will ruin your souls! A notion is abroad that if you are but earnest and sincere, you will be all right. Permit me to remind you that if you travel ever so earnestly to the north, you will never reach the south. And if you earnestly take prussic acid, you will die! And if you earnestly cut off a limb, you will be wounded. You must not only be earnest, but you must be right in it! Hence is it necessary to say, “Let no man beguile you of your reward.” “I bear them witness,” said the Apostle, “that they had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, but went about to establish their own righteousness, and have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.” Oh, may we not be beguiled, then, so as to miss the reward of Heaven at the last!

But I must pass on, especially as the light fails us this evening—I hope it is prognostic of a coming shower. Here is a second rendering which may be given to the text—

## II. LET NO MAN DOMINEER OVER YOU.

This rendering, or something analogous to it, is in the French translation. One of the great expositors in his commentary upon this passage refers it to the judges at the end of the course who sometimes would give the reward to the wrong person, and the person who had really run well might thus be deprived of his reward. Now, however close a man may be to Christ, the world, instead of honoring him for it, will, on the contrary, censure and condemn him—and hence the Apostle's exhortation is, "Let no man domineer over you."

And, my Brothers and Sisters, I would earnestly ask you to remember this, first, *as to your course of action*. If you conscientiously believe that you are right in what you are doing, care very little who is pleased or who is displeased. If you are persuaded in your own soul that what you believe and what you do are acceptable to God, whether they are acceptable to man or not is of very small consequence! You are not man's servant, you do not look to man for your reward and, therefore, you need not care what man's opinion may be in this matter. Be just and fear not! Tread in the footsteps of Christ, follow what may. Live not on the breath of men. Let not their applause make you feel great, for perhaps then their censure will make you faint. Let no man in this respect domineer over you, but let Christ be your Master, and look to His smile.

So not only with regard to your course of action, *but also with reference to your confidence*, let no man domineer over you. If you put your trust in Jesus Christ, there are some who will say it is presumption. Let them say it is presumption! "Wisdom is justified of all her children," and so shall faith be. If you take the promise of God and rest upon it, there will be some who will say that you are hare-brained fanatics. Let them say it! They that trust in Him shall never be confounded. The result will honor your faith. You have but to wait a little while and, perhaps, they that now censure you will have to hold up their hands in astonishment and say with you, "What has God worked?" Your confidence in Christ, especially my dear young Friend, I trust does not depend upon the smile of your relatives. If it did, then their frown might crush it. Walk with your Savior in the lowly walk of holy confidence, and let not your faith rest in man, but in the smile of God!

Let no man domineer over you, again, *by judging your motives*. Men will always give as bad a reason as they can for a good man's actions. It seems to be innate in human nature never to give man credit for being right if you can help it, and often tender minds have been greatly wounded when they have been misrepresented and their actions have been imputed to sinister and selfish motives—when they have really desired to serve Christ. But do not let your heart be broken about that. You will appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ—do not care about the petty judgment seats of men! Go on with your Master's work dauntlessly and fearlessly. Let them say, as David's brothers said of him, "Because of your pride and the naughtiness of your heart have you come to see the battle." You go and get Goliath's head and bring it back—and that shall be the best answer to these sneering ones. When they see that God is

with you and that He has given you the triumph, you shall have honor, even in the eyes of those who now ridicule you! I think sometimes the Christian should have very much the same bravado against the judgment of men as David had when Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out and said, "How glorious was the King of Israel, today, who uncovered himself today in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants." And he said, "It was before the Lord, and I will yet be more vile than thus." Let your eyes be to God and forget the eyes of men! Live so that whether they know what you do, or do not know, you will not care, for your conduct will bear the blaze of the great Judgment Day and, therefore, the criticisms of earth do not affect you! Let no man domineer over you.

So may I put it in another light—*let no man sway your conscience so as to lead you*. I am always anxious, my dear Hearers, that whatever respect I may ever win from you—and I trust I may have your esteem and your affection—yet that you will never believe a Doctrine simply because I utter it! Unless I can confirm it from the Word of God, away with it! If it is not according to the teaching of the Lord and Master, I beseech you follow me not. Follow me only as far as I follow Christ! And so with every other man. Let it be God's Truth, God's Word, the Holy Spirit's witness to that Word in your soul that you are seeking after! And rest, I pray you, never short of that, for if you do, your faith will stand merely in the wisdom of men—and when the man who helped you to believe is gone, perhaps your faith may be gone, too—when you most need its comforting power! No, let no man domineer over you, but press forward in the Christian race, looking unto Jesus, and looking unto Jesus only!

But now a third meaning belongs to the text. A happy circumstance it is, this dark night, that the preacher does not need to use his manuscript, for if he did, his sermon would certainly come to an end right now. But here is this point, "Let no man beguile you of your reward." It may mean this—

**III. LET NO MAN ROB YOU OF THE PRESENT REWARD WHICH YOU HAVE IN BEING A CHRISTIAN.**

Let no man deprive you of the present comfort which your faith should bring to you. Let me, just for a few minutes, have your attention while I speak upon this. Dear Brothers and Sisters, you and I, if we are believers in Christ, are this day completely pardoned. There is no sin in God's book against us. We are wholly and completely justified! The righteousness of Jesus Christ covers us from head to foot and we stand before God as if we had never sinned! Now let no man rob you of this reward. Do not be tempted by anything that is said to doubt the completeness of a believer in Christ. Hold this, and as you hold it, enjoy it! Do not let the man whom you have most to fear, beguile you. Even though conscience should upbraid you and you should have many grave reasons for doubt, as you imagine, yet if you believe in Jesus, stand to it—"There is, therefore, now no condemnation to me, for I am in Christ Jesus! He that believes in Him is not condemned! I have believed and I am not condemned. Neither will He permit condemnation to be thundered against me, for

Christ has borne my sin for me and I am clear in Him.” Let no man beguile you of the reward of feeling that you are complete in Christ!

Further, you who have believed in Jesus Christ *are safe in Christ*. Because He lives, you shall live also. Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? He has said, “I give unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hands.” Now there are some who will tell you that you are *not safe* and that it is dangerous for you to believe that you are. Let no man beguile you of this reward! You are saved. If you are believing on Him, He will keep you, and you may sing, “Now unto Him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before His Presence with exceedingly great joy, unto Him be glory.” Hold to that blessed Truth of God that you are in Jesus—safe in Jesus Christ!

There is a third blessed Truth, that not only are you pardoned and safe in Christ, but you are accepted at this moment in the Beloved. Your acceptance with God *does not rest upon anything in you*. You are accepted because you are in Christ, accepted for Christ’s sake. Now sometimes you will get robbed of this reward if you listen to the voice which says, “Why, there is still sin in you! Your prayers are imperfect! Your actions are stained.” Yes, but let no men beguile you of this conviction that, sinner as you are, you are still accepted in Christ Jesus!

The Lord grant that you may feel this within and let no man beguile you of your reward as long as you live! May you live and die in the enjoyment of it, Beloved, for Christ’s sake. Amen.

### **EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: EPHESIANS 4; 6:1-15.**

#### **EPHESIANS 4.**

**Verses 1, 2.** *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called. With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.* It is a loving call. Walk lovingly. It is the condescension of God that called you. Be, therefore, lowly. It is God in tenderness who has loved you. Be, therefore, meek, “forbearing one another in love.”

**3-6.** *Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* Therefore, strive for unity. Woe unto those who divide Believers—who rob them of love to one another—who set up another Gospel which is not another, or in any way detract from the unity of the body of Christ.

**7.** *But unto everyone of us is given Grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.* It does not mean that God gives stingingly, but that He gives according to our capacity to receive. We are not all made with the same measure of capacity because we are not all intended to fill the same office—and God gives everyone of us as much Grace as we are prepared

to receive. The Lord enlarge our hearts that we may hold more of His Grace, “according to the measure of the gift of Christ.”

**8-10.** *Therefore He said, When he ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.* Now what were the gifts He gave? He rode up to Heaven in triumph. And in Roman triumphs they scattered gold and silver among the people to show the greatness of the trophies which the warriors had brought home. So Christ, when He ascended up on high, scattered gifts among the sons of men. And what were these? Why they were men, for men are God’s possession—the Man, Christ Jesus, first, and then those whom He uses for Himself afterwards.

**11-13.** *And he gave some, Apostles, and some, Prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.* We have not come to that yet. Therefore we need instruction. We need edifying or building up, and so the Lord gives to His Church according to His own mind and will, evangelists, pastors and the like. Sometimes there are pastors whom God never sent—and a man may take upon himself the voice of an evangelist who was never called—and consequently they are not gifts of God to the churches and is a waste of their strength. But if we have those whom God gives, we shall find a priceless gift in the bestowal of such men upon the Church of God!

**14-16.** *That we henceforth are no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.* You see then, Brothers and Sisters, where we are. We are each one put into his place to do something for the entire body. No limb of the body lives to itself. It is only healthy when it ministers to the health of the whole body. We are nothing, except as we are joined to the rest of God’s people, and especially joined to Him who is our glorious Head.

**17-19.** *This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind. Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.* This, the member of the body of Christ will never do! The Head is holy, so will the members be by that Holy Spirit who sanctifies us!

**20.** *But you have not so learned Christ.* What a beautiful expression this is! It does not say, “Learned the Doctrine of Christ,” or, “the precept

of Christ,” though that were a grand Truth, but we learn Christ, Himself! Our school book is Christ! The copy by which we write is Christ! The image to which we desire to be conformed is Christ! “You have not so learned Christ.”

**21, 22.** *If so be that you have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: That you put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts—* You have done with it. You put it off as a beggar puts off his rags when he has fresh garments given him!

**23-25.** *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that you put on the man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Therefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.* You know the eye will not deceive the head. There is no part of the body that will deceive the rest. If the foot perceives that there is a trap, it tells the body and it does not lead it astray. If the nostril perceives an evil smell, it tells the body, that it may escape from the noxious odor. The body is true to itself. So if we are members, one of another, lying must be abhorrent. Every thought of it in any shape must be detestable to us.

**26.** *Be you angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.* Be angry sometimes. A man that is never angry, surely has no strong convictions in him, for he that is not angry at evil can scarcely be thought to rejoice in that which is good. But anger is a dog that is very apt to bite the wrong persons. Therefore, be you angry, and sin not. Anger is like fire. Let it always be put out at night. “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,” but if it lights during the day, keep it in the grate—keep it in its proper place, for if fire takes hold where it should not, the house may be destroyed and the man, himself, may perish in the fire. If you are angry, as you sometimes must be, “be angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down on your wrath.” They say that the stings of some obnoxious creatures will not die until the sun goes down. Well, let the sting of anger die when the sun goes down. Rake out the fire when the sun is down. Do not keep it blazing all night long, ready for the morning. Let it go out, lest our anger become hatred and become malice.

**27.** *Neither give place to the devil.* He is standing at the door. If you give him a seat, he will come in and it is very easy to do so—to make an opportunity for the devil to come in. “Neither give place to the devil.” Idle persons tempt the devil to depart by being busy—by being prayerful, and by being much with God. Give no place to the devil.

**28.** *Let him that stole, steal no more: but rather let him labor—*Honest industry is the cure for dishonesty.

**28.** *Working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needs.* What a splendid change from a thief, up to one that gives to him that needs! Now, between them, we should have put, “Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor with his hands”—a thing which is good—“that he may be able to provide things honest for himself.” A very good idea, too, but the like Christian thought is that he may labor, working with his hands that he may have, to give. I

wonder how many, even of professing Christians, think of this—that the objective of labor should be that they may have to give? There are some who think the objective is that we may have, to *keep*—that we may have, to *hoard*—but I say Christ, by His Apostle, teaches us that we should labor that we may have, *to give to him that needs*.

**29.** *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.* Putrid is the word—“no putrid communication”—no word, therefore, which tends to do harm to the purest mind—nothing which is unsavory. Therefore, also, nothing that is untrue—nothing that is slanderous—nothing that would injure my neighbor. “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.” “You may as well say it as think it,” says one. By no manner of means! If you think it, it will do you harm—if you say it, it will do hurt to others! You may have a bottle of poison and it is much better to keep the cork in, for if somebody should drink it, then they will die. No, “let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.”

**30-31.** *But that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister Grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.* Why does the Apostle say “clamor”? Why, because when people are angry they generally talk very loud, and I believe that if persons would correct their tone of voice and resolve, they will not speak above their usual tone! When they feel heated and provoked, it would greatly assist to check the abolition of passion. So the Apostle puts in, “Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and *clamor*, and loud talking—all clamor and evil speaking—be put away from you with all malice.”

**32.** *And be you kind, one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake has forgiven you.*

### **EPHESIANS 6.**

**Verse 1.** *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Fitting by nature and pleasing in the sight of God.*

**2-4.** *Honor your father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth. And you fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* For the duties are like birds with two wings, or like a pair of scales—balance for each side. There is the child’s duty, but there is the parent’s duty, too.

**5-9.** *Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ. Not with eye service, as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatever good thing any man does, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he is bond or free. And, you masters, do the same things unto them.* Mind that! We may hear a good deal about the duties of servants. Let us hear something about the duties of masters and mistresses. “You masters, do the same things unto them.”

**9.** *Forbearing threats: knowing that your Master also is in Heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him.* Very beautifully balanced is the whole system of Gospel morals. There is no undue advantage given by the fact of our being rendered equal in Christ, so that the servant is to be less obedient to the master, or the child to the parent—neither is there any undue power given to those who are in authority! But the Grace of God teaches all to do unto all as we would that they should do unto us.

**10.** *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord.* You cannot do right if you are not strong. Unless you have the backbone of principle—unless you have spiritual muscle and sinew by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in you, you cannot continue to do that which is right. “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord.”

**10, 11.** *And in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God.* First, be strong, and then put on armor. It is no use putting armor on a weak man, or else it will be what James I said it was—a capital invention, he said, because he who wore it would come to no harm and certainly do no harm, for he could not stir in it. Now you must be strong, first, but then not trust in your strength, but put on the armor which is here described. And yet it would be useless to have the armor unless you are first strong. “Put on the whole armor of God.”

**11-13.** *That you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Therefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.* To keep your ground, not to give way in any respect! And blessed is that man whose name is Stand-Fast, and whose practice is to hold fast—“having done all to stand.”

**14.** *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth.* Nothing will so tighten up your garments and keep them right as a belt of sincerity and truthfulness. If we are not true, whatever else we are, we are but loosely arrayed. We shall come to mischief. “Having your loins girt about with truth.”

**14.** *And having on the breastplate of righteousness.* A grand protection when God has given you to be holy, and when the principle which covers your heart and shields your members is righteousness!

**15.** *And your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.* Peace in your own heart, peace with God, peace with man. Peacefulness and peace. No shoes like these! A man that has a merry heart makes many a mile fly beneath him, but a heavy heart is a slow traveler. “Your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.”

—Adapted from the *C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

**PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON  
TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.**

# FOLLOWING THE RISEN CHRIST

## NO. 1530

DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, MARCH 28, 1880,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“If you then are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”*  
*Colossians 3:1, 2.*

THE resurrection of our Divine Lord from the dead is the cornerstone of Christian doctrine. Perhaps I might more accurately call it the keystone of the arch of Christianity, for if that fact could be disproved, the whole fabric of the Gospel would fall to the ground. If Jesus Christ is not risen, then is our preaching in vain and your faith is also in vain—you are yet in your sins. If Christ is not risen, then they which have fallen asleep in Christ have perished and we, ourselves, in missing so glorious a hope as that of Resurrection, are, of all men, the most miserable! Because of the great importance of His Resurrection, our Lord was pleased to give many Infallible proofs of it, by appearing again and again in the midst of His followers.

It would be interesting to search out how many times He appeared. I think we have mention of some 16 manifestations. He showed Himself openly before His disciples and did eat and drink with them. They touched His hands and His side and heard His voice and knew that it was the same Jesus that was crucified. He was not content with giving evidence to the ears and to the eyes, but even to the sense of touch He proved the reality of His Resurrection. These appearances were very varied. Sometimes He gave an interview to one alone, either to a man, as to Cephas, or to a woman, as to Magdalene. He conversed with two of His followers as they went to Emmaus and with the company of the Apostles by the sea. We find Him at one moment among the 11 when the doors were shut for fear of the Jews and at another time in the midst of an assembly of more than 500 brethren, who, years later, were, most of them, living witnesses to the fact.

They could not all have been deceived. It is not possible that any historical fact could have been placed upon a better basis of credibility than the Resurrection of our Lord from the dead. This is put beyond all dispute and question and it was done on purpose because it is essential to the whole Christian system. For this same cause the Resurrection of Christ is commemorated frequently. There is no ordinance in Scripture of any one Lord's-Day in the year being set apart to commemorate the rising of Christ from the dead and for this reason *every* Lord's-Day is the memorial of our Lord's Resurrection. Wake up any Lord's-Day you please, whether in the depth of winter, or in the warmth of summer and you may sing—

*“Today He rose and left the dead,*

***And Satan's empire fell!  
Today the saints  
His triumph spread,  
And all His wonders tell."***

To set apart an Easter Sunday for special memory of the Resurrection is a *human* device for which there is no Scriptural command. But to make every Lord's-Day an Easter Sunday is due to Him who rose early on the first day of the week. We gather together on the first, rather than upon the seventh day of the week, because redemption is even a greater work than creation and more worthy of commemoration and because the rest which followed creation is far outdone by that which ensues upon the completion of redemption! Like the Apostles, we meet on the first day of the week and hope that Jesus may stand in our midst and say, "Peace be unto you."

Our Lord has lifted the Sabbath from the old and rusted hinges whereon the Law had placed it long before and set it on the new golden hinges which His love has fashioned. He has placed our rest day, not at the end of a week of toil, but at the beginning of the rest which remains for the people of God. Every first day of the week we should meditate upon the rising of our Lord and seek to enter into fellowship with Him in His risen life. Never let us forget that all who are in Him rose from the dead in His rising.

Next in importance to the fact of the Resurrection is the doctrine of the federal headship of Christ and the unity of all His people with Him. It is because we are in Christ that we become partakers of everything that Christ did—we are circumcised with Him, dead with Him, buried with Him, risen with Him because we cannot be separated from Him. We are members of His body and not a bone of Him can be broken. Because that union is most intimate, continuous and indissoluble, therefore all that concerns Him concerns us and as He rose, so all His people have arisen in Him! They are risen in two ways. First, *representatively*. All the elect rose in Christ in the day when He quit the tomb. He was justified, or declared to be clear of all liabilities on account of our sins by being set free from the prison of the tomb.

There was no reason for detaining Him in the sepulcher, for He had discharged the debts of His people by dying "unto sin once." He was our Hostage and our Representative and when He came forth from His bonds we came forth in Him. We have endured the sentence of the Law in our Substitute. We have lain in its prison and even died under its death warrant and now we are no longer under its curse. "Now if we are dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dies no more; death has no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He lives, He lives unto God."

Next to this representative resurrection comes our *spiritual* resurrection, which is ours as soon as we are led by faith to believe in Jesus Christ. Then it may be said of us, "And you has He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." The resurrection blessing is to be perfected, by-and-by, at the appearing of our Lord and Savior, for then our bodies

shall rise again if we fall asleep before His coming. He redeemed our manhood in its entirety—spirit, soul and body—and He will not be content until the resurrection which has passed upon our spirit shall pass upon our body, too. These dry bones shall live! Together with our dead body they shall rise—

***“When He arose ascending high,  
He showed our feet the way;  
Up to the Lord our flesh shall fly  
At the great rising day.”***

Then shall we know in the perfection of our resurrection beauty that we are, indeed, completely risen in Christ and “as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

This morning we shall only speak of our fellowship with Christ in His Resurrection as to our own spiritual resurrection. Do not misunderstand me as if I thought the resurrection to be only spiritual, for a literal rising from the dead is yet to come. But our text speaks of *spiritual* resurrection and I shall, therefore, endeavor to set it before you.

**I.** First, then, LET US CONSIDER OUR SPIRITUAL RISING WITH Christ—“If you then are risen with Christ.” Though the words look like a supposition they are not meant to be. The Apostle casts no doubt and raises no question, but merely puts it thus for argument’s sake. It might just as well be read, “Since you then are risen in Christ.” The “if” is used logically, not theologically—by way of argument and not by way of doubt. All who believe in Christ are risen with Christ. Let us meditate on this Truth of God. For, first, we were “dead in trespasses and sins,” but having believed in Christ we have been quickened by the Holy Spirit and we are dead no longer!

There we lay in the tomb, ready to become corrupt—yes, some of us *were* corrupt—the marks of the worm of sin were upon our character and the foul stench of actual sin arose from us. More or less, according to the length of time in which we abode in that death and according to the circumstances with which we were surrounded, death worked in us corruption. We lay in our death quite unable to raise ourselves. Ours were eyes that could not see and ears that could not hear; a heart that could not love and withered hands that could not be stretched out to give the touch of faith. We were even as they that go down into the Pit, as those that have been long dead—only we were in a worse plight than those actually dead, for we were responsible for all our omissions and inabilities.

We were as guilty as if we had power, for the loss of moral power is not the loss of moral responsibility! We were, therefore, in a state of spiritual death of the most fearful kind. The Holy Spirit visited us and made us live. We remember the first sensation of life, some of us—how it seemed to tingle in our soul’s veins with sharp and bitter pain—just as drowning persons, when life is coming back to them, suffer great pain. Conviction was worked in us and confession of sin. A dread of judgment to come and a sense of present condemnation were present, but these were tokens of *life* and that life gradually deepened and opened up until the eyes were opened—we could see Christ! Our hands ceased to be withered and we stretched them out and touched His garment’s hem. Our feet began to

move in the way of obedience and our heart felt the sweet glow of love within.

Then the eyes, not content with only seeing, fell to weeping and afterwards, when the tears were wiped away, they flashed and sparkled with delight. And oh, my Brothers and Sisters, believers in Jesus, you were not spiritually dead any longer! On Christ you have believed and that grand act proves that you are dead no more! You have been quickened by God according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies. Now, Beloved, you are new creatures—the product of a second birth, begotten again in Christ Jesus unto newness of life! Christ is your life—such a life as you never knew before, nor could have known apart from Him. If you then are risen with Christ you walk in newness of life while the world abides in death!

Let us advance another step. We are risen with Christ and, therefore, there has been worked in us a wonderful change. When the dead shall rise, they will not appear as they now are. The buried seed rises from the ground, but not as a seed, for it puts forth green leaves and bud and stem and gradually develops expanding flowers and fruit and even so we wear a new form, for we are renewed after the image of Him that created us in righteousness and holiness! I ask you to consider the change which the Spirit of God has worked in the Believer—a wonderful change, indeed! Before regeneration our soul was as our body will be when it dies and we read that, “it is sown in corruption.” There was corruption in our mind and it was working irresistibly towards every evil and offensive thing.

In many, the corruption did not appear upon the surface, but it worked within. In others it was conspicuous and fearful to look upon. How great the change! For now the power of corruption within us is broken! The new life has overcome it, for it is a living and incorruptible seed which lives and abides forever. Corruption is upon the old nature, but it cannot touch the new, which is our true and real self. Is it not a great thing to be purged of the filthiness which would have ultimately brought us down to Hell where the unquenchable fire burns and the undying worm feeds upon the corrupt?

Our old state was further like that which comes upon the body at death because it was a state of dishonor. You know how the Apostle says of the body, “It is sown in dishonor” and certainly no corpse wears such dishonor as that which rests upon a man who is dead in trespasses and sins. Why, of all things in the world that deserve shame and contempt, a sinful man is certainly the most so! He despises his Creator; he neglects his Savior; he chooses evil instead of good and puts the Light of God from him because his deeds are evil and, therefore, he prefers the darkness. In the judgment of all pure spirits, a sinful man is a dishonorable man.

But oh how changed is man when the Grace of God works within him, for then he is honorable. “Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” What an honor this is! Heaven itself contains not a more honorable being than a renewed man! Well may we cry with David, “What is man, that You are

mindful of him? And the son of man, that You visit him?" But when we see man, in the Person of Jesus, made to have dominion over all the works of God's hands and know that Jesus has made us kings and priests unto God, we are filled with amazement that God should so exalt us! The Lord Himself has said, "Since you were precious in My sight, you have been honorable and I have loved you." "Unto you therefore which believe he is an honor," for so the original text may run. A precious Christ makes us precious—such honor have all the saints!

When a body is buried, we are told by the Apostle, again, that it is "sown in weakness." The poor dead frame cannot lay itself down in its last bed—friendly hands must place it there. Even so we were utter weakness towards all good. When we were the captives of sin, we could do nothing good, even as our Lord said, "Without Me you can do nothing." We were incapable of even a good *thought* apart from Him. But "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" and now we know Him and the power of His Resurrection! God has given us the spirit of power and of love. Is it not written, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name"? What an amazing power is this! Now we "taste of the powers of the world to come" and we are "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness."

Faith girds us with a Divine power, for, "all things are possible to him that believes," and each Believer can exclaim, without boasting, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me!" Is not this a marvelous change which the spiritual resurrection has worked upon us? Is it not a glorious thing that God's strength should be perfect in our weakness? The great change mainly concerns another point. It is said of the body, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Before this we were natural men and discerned not the things that are of the Spirit of God. We minded earthly things and were moved by carnal lusts after the things which are seen. But now, through Divine Grace, a spirit has been created in us which feeds on *spiritual* bread, lives for *spiritual* objects, is swayed by *spiritual* motives and rejoices in *spiritual* truths.

This change, from the natural to the spiritual, is such as only God Himself could have worked and yet we have experienced it. To God be the glory! So that by virtue of our rising in Christ we have received life and have become the subjects of a wondrous change—"old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." In consequence of our receiving this life and undergoing this change, the things of the world and sin become a tomb to us. To a dead man a sepulcher is as good a dwelling as he can want. You may call it his bedchamber if you will, for he lies within it as unconscious as if he were sleeping. But the moment the dead man lives, he will not endure such a bedchamber! He calls it a dreary vault; a loathsome dungeon; an unbearable morgue and he must leave it at once!

So when you and I were natural men and had no spiritual life, the things of this life contented us. But it is far otherwise now. A merely outward religion was all that we desired—a dead form suited a dead soul. Judaism pleased those who were under its yoke in the very beginning of the

Gospel. New moons and holy days and traditional ordinances and fasting and feasting were great things with those who forgot their resurrection with Christ! All those things make pretty furniture for a dead man's chamber! But when the Eternal Life enters the soul, these outward ordinances are flung off—the living man tears off his grave clothes and demands such garments as are suitable for life!

So the Apostle in the chapter before our text tells us to let no man spoil us by the traditions of men and the inventions of a dead ritualism, for these things are not the portion of renewed and spiritual men. So, too, all merely carnal objects become as a grave to us, whether they are sinful pleasures or selfish gains. For the dead man, the shroud, the coffin and the vault are suitable enough—but make the corpse alive and he cannot rest in the coffin! He makes desperate struggles to break it up. See how, by main force, he dashes up the lid, tears off his bandages and leaps from the bier! So the man renewed by Grace cannot live in sin—it is a coffin to him—he cannot bear evil pleasures, they are as a shroud. He cries for liberty!

When resurrection comes, the man lifts up the soil above his grave and scatters monument and headstone, if these are raised above him. Some souls are buried under a mass of self-righteousness, like wealthy men on whom shrines of marble have been heaped. But all these the Believer shakes off! He must have them gone! He cannot bear these dead works. He cannot live otherwise than by *faith*—all other life is death to him. He must get out of his former state, for as a tomb is not a fit place for a living man, so when we are quickened by Grace, the things of sin and self and carnal sense become dreary catacombs to us where our soul feels buried and out of which we must arise. How can we that are raised out of the death of sin live any longer in sin?

And, now, Beloved, we are at this time wholly raised from the dead in a spiritual sense. Let us think of this, for our Lord did not have His head quickened while His feet remained in the sepulcher. He rose a perfect and entire Man, alive throughout. Even so have we been renewed in every part. We have received, though it is but in its infancy, a perfect spiritual life—we are perfect in Christ Jesus. In our inner man our eyes are opened, our ears are awakened, our hands are active, our feet are nimble—our every faculty is there, though as yet immature and needing development and having the old dead nature to contend with. Moreover and best of all, we are so raised that we shall die no more! Oh, tell me no more the dreary tale that a man who has received the Divine Life may yet lose Grace and perish!

With our Bibles in our hands we know better. “Christ being raised from the dead dies no more, death has no more dominion over Him” and, therefore, He that has received Christ's life in him shall never die. Has He not said, “He that believes in Me, though he were dead yet shall he live; and whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die”? This life which He has given us shall be in us, “a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life.” He has said, “I give unto My sheep *eternal* life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand.” On the day of our

quickenings we bid farewell to spiritual death and to the sepulcher where we slept under sin's dominion!

Farewell, you deadly love of sin! We have done with you! Farewell, dead world, corrupt world! We have done with you! Christ has raised us. Christ has given us eternal life! We forsake forever the dreary abodes of death and seek the heavenly places. Our Jesus lives and because He lives we shall live also, world without end! Thus I have tried to work out the metaphor of resurrection, by which our spiritual renewal is so well set forth.

**II.** We are urged by the Apostle to use the life which we have received and so, secondly, LET US EXERCISE THE NEW LIFE IN SUITABLE PURSUITS. "If you then are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." Let your actions be agreeable to your new life. First, then, let us leave the sepulcher. If we are quickened, our first act should be to leave the region of death. Let us quit the vault of a merely outward religion and let us worship God in spirit and in truth. Let us have done with priestcraft and all the black business of spiritual undertaking and let the dead bury their dead—we will have none of it! Let us have done with outward forms and rites and ceremonies, which are not of Christ's ordaining and let us know nothing except Christ Crucified, for that which is not of the living Lord is a mere piece of funeral pomp, fit for the cemeteries of formalists whose whole religion is a shoveling in of dust on coffin lids. "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh."

Let us also quit the vault of carnal enjoyments where men seek to satisfy themselves with provision for the flesh. Let us not live by the sight of the eyes, nor by the hearing of the ears. Let us not live for the amassing of wealth, or the gaining of fame, for these ought to be as dead things to the man who is risen in Christ. Let us not live for the world which we see, nor after the fashion of men to whom this life is everything. Let us live as those that have come out of the world and who, though they are in it, are no more of it. Let us be unmindful of the country from where we came out and leave it, as Abraham did, as though there were no such country, henceforth dwelling with our God, sojourners with Him, seeking "a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." As Jesus Christ left behind Him all the abodes of death, let us do the same.

And, then, let us hasten to forget every evil, even as our Lord hastened to leave the tomb. How little a time, after all, did He sojourn among the dead! He must lie in the heart of the earth three days, but He made them as short as possible, so that it is difficult to make out the three days at all. They were there, for there were fragments of each period, but surely never were three days so short as Jesus made them! He cut them short in righteousness and being loosed from the pains of death, He rose early, at the very break of day! At the first instant that it was possible for Him to get away from the sepulcher, consistent with the Scriptures, He left the napkin and the grave clothes and stood in the garden, waiting to salute His disciples!

So let it be with us! There should be no lingering, no loitering, no hankering after the world—no clinging to its vanities, no making provision for

the flesh. Up in the morning early, oh you who are spiritually quickened! Up in the morning early from your ease, your carnal pleasure, your love of wealth and self and away out from the dark vault into a congenial sphere of action—"If you then are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."

To pursue the analogy—when our Lord had left the tomb thus early, He spent a season on earth among His disciples and we are to pass the time of our sojourning here on earth as His was passed—in holy service. Our Lord reckoned that He was on the move from earth as soon as He rose. If you remember, He said, "I ascend unto My Father and your Father." He did not say, "I shall ascend," as though He looked at it as a *future* event, but He said, "I ascend," as if it were so quickly to be done that it was already doing. Forty days He stayed, for He had 40 days' work to do—but He looked upon Himself as already going up into Heaven. He had done with the world. He had done with the grave and now He said, "I ascend to My Father and your Father."

We also have our 40 days to tarry here—the period may be longer or shorter as the Providence of God ordains—but it will soon be over and the time of our departure will come. Let us spend our risen life on earth as Jesus spent His—in a greater seclusion from the world and in greater nearness to Heaven than ever. Our Lord occupied Himself much in testimony—manifesting Himself—as we have already seen, in many ways to His friends and followers. Let us also manifest the fruits of our risen life and bear testimony to the power of God! Let all men see that we are risen! So live that there can be no more doubt about your spiritual resurrection than there was about Christ's literal Resurrection. Do not publish to the world your *own* virtues that you may be honored among them. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

Put your possession of the new life beyond question so that when you have gone Home your friends and acquaintances may say—"He was a living child of God, for we felt the power of his life. He was a changed man, for we saw the renewing." Jesus spent His risen life, also, in comforting His saints. He said, "Peace be unto you." He spoke to one and another, to poor Peter who denied Him and to all the assembled company, cheering them and preparing them for their future career. He spent those 40 days in setting everything in order in His kingdom, arranging as to what should be when He should be taken up and leaving His last commission to His followers was that they should "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Beloved, let us also spend the time of our sojourning here in the fear of God, worshipping Him, serving Him, glorifying Him, endeavoring to set everything in order for the extension of our Master's Kingdom, for the comforting of His saints, for the accomplishment of His sacred purposes.

And now I have led you up so far, I want to go further and rise higher. May the Lord help us! Let our minds ascend to Heaven in Christ. Even while our bodies are here we are to be drawn upward with Christ—attracted to Him so that we can say, "He has raised us up together and

made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Our text says, “Seek those things which are above where Christ sits at the right hand of God.” What is this but rising to heavenly pursuits? Jesus has gone up—let us go up with Him! As for these bodies, we cannot as yet ascend, for they are not fit to inherit the Kingdom of God—yet let our thoughts and hearts mount up and build a happy rest on high! Let not a stray *thought* ascend like one lone bird which sings and mounts the sky, but let our whole mind, soul, spirit, heart arise as when doves fly as a cloud!

Let us be practical, too, and in very deed seek the things that are above—seek them because we feel we need them. Seek them because we greatly prize them. Seek them because we hope to gain them for a man will not heartily seek for that which he has no hope of obtaining. The things which are above, which we are even now to seek, are such as these—let us seek heavenly communion, for we are no more numbered with the congregation of the dead, but we have fellowship in Christ’s Resurrection and with all the risen ones. “Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” and, “our conversation is in Heaven.” Let us seek to walk with the living God and to know the fellowship of the Spirit. Let us seek heavenly Graces, for “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.” Let us seek more faith, more love, more patience, more zeal—let us labor after greater charity, greater brotherly kindness, greater humbleness of spirit.

Let us labor after likeness to Christ, that He may be the firstborn among many brethren. Seek to bear the image of the heavenly and to wear those jewels which adorn heavenly spirits. Seek also heavenly objectives. Aim at the Glory of God in everything. You have to labor and toil in this world for you are yet in the body—take care to use worldly things to God’s Glory. Exercise your privileges and fulfill your duties as men and as Englishmen, as before God, not minding the judgment of men. Wherein you mingle with the sons of men, take heed that you descend not to their level, nor act from their motives. You are not to seek your own selfish ends or the aggrandizement of a party, but to promote the general good and the interests of truth, righteousness, peace and purity. Sanctify everything by the love of God and your neighbor. Seek no party ends, but things which are pure and honest and of good report.

Descend not to the falsehood, the trickery, the policy which are from beneath, but honestly, sincerely, righteously, always seek to live as those who are alive from the dead. “Seek those things which are above,” that is, heavenly joys. Oh seek to know on earth the peace of Heaven, the rest of Heaven, the victory of Heaven, the service of Heaven, the communion of Heaven, the holiness of Heaven! You may have foretastes of all these—seek after them! Seek, in a word, to be preparing for the Heaven which Christ is preparing for you. You are soon to dwell above—robe yourselves for the great festival. Your treasure is above, let your hearts be with it. All that you are to possess in eternity is above, where Christ is! Rise, then, and enjoy it! Let hope anticipate the joys which are reserved and so let us begin our Heaven here below.

If you, then, are risen with Christ, live according to your risen nature, for your life is hid with Christ in God. What a magnet to draw us towards Heaven should this fact be—that Christ sits at God’s right hand! Where should the wife’s thoughts be when her husband is away but with the absent and beloved one? You know, Brothers and Sisters, it is not otherwise with us—the objects of our affection are always followed by our thoughts. Let Jesus, then, be as a great loadstone, drawing our meditations and affections towards Himself. He is sitting, for His work is done, as it is written, “This Man, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God.” Let us rise and rest with Him! He is sitting on a Throne. Observe His majesty! Delight in His power and trust in His dominion.

He is sitting at the right hand of God in the place of honor and favor. This is a proof that we are beloved and favored of God, for our Representative has the choicest place, at God’s right hand! Let your hearts ascend and enjoy that love and favor with Him. Take wing, my thoughts, and fly away to Jesus! My Soul, have you not often said, “Woe’s me that I dwell in Meshach and tabernacle in the tents of Kedar! Oh that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest”? Now, then, my Soul, here are wings for you! Jesus draws you upward! You have a right to be where Jesus is, for you are married to Him! Therefore let your thoughts abide with Him, rest in Him, delight in Him, rejoice in Him and yet again rejoice!

The sacred ladder is before us, Brothers and Sisters, let us climb it, until, by faith, we sit in the heavenlies with Him. May the Spirit of God bless these words to you.

**III.** Thirdly, inasmuch as we are risen with Christ, LET THE NEW LIFE DELIGHT ITSELF IN SUITABLE OBJECTS. This brings in the second verse—“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” “Set your affection.” These words do not quite express the meaning, though they are as near it as any one clause could well come. We might render it thus—“Have a relish for things above” or, “Study industriously things above” or, “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” That which is proper enough for a dead man is quite unsuitable for a risen one! Objects of desire which might suit us when we were sinners are not legitimate nor worthy objects for us when we are made saints. As we are quickened, we must exercise life and, as we have ascended, we must love higher things than those of earth.

What are these “things above” which we should set our affection upon? I ask you, now, to lift your eyes above yonder clouds and this lower firmament to the residence of God. What do you see there? First, there is God Himself. Make Him the subject of your thoughts, your desires, your emotions, your love. “Delight yourself, also, in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.” “My Soul, wait only upon God, for my expectation is from Him.” Call Him, “God my exceeding joy.” Let nothing come between you and your heavenly Father! What is all the world if you have not God and when you once have God, what matters it though all the world is gone? God is all things and when you can say, “God is mine,” you

are richer than Croesus. O to say, "Whom have I in Heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside You"!

O to love God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind and with all our strength—that is what the Law *required*—but it is what the *Gospel* enables us to *render*. What do I see next? I see Jesus, who is God, but yet is truly Man. Need I press upon you, Beloved, to set your love upon the Well-Beloved? Has He not won your heart and does He not hold it, now, as under a mighty spell? I know you love Him! Fix your mind on Him, then. Often meditate upon His Divine Person, His perfect work, His mediatorial Glory, His second coming, His glorious reign, His love for you, your own security in Him, your union with Him! Oh let these sweet thoughts possess your breasts, fill your mouths and influence your lives. Let the morning break with thoughts of Christ and let your last thought at night be sweetened with His Presence. Set your affection upon Him who has set His affection upon you!

But what do I see above next? I see the new Jerusalem which is the mother of us all! I see the Church of Christ triumphant in Heaven, with which the Church militant is one. We do not realize enough the fact that we are come unto the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn, whose names are written in Heaven. Love all the saints, but do not forget the saints above! Have fellowship with them, for we make but one communion. Remember those—

***"Who once were mourning here below,  
And wet their couch with tears,  
Who wrestled hard, as we do now,  
With sins and doubts and fears."***

Speak with the brave ones who have won their crowns, the heroes who have fought a good fight and now rest from their labors, waving the palm. Let your hearts be often among the perfected, with whom you are to spend eternity.

And what else is there above that our hearts should love but Heaven itself? It is the place of holiness! Let us so love it that we begin to be holy *here*. It is the place of rest—let us so delight in it that by faith we enter into that rest! O my Brothers and Sisters, you have vast estates which you have never seen—and I think if I had an estate on earth which was soon to be mine, I would wish to take a peep over the hedge now and then. If I could not take possession, I should like to see what I had in reversion. I would make an excuse to pass that way and say to any who were with me, "That estate is going to be mine before long."

In your present poverty console yourselves with the many mansions. In your sickness delight much in the land where the inhabitants shall no more say, "I am sick." In the midst of depression of spirit comfort your heart with the prospect of unmixed felicity—

***"No more fatigue, no more distress,  
Nor sin nor death shall reach the place!  
No groans to mingle with the songs  
Which warble from immortal tongues!"***

What? Are you fettered to earth? Can you not project yourself into the future? The stream of death is narrow—cannot your imagination and your

faith leap over the brook to stand on the other shore awhile and cry, "All is mine and mine forever! Where Jesus is there shall I be! Where Jesus sits there shall I rest—

***'Far from a world of grief and sin,  
With God eternally shut in'?***

"Set your affection on things above."

Oh to get away at this present time from these dull cares which, like a fog, envelope us! Even we that are Christ's servants and live in His court, at times, feel weary and droop as if His service were hard. He never means it to be a bondage and it is our fault if we make it so. Martha's service is due, but she is not called to be cumbered with much serving—that is her own arrangement! Let us serve abundantly and yet sit with Mary at the Master's feet. You who are in business and mix with the world by the necessity of your callings must find it difficult to keep quite clear of the dragging down influences of this poor world—it will hamper you if it can. You are like a bird which is always in danger when it alights on the earth. There are twigs and traps and nets and guns and a poor bird is never safe except upon the wing and up aloft. Yet birds must come down to feed and they do well to gather their meal in haste and take to their wings again.

When we come down among men we must speedily be up again. When you have to mix with the world and see its sin and evil, yet take heed that you do not light on the ground without your Father. And then, as soon as ever you have picked up your barley, rise again—away, away, for this is not your rest! You are like Noah's dove flying over the waste of waters—there is no rest for the sole of your feet but on the ark with Jesus! On this Resurrection Day fence out the world! Let us chase away the wild boar of the woods and let the vines bloom and the tender grapes give forth their good smell and let the Beloved come and walk in the garden of our souls while we delight ourselves in Him and in His heavenly gifts.

Let us not carry our burden of things below on this holy day, but let us keep it as a Sabbath unto the Lord! On the Sabbath we are no more to work with our minds than with our hands. Cares and anxieties of an earthly kind defile the day of sacred rest. The essence of Sabbath-breaking lies in worry and murmuring and unbelief with which too many are filled. Put these away, Beloved, for we are risen with Christ and it is not right that we should wander among the tombs! No, rather let us sing unto the Lord a new song and praise Him with our whole soul.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.

# CHRIST OUR LIFE—SOON TO APPEAR NO. 617

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 26, 1865,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall  
you, also, appear with Him in glory.”  
Colossians 3:4.*

MY discourse on Sunday mornings is very frequently the gathering up of the thoughts and experiences of the week—a handful of barley which I have gleaned among the sheaves. But I could not thrust upon you, this morning, the poverty-stricken productions of my own insufferable dullness of brain, weariness of heart and sickness of spirit during this week, for this were a sure method of making you partakers of my misery. I have wandered through a wilderness, but I will not scatter handfuls of the hot sand among you. I have traversed the valley of the shadow of death, but I will not repeat the howling of Apollyon.

This day of rest is appointed for a far better purpose. Scarcely knowing how to fulfill the appointed service of this morning, I sit down and remember the ancient minstrel, who, when the genius of song had for a time departed from him, was nevertheless called upon to discourse sweet music. What could he do but play his fingers among the strings of his harp and begin some old accustomed strain? His fingers and his lips moved at first mechanically. The first few stanzas dropped from him from mere force of habit and fell like stones without life or power. But by and by he struck a string which woke the echoes of his soul—a note fell on his heart like a blazing torch and the smoldering fire within his soul suddenly flamed up. The Heaven-born muse was with him and he sang as in his better times.

So may it be my happy lot this morning—to place my fingers on the strings which know so well the name of Jesus—and begin to discourse upon a theme which so constantly has made these walls ring! Although at first insipid periods may try your patient ears, yet shall they nevertheless lead to something that may kindle in you hope and joy and love, if not rapture and delight! O for the wings of eagles to bear our souls upward towards the Throne of our God! Already my heart warms with the expectation of a blessing!

Does the earth feel the rising of the sun before the first bright beams gild the east? Are there not sharp-witted birds which know within themselves that the sunbeams are on the road and therefore begin right joyously to wake up their fellows to tell them that the morning comes leaping over the hills? Certain hopeful, joyful thoughts have entered within our heart—prophetic of the Comforter’s Divine appearing—to make glad our souls. Does not the whole earth prophecy the coming of the happy days of

spring? There are certain little bulbs that swell, and flowers that peep from under the black mold and say, “We know what others do not know, that the summer’s coming, coming very soon.”

And surely there are rising hopes within us this morning which show their golden flowers above our heaviness and assure us with joyful accents that Christ is coming to cheer our hearts yet again! Believer, you shall once again behold His comfortable Presence! You shall no longer cry unto Him out of the depths, but your soul shall lean upon His arm and drink deep of His love! Beloved, I proceed in the hope that the gracious Lord will favor His most unworthy servant and in His mercy fulfill our best expectations.

Our text is a very simple one and bears upon its surface four thoughts. First, that Christ is our life. That, secondly, Christ is hidden and so is our life. That thirdly, Christ will one day appear. And, fourthly, that when He appears, we, also, shall appear with Him in glory.

I. The first most precious and experimental doctrine lies in these words, “CHRIST WHO IS OUR LIFE.” We hardly realize that we are reading in Colossians when we meet with this marvelously rich expression. It is so like John’s way of talking.

See his opening words in his Gospel, “In Him was life and the life was the light of men.” Remember how he reports the words at Lazarus’ tomb, “I am the resurrection and the life.” How familiarly he speaks of the Lord Jesus under the same Character in his first Epistle—“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled, of the Word of life. For the life was manifested and we have seen it and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us.”

How closely John cleaves to Jesus! He does not say, as the preacher of this morning will—Christ is the food of our life and the joy of our life and the object of our life and so on. No, but “Christ is our life.” I think that Peter or James would have said, “He is the strength or guide of our life,” but John must put his head right on the Savior’s bosom—he cannot talk at a distance, or whisper from a second seat—his head must go sweetly down upon the Savior’s heaving bosom.

He must feel himself in the closest, nearest possible contact with his Lord. And so he puts it, “The life was manifested,” getting to the very pith and marrow of it at once. Paul has somewhat of the same loving spirit, and if not entitled to be called, “that disciple whom Jesus loved,” the angel might well have addressed him as he did Daniel, “O man, greatly beloved.” Therefore, you see, he leaps at once into the depths of the Truth of God and delights to dive in it. Whereas others, like the Israelites, stand outside the bound which surrounds the mount, he, like Moses, enters into the place where God is and beholds the excellent glory.

We, I fear, must compass this holy Truth round about before we can fully enter into it. Blessed is it to wait at the doors of such a Truth, though far better to enter in. Let it be understood that it is not *natural* but *spiritual* life of which the text treats and then we shall not mislead the ignorant.

**1.** Christ is the source of our life. “For as the Father raises up the dead, and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom He will.” Our Lord’s own words are—“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears My Word and believes on Him that sent Me has everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that hear shall live.”

Four verities, as if to show the importance of the Truth here taught to us. We are dead in sin. That same voice which brought Lazarus out of the tomb brings us out of our grave of sin. We hear the Word of God and we live according to the promise—“Awake you that sleep and arise from the dead and Christ shall give you light” (Eph. 5:14). Jesus is our Alpha, as well as our Omega—He is the Author of our faith, as well as its Finisher. We should have been to this day dead in trespasses and sins if it had not been said, “And you has He quickened.” It is by His life that we live. He gives us the living water which is in us a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

**2.** Christ is the Substance of our spiritual life. What is life? The physician cannot discover it. The anatomist hunts in vain for it through flesh and nerve and brain. Be quick, Sir, with that scalpel of yours! “Life’s just departed,” men say. Cut quick to the heart and see if you cannot find, at least, some lingering footprint of the departed thing called life. Subtle anatomist, what have you found? Look at that brain—what can you see there but a certain quantity of matter strangely fashioned? Can *you* discover what is life?

It is true that somewhere in that brain and in that spinal cord it dwells and that heart with its perpetual pumping and heaving has something or other to do with it—but where is the *substance*, the real substance of the thing called life? Ariel’s wings cannot pursue it—it is too subtle. Thought knows it but cannot grasp it—knows it from its being like itself, but cannot give a picture of it—nor represent what it is. In the new nature of the Christian there is much mystery, but there is none as to what is its life! If you could cut into the center of the renewed heart you would find sure footprints of Divine life, for you would find love to Jesus.

No, you would find Christ Himself there! If you walk in search of the springs of the sea of the new nature, you will find the Lord Jesus at the fount of all. “All my springs are in You,” said David. Christ creates the life-throbs of the Believer’s soul! He sends the life-floods through the man according to His own will! If you could penetrate the brain of the Believer you would find Christ to be the central thought moving every other thought and causing every other thought to take root and grow out of itself! You would find Christ to be the true Substance of the inner life of the spiritual nature of every soul quickened by the breath of Heaven’s life.

**3.** Christ is the Sustenance of our life. What can the Christian feed upon but Jesus’ flesh and blood? As to his natural life he needs bread, but as to his spiritual life, of which, alone, we are now speaking, he has learned that, “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word which proceeds out of the mouth of God shall man live.” “This is the bread which comes down from Heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. I am the

living bread which came down from Heaven. If any man eats of this bread, he shall live forever—and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

We cannot live on the sand of the wilderness. We want the manna which drops from on high. Our skin bottles of creature confidence cannot yield us a drop of moisture—we drink of the Rock which follows us and that rock is Christ. O wayworn Pilgrims in this wilderness of sin! You never get a morsel, much less a meal to satisfy the craving hunger of your spirits except you find it in Christ Jesus! When you feed on Him your soul can sing, “He has satisfied my mouth with good things, so that my youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” But if you have Him not, your bursting wine vat and your well-filled barn can give you no sort of satisfaction—rather you will lament over them in the words of Wisdom—“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!”

O how true are Jesus’ own Words, “For My flesh is meat, indeed, and My blood is drink, indeed. He that eats My flesh and drinks My blood dwells in Me and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me and I live by the Father: so he that eats Me, even he shall live by Me.” Christ is the solace of our life! Noah’s ark had but one window and we must not expect more. Jesus is the only window which lets light into the Christian’s spirit when he is under sharp affliction. Kirke White’s picture of his midnight voyage, when one star alone of all the train could guide the mariner’s foundering boat to the port of peace, is a faint but truthful representation of the Christian’s life in its hour of peril.

Paul says that during his disastrous voyage, “neither sun nor stars for many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on them and all hope that they should be saved was taken away, but then, just then, the Angel of God stood at his side.” And even so will the Lord Jesus appear to His saints in their extremities and be their joy and safety. And, Brethren, if Christ appears, what matters it where we are?—

***“Midst darkest shades if He appears  
My dawning is begun.  
He is my soul’s bright morning star,  
And He my rising sun.”***

Do not talk of poverty! Our tents are the curtains of Solomon and not the smoke-dried skins of Kedar when Christ is present! Speak not of need! There are all manner of precious fruits laid up for my Beloved when He comes into my cot. Speak not of sickness! My soul is no longer sick except it is of love, but full of holy health when once the Sun of Righteousness has risen with healing beneath His wings! Christ is the very soul of my soul’s life. His loving kindness is better than life! There is nothing in life worth living for but Christ. “Whom have I in Heaven but You and there is none upon earth that I desire beside You!”

The rest is mere skim milk and curds fit to be given to the swine, but Christ is the cream. All else is but the husk and bran and coarse gritty meal. The Lord Jesus is the pure flour. All that remains is the chaff—fan it and the wind shall carry it away, or the fire shall burn it and little shall be the loss! Christ is the golden grain, the only thing worth having. Life’s true life, the true heart’s blood, the innermost fount of life is in Jesus. To the true Christian, Christ is the object of his life. As speeds the ship to-

wards the port, so hastens the Believer towards the haven of his Savior's bosom. As flies the arrow to its goal, so flies the Christian towards the perfecting of his fellowship with Christ Jesus. As the soldier fights for his captain and is crowned in his captain's victory, so the Believer contends for Christ and gets his triumph out of the triumphs of his Master.

"For him to live is Christ"—at least it is this he seeks after and counts that all life apart from this is merely death in another form. That wicked flesh of his. That cumbrous clay. Those many temptations. That Satanic trinity of the world, the flesh, and the devil—all these mar his outward actions. But if he could be what he would be, he would stand like the bullock at Christ's altar to be slaughtered, or march forward like a bullock in Christ's furrow to plough the blood-bought field. He desires that he may not have a hair of his head unconsecrated, nor heave one breath which is not for his Savior, nor speak one word which is not for the glory of his Lord!

His heart's ambition is to live so long as he can better glorify Christ on earth than in Heaven and to be taken up when it shall be better for him and more honorable for his Master that he should be with Jesus where He is. As the river seeks the sea, so, Jesus, I seek You! O let me find You and melt my life into Yours forever! It follows from all this that Christ is the Exemplar of our life. A Christian lays the life of Christ before him as the schoolboy puts his copy at the top of the page and he tries to draw each line, down-stroke and up-stroke, according to the handwriting of Christ Jesus.

He has the portrait of Christ before him as the artist has in his studio his Greek sculptures, busts and torsos. He knows that there is all the true anatomy of virtue in Christ. If he wants to study life, he studies from Christ, or, if he would closely learn the beauties of the antique, he studies from the Savior, for Christ is ancient and modern, antique and living, too! Therefore God's artists in their life-sculpture keep to the Savior and count that if they imitate every vein and fetch out every muscle of their great Copy, they shall then have produced the perfection of manhood. I would give nothing for your religion if you do not seek to be like Christ! Where there is the same life within, there will, there *must* be, to a great extent, the same developments without.

I have heard it said and I think I have sometimes noticed it, that husbands and wives who are truly knit together in near and dear conjugal affection, grow somewhat like each other in expression, if not in feature. This I well know, that if the heart is truly wedded to the Lord Jesus and lives in near fellowship with Him, it must grow like He is. Grace is the light, our loving heart is the sensitive plate, Jesus is the Person who fills the lens of our soul and soon a heavenly photograph of His Character is produced. There will be a similarity of spirit, temper, motive and action. It will not be manifest merely in great things but in little matters, too, for even our speech will betray us.

Thus you see I have only been wading along the banks, or at best conducting you up to the knees in the gently flowing stream of my text. Experience must lead you further, for there is a great deep here. Paul could perceive it, for he does not say as I have been saying, "Jesus is the Source

of our life, the Substance of our life, the Solace of our life, the Object of our life, the Exemplar of our life.” Paul says, “Christ is our life,” and so He is, indeed.

Just as we have a natural life of which we know so little, so we have a spiritual life which is more mysterious by far and of that we know beyond its effects and operations little more than this—that Christ is that life. That when we get Christ we have eternal life. That if we have life it is only because we have Christ in us, the hope of Glory. I must pause a minute here to say that what is true concerning our spiritual life, now, is equally true of our spiritual life in Heaven. Different as are the circumstances of the life in Heaven and the life on earth, yet as to real essence there is only one life in both places. Saints in Heaven live by precisely the same life which makes them live here.

Spiritual life in the kingdom of Grace and in the kingdom of Glory is the same—only here it is uneducated spiritual life—there it is educated and trained. Here it is undeveloped, it is the babe, the child—there it is developed, manifested, perfected. But in very deed the life is precisely the same. Saints need not to be born again after once being regenerate. You who have been born again have now within you the life which will last on throughout eternity! You have the very same vital spark of heavenly flame which will burn in Glory, world without end. It will be no digression if we here remark that as we have eternal life in having Christ, this marks our dignity.

“Christ our life!” Why, this cannot be said of princes or kings! What is their life? Talk of blue blood and pedigree, and so on—here is something more, here is God’s own Son—our life! You cannot say this of angels. Bright spirits, your songs are sweet and your lives are happy, but Christ is not your life! No, this cannot be asserted of archangels. Gabriel! You may bend yourself before God’s Throne and worship Him in praises too high for me, but you cannot boast what I can surely claim—that Christ is my life!

Even those mysterious presences—angels of whom we read in Ezekiel and Revelation called the four living creatures—though they seem to bear up the moving throne of Deity, creatures who appear to be an embodiment of Divine power and glory—yet even of these it is not written that Christ is their life! Herein men—redeemed, elect, favored men rise to a supernatural light, for they can say what no spirits but those redeemed by blood may venture to assert—“Christ is our life.” Does not this account for Christian holiness? How can a man live in sin if Christ is his life? Jesus dwells in him and he continues in sin? Impossible! Can he sin without his life? He must do so if he sins, because Christ cannot sin and Christ is his life.

Why, if I see the saint ever so self-denying, ever so zealous, ever so earnest, ever so like his Lord, it is no wonder now, when I understand that Christ is his life! See how secure the Christian is. No dagger can reach his life, for it is hidden beyond the skies. No temptation, no hellish blast, no exhalation from the Stygian pits of temptation can ever, with burning fever or chill consumption, waste the life of the Christian spiritually. No, it

is hid with Christ! It is Christ and unless Christ dies, the Christian's life dies not. Oh how safe, how honored, how happy is the Christian!

But we may not linger longer, time warns us to proceed. There is much more than ever we shall be able to bring out. Let down your buckets—here is a deep well! I hope you have something to draw with—and you that have life within have. You that have not may look down the well and see the darkness, or the reflection of the water—but you cannot reach the cooling flood. It is only you who can draw who can know the excellence of this living water. I pray the Lord help you to drink to the full and draw again! There is no fear of ever draining the inexhaustible fullness of this deep Truth of God.

**II.** Now, as our Lord Jesus has not yet appeared in His Glory, OUR LIFE IS THEREFORE HIDDEN. “The earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God,” but as yet they are unknown and unmanifested. The major part of the Believer's life is not seen at all and never can be by the unspiritual eye. Where is Christ? To the worldling at the present moment there is no such Person as Christ. He says, “I cannot see Him, touch Him, hear Him. He is beyond all cognizance of my senses. I do not believe in Him.” Just such is spiritual life to the unbeliever.

You must not expect, because you are a Christian, that unbelievers will begin to admire you and say, “What a mystery! This man has a new life in him! What an admirable thing, what a desirable possession! We wish we partook of the same.” Nothing of the kind. They do not know that you have such a life at all. They can see your outward actions, but your inward life is quite out of reach of their observation.

Christ is in Heaven today. He is full of joy. But the world does not know His joy. No worldly heart is boasting and rejoicing because Christ is glad in Heaven. Christ today is pleading before the Father's Throne, but the world does not see Christ's engagements. Christ's occupations are all hidden from carnal eyes. Christ at this present moment reigns and has power in Heaven and earth and Hell—but what does the worldly man see of it? Jesus has fellowship with all His saints everywhere—but what does the ungodly discern? I might stand and preach until midnight concerning my Lord, but all that men who are unconverted would gain would be to hear what I have to tell and then to say, “Perhaps it is true.” But they could not possibly discern it—the thing is beyond the cognizance of sense.

So is our spiritual life. Beloved, you may reign over sin, but the sinner does not comprehend your being a king. You may officiate as a priest before God, but the ungodly man does not perceive your priesthood and your worship. Do not expect him to do so! Your labor is lost if you try by any way to introduce him to these mysteries except by the same door through which you came yourself. I never try to teach a horse astronomy—and to teach an unconverted man spiritual experience would be a folly of the same sort. The man who knows nothing of our inner life takes up “Pilgrim's Progress,” and he says, “Yes, it is a very wonderful allegory.”

It is, Sir, but unrenewed minds know nothing about it. When we have sometimes read explanations of the Pilgrim's Progress, we could not but detect that the writer of the explanation had need to have had it explained

to himself. He could describe the shell, but the kernel of the nut was far beyond his reach! He had not learned to crack the shell and to feed upon the meat. Now it must be so, it must be so, if Christ is our life. Christ has gone away and cannot be seen. It must be so that the greater proportion of the spiritual life must be forever a secret to all but spiritual men.

But there is a part which men *do* see and that I may liken to Christ when He was on earth—Christ seen of men and angels. What did the world do with Christ as soon as they saw Him? Set Him in the chair of State and fall down and worship His absolute perfection? No, not they—“He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Outside of the camp was His place! Cross-bearing was for Him His occupation, not of one day, but of every day. Did the world yield Him solace and rest?

Foxes, you have your holes! Birds of the air, you have your nests! But the Son of Man had no where to lay His head! Earth could afford Him no bed, no house, no shelter! At last it cast Him out for death and crucified Him and then would have denied Him a tomb if one of His disciples had not begged His body! Such you must expect to be the lot of the part of your spiritual life which men can see. As soon as they see it to be spiritual life, they will treat it as they treated the Savior.

They will despise it. “Sure!” they say, “pretty fancies, fine airs, nice ideas.” You expect them to give you comfort, do you? Worldlings to give you comfort? Do you think that Christ will have anywhere to lay His head in this world today any more than He had 1800 years ago? You go about to find what God gives the foxes and the birds—but what He never meant to give to you in this world—a place to lay your head. Your place to lay your head is up yonder on your Savior’s bosom, but not here. You dream that men will admire you, that the more holy you are and the more Christ-like you are, the more peaceable people will be towards you. My dear Friends, you do not know what you are thinking!

“It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house, Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household?” I believe if we were more like Christ we should be much more loved by His friends and much more hated by His enemies. I do not believe the world would be half so lenient to the Church, today, if it were not that the Church has grown complacent to the world.

When any of us speak up boldly, mercenary motives are imputed to us! Our language is turned upside down and we are abhorred of men. We get smooth things, Brethren, because I am afraid we are too much like the false prophets who prophesied peace, peace, where there was no peace. Let us be true to our Master! Stand out and come out and be like He, and we must expect the same treatment which He had. And if we receive it we can only say, “This is what I expected.”—

**“ ‘Tis, no surprising thing  
That we should be unknown.  
The Jewish world knew not their king,  
God’s everlasting Son.”**

**III. CHRIST WILL APPEAR.** The text speaks of it as a fact to be taken for granted. “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear.” It is not a matter

of *question* in the Christian Church whether Christ will appear or not. Has not Christ appeared once? Yes, after a certain sort. I remember reading a quaint expression of some old Divine that the book of Revelation might quite as well be called an Obvelation, for it was rather a hiding than a revealing of things to come. So, when Jesus came it was hardly a revealing, it was a hiding of our Lord.

It is true that He was “manifest in the flesh,” but it is equally true that the flesh shrouded and concealed His Glory. The first manifestation was very partial—it was Christ seen through a glass—Christ in the mist of grief and the cloud of humiliation. Christ is yet to appear in the strong sense of the word “appearing.” He is to come out and shine forth. He is to leave the robes of scorn and shame behind and to come in the Glory of the Father and all His holy angels with Him. This is the constant teaching of the Word of God and the constant hope of the Church, that Christ will appear.

A thousand questions at once suggest themselves—*How* will Christ appear? *When* will Christ appear? *Where* will Christ appear? And so on. What God answers we may enquire, but some of our questions are mere impertinence. How will Christ appear? I believe Christ will appear in Person. Whenever I think of the Second Coming, I never can tolerate the idea of a *spiritual* coming. That always seems to me to be the most transparent folly that can possibly be put together, because Christ cannot come spiritually—He is always here! “Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

Christ’s spiritual coming never can be that which is spoken of in Scripture, as the day of our release. I sometimes say to Brethren, “Do you think if Christ were to come spiritually now, we should observe the ordinances better?” “Yes, certainly.” “Do you think, for instance, the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper would be better attended to?” “Yes, no doubt it would.” Yes, but then this proves that this is not the coming which the Bible speaks of, because it is *expressly* said of the Lord’s Supper that we are to do it in *remembrance* of Him, *till He comes*. A *spiritual* coming would make us do it more zealously.

There must be another form of coming which would justify our giving up the Supper altogether and that must be of a *personal* character—for then, and then only, might the Supper properly cease. We shall not need to have a supper to remind us of the Person, when the Person Himself shall be present in our midst reigning and triumphant in His Church! We believe in a *Personal reign* and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. But how will He come? He will doubtless come with great splendor. The angels of God shall be His attendants. We gather from Scripture that He will come to reign in the midst of His people. That the house of Israel will acknowledge Him as King—yes, that *all* nations shall bow down before Him and kings shall pay Him homage.

None shall be able to stand against Him. “Those that pierced Him shall wail because of Him.” He will come to discern between the righteous and the wicked, to separate the goats from the sheep. He will come graciously to adjudge His people their reward according to their works. He will give to those who have been faithful over a few things to be rulers over many

things. And those who have been faithful over many things shall be rulers over many cities. He will come to discern between the works of His people—such as are only wood, hay and stubble will be consumed. Such as are gold and silver and precious stones will stand the fire.

He will come to condemn the wicked to eternal punishment and to take His people up to their everlasting mansions in the skies. We look for such a coming and without entering into minute details, drawing charts and painting pictures, we are content to believe that He is coming in His Glory to show Himself to be what He always was—King of kings and Lord of lords, God over all, blessed forever! He is to be adored and worshipped and no more to be despised and rejected of men.

When will He come? That is a question which Unbelief asks with a start. Faith replies, “It is not for you to know the times and seasons. Of that day and of that hour no man knows.” Some simpleton says, “But we may know the week, month, or year.” Do not trifle with God’s Word and make a fool of yourself because you must know that the expression means that you do not know anything about the time at all and never will. Christ will come in a time when we look not for Him. Perhaps when the world and the Church are most asleep. When the wise and the foolish virgins have, alike, fallen into a deep slumber. When the stewards shall begin to beat their fellow servants and to drink and to be drunk. At midnight, or perhaps not till cock-crowing, He will come like a thief and the house shall be suddenly broken up.

But come He will, and that is enough for you and for me to know. And when He comes we shall appear, for as He shall appear, we shall also appear with Him in glory.

**IV.** The fourth thought is THAT WHEN CHRIST SHALL APPEAR, WE ALSO SHALL APPEAR. Do you ever feel like those lions in the Zoological Gardens, restlessly walking up and down before the bars of their cage and seeming to feel that they were never meant to be confined within those narrow limits? Sometimes they are for thrusting their heads through the bars and then for dashing back and tearing the back of their dungeon, or for rending up the pavement beneath them as if they yearned for liberty. Do you ever feel like that?

Does your soul ever want to get free from her cage? Here is an iron bar of sin, of doubt, and there is another iron bar of mistrust and infirmity. Oh, if you could tear them away, could get rid of them all you would do something for Christ—you would be like Christ! Oh, if you could but by some means or other burst the bands of this captivity! But you cannot and therefore you feel uneasy. You may have seen an eagle with a chain upon its foot, standing on a rock—poor unhappy thing! It flaps its wings—looks up to the sun—wants to fly right straight ahead at it and stare the sun out of countenance—looks to the blue sky and seems as if it could sniff the blue beyond the dusky clouds and wants to be away.

And so it tries its wings and dreams of mounting—but that chain, that cruel chain, remorselessly holds it down. Has not it often been so with you? You feel, “I am not meant to be what I am. I am sure I am not. I have a something in me which is adapted for something better and higher and I

want to mount and soar—but that chain—that dragging chain of the body of sin and death keeps me down.”

Now it is to such as you that this text comes and says to you, “Yes, your present state is not your soul’s true condition. You have a hidden life in you. That life of yours pants to get out of the bonds and fetters which control it and it shall be delivered soon, for Christ is coming! And when Christ shall appear *you* shall appear—the same appearance that belongs to Him belongs to you! He shall come and then your day of true happiness and joy and peace and everything that you are panting for and longing for shall certainly come.”

I wonder whether the little oak inside the acorn—for there is a whole oak there and there are all the roots and all the boughs and everything inside that acorn—I wonder whether that little oak inside the acorn ever has any premonition of the summer weather that will float over it a hundred years from now and of the mists that will hang in autumn on its sere leaves and of the hundreds of acorns which itself will cast, every autumn, upon the earth, when it shall become in the forest a great tree?

You and I are like that acorn! Inside of each of us are the germs of great things. There is the tree that we are to be—I mean there is the *spiritual* thing we are to be—both in body and soul! Even now within us and sometimes here below, in happy moments, we get some inklings of what we are to be. And then how we want to burst the shell, to get out of the acorn and to be the oak! Yes, but stop. Christ has not come, Christian, and you cannot get out of that till the time shall come for Jesus to appear. Then shall you appear with Him in glory.

You will very soon perceive in your rainwater, certain ugly little things which swim and twist about in it, always trying, if they can, to reach the surface and breathe through one end of their bodies. What makes these little things so lively, those innumerable little things like very small tadpoles? Why are they so lively? Possibly they have an idea of what they are going to be. The day will come when all of a sudden there will come out of the case of the creature that you have had swimming about in your water, a long-legged thing with two bright gauze-like wings which will mount into the air and on a summer’s evening will dance in the sunlight!

It is nothing more nor less than a gnat! You have, swimming there, a gnat in one of its earliest stages. You are just like that—you are an undeveloped being—you have not your wings yet and yet sometimes, in your activity for Christ, when the strong desires for something better are upon you, you leap in foretaste of the bliss to come! I do not know what I am to be, but I feel that there is a heart within me too big for these ribs to hold! I have an immortal spark which cannot have been intended to burn on this poor earth and then to go out. It must have been meant to burn on Heaven’s altar.

Wait a bit and when Christ comes you will know what you are. We are in the chrysalis state now and those who are the liveliest worms among us grow more and more uneasy in that chrysalis state. Some are so frozen up in it that they forget the hereafter and appear content to remain a chrysalis forever. But others of us feel we would sooner not be than be what we now are forever. We feel as if we must burst our bonds and when that

time of bursting shall come, when the chrysalis shall get its painted wings and mount to the land of flowers, then shall we be satisfied.

The text tells us—“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear”—when He comes out in all His Glory—“we also shall appear with Him in glory.” If you would like these gracious promises drawn out into detail with regard to the body you may listen to just such words as these. “It is sown a soul-ish body, it is raised a Spiritual body. The first man is of the earth earthy, the second man is the Lord from Heaven. As is the earthy such are they, also, that are earthy. As is the heavenly such are they, also, that are heavenly.”

Whatever Christ’s body is in Heaven, our body is to be like it. Whatever its glory and strength and power, our vile body is to be fashioned like unto His glorious body! As for our soul, whatever of absolute perfection—whatever of immortal joy Christ possesses, we are to possess that. And as for honor—whatever of esteem and love Christ may have from intelligent beings, we are to share in the same. And as for position before God—whatever Christ has—we are to stand where He stands.

Are His enemies put to confusion? So are ours. Do all worlds discern His Glory? They shall discern ours, too. Is all dishonor wiped away from Him? So shall it be from us. Do they forget forever the shame and spitting, the Cross and the nails? So shall they in our case. Is it forever, “Gory! And honor! And power! And dominion! And bliss without end!”? So shall it be in our case! Let us comfort one another, therefore, with these words and look up out of our wormwood and our chrysalis state to that happier and better day when we shall be like Christ, for we shall see Him as He is.

All this has nothing to do with a great many of you. You will die but you will never rise like Christ. You will die and you will die—why did I say, “and you will die?” Why, because you will have to feel the Second Death, and that second death, mark you, is as much more horrifying than the first as the trumpet of the angel is more terrible than the voice of the preacher can be this morning!

Oh, I would that Christ were your life, but you are dead and God will say of you one of these days as Abraham said of Sarah, “Bury the dead out of My sight,” and you must be put out of His sight as an obnoxious putrid thing. Oh that He would quicken you this day! “There is life,” says the hymn, “in a look at the Crucified One.” God help you to exercise one look at that Christ of whom I spoke and then you shall join with the rest of His people in saying, “Christ is our life.”

May God bless these feeble words of mine and own them because of their weakness—the more to illustrate His own Grace and power, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

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# CHRIST IS ALL

## NO. 1006

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, AUGUST 20, 1871,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

***“Christ is All in All.”  
Colossians 3:11.***

THE Apostle was arguing for holiness. He was earnestly contending against sin and for the maintenance of Christian graces, but he did not, as some do who would like to be thought preachers of the Gospel, resort to reasons inconsistent with the Gospel of Free Grace. He did not bring forward a single legal argument. He did not say, “This do, and you shall merit reward,” or, “This do not, and you shall cease to be the Beloved of the Lord.” He knew that he was writing to Believers who are not under the Law but under Grace, and he therefore used arguments fetched from Grace, and suitable to the character and condition of “the elect of God, holy and beloved.”

He fed the flame of their love with suitable fuel, and fanned their zeal with appropriate appliances. Observe in this chapter that he begins by reminding the saints of their having risen with Christ. If they, indeed, have risen with Him, he argues that they should leave the grave of iniquity and the grave clothes of their sins behind, and act as those who are endowed with that superior life which accounts sin to be death and corruption. He then goes on to declare that the Believer's life is in Christ, “for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” He infers holiness from this, also.

Shall those who have Christ for their life defile themselves with guilt? Is it not inevitable that, if the Holy One of Israel is in them as their life, their life should be fraught with everything that is virtuous and good? And then he brings forward the third argument that in the Christian Church Christ is the only distinguishing mark. In the new birth we are created in the image of Jesus, the second Adam, and in consequence all the distinctions that appertain to the old creation are rendered valueless.

“There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is All, and in all”—the argument from this fact being that since the only abiding distinction in the new creation is Christ, we should take care that His image is most clearly stamped upon us so that we may not only confess with our tongues that we are Christians, but our conversation and our entire character shall bespeak us to be such. As you may recognize the Jew by his physiognomy, the Greek by his gracefulness, and the barbarian by his uncouthness—so should the Christian be known by his Christ-likeness—by the light, love, and life of Christ streaming forth from him.

This is the seal of God which is set upon the forehead of the faithful, and this is the mark of election which is in due season engraved on the right hand of all the elect. Now, as the only distinction which marks the Christian from other men, and the only essential distinction in the new

world of Grace, is Christ, we are led to see beneath this fact a great underlying doctrine. In the realm of Grace, things are what they seem. Christ is apparently All, because he is actually All. The fact of a man's possessing Christ is all in all in the Church, because in very deed Christ is All in All.

All that is real in the Christian—all that is holy, heavenly, pure, abiding, and saving—is of the Lord Jesus. This great granite fact lies at the basis of the whole Christian system, Christ is really and truly All in All in His Church, and in each individual member of it. We shall, this morning, in trying to open up this precious subject, by the help of the Divine Spirit, first, notice *by whom this Truth of God is recognized*. Secondly we shall consider *what this Truth includes*. Thirdly, *what it involves*, and fourthly, *what it requires of us*—for if you observe, the text is followed by a, “Therefore.” There is a conclusion logically drawn from it.

I. First, then, BY WHOM IS THIS TRUTH RECOGNIZED? Paul does not say that Christ is All in All to all men, but he tells us that there is a new creation in which the man is “renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him,” where all national and ceremonial distinctions cease, and Christ is All and in all. It is not to every man that Christ is All and in all. Alas, there are many in this world to whom Christ is nothing. He scarcely enters into their thoughts.

Some of the baser sort only use His name to curse by. And as to many others, if they have a religion, it is a proud presumption which excludes a savior. The creed of the self-righteous has no room in it for the sinner's savior. The Justifier of the ungodly is nothing to them. The worldly, the frivolous, the unchaste, the licentious—these do not permit themselves to think of the Holy Redeemer. Perhaps some such are now present, and though they will hear about Him this morning, and of nothing else but Him, they will say, “what a weariness it is,” and be glad when the discourse is ended.

Jesus is a root out of a dry ground to multitudes—to them He has no form nor comeliness—and in Him they see no beauty that they should desire Him. Ah, what will they do when He is revealed in the glory of His power? They thought it nothing to them as they passed by His Cross, but they will not be able to despise Him as they stand convicted before His Throne. O you who make Jesus nothing, kiss the Son lest He be angry, and you perish from the Way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Without Christ, you are today without peace, and will be forever without hope!

Nothing remains for Christless souls at the last but a fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation. I could well pause here, and say let us pray for those who are unbelievers, and so are living without a Savior, that they may not remain any longer in this state of condemnation.

There are others in this world to whom Christ is *something*, but not much. They are anxious to save themselves, but since they must confess some imperfections they use the merits of Christ as a sort of makeweight for their slight deficiencies. Their robe is almost long enough, and by adding a little fringe of the Redeemer's Grace it becomes all they can wish. They say prayers. They go to Church to take the sacrament, to observe Good Friday—these are the main reliances of many a religionist—and then

if the coach sticks a little in a deeper rut than usual they call in the help of the Lord Jesus, and hope that He will put His shoulder to the wheel.

They commonly say, "Well, we must do our best, then Christ will be our Savior, and God is very merciful." They allow the blessed and all-sufficient work and sacrifice of the Savior to fill up their failures. And they imagine that they are extremely humble in allowing so much as that. Jesus is to them a stopgap, and nothing more. I know not whether the condition of such people is one whit more desirable than that of those to whom Jesus is nothing at all, for this is a vile contempt and despising of Christ, indeed—to think that He came to help you to save yourselves—to dream that He is a part Savior, and will divide the world and honor of salvation with the sinner.

Those who yoke the sinner and the Savior together as each doing a part rob Christ of all His Glory. And this is robbery, indeed, to pilfer from the bleeding Lamb of God the due reward of His agonies. "He trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with Him." In the work of salvation Jesus stands alone. Salvation is of the Lord. If Christ is not all to you—He is nothing to you. He will never go into partnership as a part Savior of men. If He is something He must be everything, and if He is not everything He is nothing to you.

There are many who, unconsciously to themselves, think Jesus Christ to be much, but yet they do not understand that He is All in All. I allude to many seeking souls, who say, "I would put my trust in Jesus this morning, but I do not feel as I ought." I see—you think that there is at least a little of your *feeling* to be *added* to the Savior's work before it can avail for you. "But I am not as penitent as I should be, and therefore I cannot rest in Jesus." I see, your penitence is to add the top stone to the Savior's yet unfinished work. Perhaps it is one of the hardest works in the world, so hard as to be impossible except to the Holy Spirit, Himself, to drive a man away from the idea that he is to *do* something, or to *be* something, in order to his own salvation.

Sinner, you are the emptiness, and Christ the Fullness! You are the filthiness, and He the Cleansing! You are nothing, and he is All in All. And the sooner you consent to this, the better. Have done with saying, "I would come to the Savior if this, and if that!" For this quibbling will delude, delay, and destroy you! Come as you are, just now, even at this moment—for Christ is not *almost* all—He is ALL IN ALL.

There are some, too, who think that Christ is all in some things, but they have not yet seen the full teaching of the text. For it says—"Christ is All, and in all." He is all, "say they, in Justification. He it is that pardons all our sins and covers us with His righteousness. But as to our *sanctification*, surely, we are to effect *that* ourselves. And as to our final perseverance, it must depend wholly upon our own watchfulness. Are we not in jeopardy still? Are there not some points which depend upon our own virtue and goodness?"

Beloved, God forbid I should say a word against the most earnest watchfulness, against the most diligent endeavors, but I beseech you do not place them in a wrong position, or speak as though the ultimate salvation of the Believer were based upon such shifting sand. We are *saved* in Christ. We are *complete* in Him. We are *sanctified* in Christ Jesus—

“And He is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” Christ is ALL, not in my Justification only, but in my sanctification, too. He is ALL, not only in the first steps of my faith, but in the last.

“He is Alpha and Omega. He is the Beginning and the Ending, says the Lord.” There is no point between the gates of Hell and the gates of Heaven where a Believer shall have to say, “Christ fails me here, and I must rely upon my own endeavors.” From the dunghill of our corruption up to the throne of our perfection there is no point left to chance, or set aside for us to supply. Our salvation has Christ to *begin* with, Christ to *go on* with, and Christ to *finish* with—and that in all points, at all times—for every man of woman born that ever shall be saved. There is no point in which the creature comes in to claim merit, or to bring strength, or to make up for that which was lacking. “Christ is all, and in all.”

The saints are “perfect in Christ Jesus.” He said, “it is finished,” and finished it is. He is not the Author of our faith only, but the Finisher of it, too. He is All in All, and man is nothing at all. This is a Truth of God which every Believer has recognized. There are a great many differences among Believers, but there can be no difference as to this essential point. Unhappily, the Christian Church has been divided into sections, but those divisions do not affect our agreement upon this one point, that Christ is All. It is no unkindness if I say that the man who does not accept this is no Christian, nor is it too wide a liberality to affirm that every man who is sound in heart upon this point is most certainly a Believer.

He who trusts alone in Christ, who submits to Him as his sole Teacher, King, and Savior is already a saved man. But he who gives not Christ the glory, though he should speak with the tongues of men and of angels—though he should have the gift of prophecy and all knowledge, and though he should have all faith—and could remove mountains. And though he should appear to have all virtue, yet he is no Christian if Christ is held in light esteem by him, or is anything less than All in All. For in the new creation this one thing stands as the mark of the newly created, that “Christ is All, and in all” to them, whatever He may be to others.

**II.** Having thus shown where this Truth is recognized, we pass on to notice WHAT THIS TRUTH INCLUDES. It was the advice of an aged tutor to a young student not to take too magnificent a text. I have sounded that warning in my own ears this morning. This little text is yet one of the greatest in the whole Bible and I feel lost in its boundless expanse. It is like one of those rare gems which are little to look upon, and yet he who carries them bears the price of empires in his hand. It would not be within the compass of arithmetic to set down the value of this sapphire test.

I might as soon hope to carry the world in my hands as to grasp all that is contained in these few words. I cannot navigate so huge a sea—my skiff is too small—I can only coast along the shore. Who can compress “all things” into a sermon? I will warrant you that my discourse this morning will be more remarkable for its omissions than for what it contains, and I shall hope, indeed, that every Christian here will be remarking upon what I do *not* say. For then I shall have done much good in exciting meditations and reflections. If I were to try to tell you all the meaning of this boundless text, I should require all time and eternity, and even then all tongues,

human and angelic, could not avail me to compass the whole. We will swim in this sea though we cannot fathom it, and feast at this table though we cannot reckon up its costliness.

1. According to the connection, Christ is All by way of *national distinction, subject for glorying, and ground for custom*. Observe, “there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free,” in the new creation, but “Christ is All, and in all.” In the new world there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—barbarian simplicity and Greek cultivation are as nothing. I suppose as long as we are in the flesh we shall set some store by our nationality, and like Paul, shall somewhat glory that we were free born—but surely the less of this the better.

Within the gates of the Christian Church we are cosmopolitan, or rather we are citizens of the New Jerusalem only. As a man, I rejoice that I am an Englishman, but not with the same holy joy which fills me when I remember that I am a Christian. When I meet another man who fears God, I do not want him to think me an Englishman, nor do I desire to regard him as an American, a Frenchman, or a Dutchman. We are no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow-citizens.

If any man is a Christian and a foreigner after the flesh, he is yet in spirit ten thousand times more allied to me than if he were an Englishman and an unbeliever. Greatly is it to be deplored whenever the convulsions of nations drag Christian men into opposition to one another on the ground of politics. One part of the body of Christ cannot be at war with another. It is a shameful thing whenever we suffer our earthly nationality to dominate over our heavenly citizenship.

Queen Victoria and President Grant are well enough in their places, but King Jesus is Lord of all. We are above all things subjects of His Imperial Highness the Prince of Peace. Nobody comes into the Church as a Jew or a Gentile, nor does he remain there as a Greek or a Scythian—whatever he may have been before. When he becomes a Christian, Christ is All. Earthly distinctions of rank, if they still exist, as they must while we are in this world, are brought to a minimum within the Church. They are almost obliterated, and what remains is sanctified to sacred ends. Christ is All in the Church by way of glorying. The Greek said, “The Hellenes are a race of heroes. Remember Sparta and Athens. Are we not foremost in civilization, and were we not chief in war? Who set bounds to the Persian tyrant, and bade the boastful monarch bite the dust? We hold our heads erect when we think of Marathon and Salamis.”

But when the Greek joined the Christian Church, he forgot his national boasting, and from then on gloried only in the Cross of Him whose single arm defeated the hosts of Satan, and led captivity captive. The Jew, when despised, returned scorn for scorn and said to Greek and Roman, “You may speak of Marathon, but I sing of the Red Sea. You may boast of broken Persia, but I tell of vanquished Egypt. Mine are the glories of the Lord of Hosts in the far off ages. We were a people when you were as yet unknown, and we are the chosen favorites of Jehovah.”

The moment the Jew sat down at the Gospel supper, he laid aside his hereditary pride and bigotry, and recognized the fact that the Greek was as much a Brother as the believing Hebrew at his side. So the Scythian,

when he came into the Christian Church, was no longer a Barbarian—he spoke the language of Canaan as correctly as his Grecian fellow Christian. The slave no sooner breathed the air of the Christian Church than his shackles fell from him. He might be a slave at home with his master, but he was no slave there!

While the freeman, though he had been born free, or with a great price had obtained his freedom, never in the Christian Church looked down upon the slave. Bond and free were one in Christ Jesus. Nobody had any personal ground for glory—neither race, nor pedigree, nor rank, nor position, were of any account—but Christ was All. “*Christianus sum*,” I am a Christian, was and is the universal glorying of all saints. This at the same time obliterated all their sinful national customs. The Greek said originally, “I may certainly indulge in this vice, because the Lacedaemonians have always observed this custom.”

And the Jew, perhaps, might have said, “I will eat nothing common or unclean, neither will I consort with Gentiles, because our fathers did not so.” The Barbarian said, “I cannot submit to the laws of civilized life. My father ranged the desert.” And the Scythian said, “I shall rob, and pillage, and kill, for I am a wild man. Why shouldn’t I? Did not my fathers do so from generation to generation?” When the various tribes came into the Christian Church, down went all separating and evil customs at once. What has Christ said? What has Christ done? What has He bid us? These are Law to us and nothing else. Thus the distinctions of race, the glorying of nationality, and the habits and customs of various nations—all sank into nothing—for Jesus Christ in the Christian Church became All in All. That, I doubt not, is the meaning of the text in its connection. Christ All and in all by way of distinction.

**2.** Secondly, Christ is All in All to us in another three-fold way—to God, before our enemies, within ourselves. Happy are you, O child of God, that in all your relationships to the Great Judge of all the earth, Christ is All in All to you! You need a Mediator to stand between you and God—Christ is He. You want a High Priest to present, with His own sacrifice, your prayers and praises—Christ is He. You want a Representative to stand at all times before God, an Intercessor to plead for you, one who shall be a daysman akin to you and akin to God—who can put His hand upon both—Christ is that to you.

Whenever God looks upon you *in* Christ, He sees in you all that ought to be there. Did He look upon you apart from Christ, He would see in you nothing He could commend—but you are “accepted in the Beloved.” Even the Omniscient eye of God detects nothing for which to condemn the soul which is covered with the righteousness of Christ. “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifies.” Without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, is the entire Church as seen in the Person of Christ Jesus, her Representative and Head. Christ is All for us before the Throne of God.

But, alas, we need someone to stand between us and our enemies. There is Satan—how shall I meet him? He will accuse me! Who shall plead my case? Christ is All in All for that. Whatever fiery darts Satan may shoot, Christ is the Shield that can quench those darts. If Satan tempts me, Christ shall plead for me before the temptation comes. Whenever I

have to contend with Satan, this is the Weapon with which I should arm myself. If I reason with him, if I bring forward any strength of my own to oppose him, he may well say to me—"Jesus I know. But who are *you*?" But if I bring *Jesus* into the conflict, and wield the merit of His blood, and the faithfulness of His promise, the Destroying Angel cannot overcome the sprinkled blood. We overcome through the blood of the Lamb. Christ Jesus is both Shield and Sword to us, Armor and Weapons of war.

So in our conflict with the world. Whatever trials you have, my dear Brothers and Sisters, Christ is All in All to meet them. Are you poor? He will make you rich in your poverty by His consoling Presence. Are you sick? He will make your bed in your sickness, and will so make your sick-bed better than the walks of health. Are you persecuted? Be it for His sake, and you may even leap for joy! Are you oppressed? Remember how He also was oppressed and afflicted? And you will have fellowship with Him in His sufferings. Amidst all the vicissitudes of this present life, Christ is All that the Believer wants to bear him up, and bear him through. No wave can sink the man who clings to this life buoy. He shall swim to Glory on it.

So, too, *within myself* Christ is All. If I look into the chambers of my inner nature, I see all manner of deficiencies and deformities, and I may well be filled with dismay. But when I see Christ there, my heart is comforted, for He will both destroy the works of the devil, and perfect that which He has begun in me. I am a sinner, but my heart rests on its Savior. I am burdened with this body of sin and death but behold, my Savior is formed in me the Hope of Glory. I am by nature an heir of wrath, even as others, but I am born into the second Adam's household, and therefore I am beloved of the Most High, and a joint-heir with Christ.

Is there Christ in your heart, Beloved? Then everything that is there that would make you sorrow may also suggest to you a topic for joy. The saint is grieved to think that he has sin to confess, but he is glad to think that he is enabled to confess sin. The saint is vexed that he should have so much infirmity, yet he glories in infirmity because the power of Christ does rest upon him. He is grieved day by day to observe his wanderings, but he is also rejoiced to see how the Good Shepherd follows him and restores his soul. All the evils and shortcomings in me which make me weep, also make me glad when Jesus is seen within. For all I see within myself lacking or sinful, I see a sufficient remedy in Christ who is All in All.

Thus I have given you a second way of meditating upon our text. Christ is not only All by way of distinction, but He is All to God, All between us and our enemies, and All within ourselves.

**3.** We may see another phase of the same meaning if we take a third division. Christ is All *for* us, He is all *to* us, He is all *in* us. Christ is all *for* us, the Surety, the Substitute in our place to bear our guilt—"For the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him." "He has made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." He is also the Worker standing in our place to fulfill all righteousness for us. He is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believes. All that God requires us to be, Christ is for us.

He has not presented to God a part of what was done, but has to the utmost farthing paid all that His people owed. Acting as our Forerunner in Heaven, He has taken possession of our inheritance, and as our Surety He secures to us our entrance there. *For us all* Jesus is All. And this day He is All to us. We trust wholly in Him. I often question myself upon many Christian graces, but there is one thing I never can doubt about, and that is I know I have no other hope but in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. If a soul can perish relying with all its power upon the finished work of the Savior, then I shall perish. But if saving faith is an entire reliance upon Him whom God has sent forth to be a Propitiation for sin, then I can never perish until God's Word is broken.

Can you not say that, dear Brethren, and will it not yield you comfort? Have you anything else you could trust? Have you *one good work* that you could rely upon? Is there a prayer you have ever offered, an emotion you have ever felt that you would dare to use as a buttress, or as in some degree a prop, to your hope of salvation? I know you reply, "I have nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing! Christ my Savior is all my salvation and all my desire, and I abhor the very idea of putting anything side by side with Him as a ground of my dependence before God." Oh, then, assuredly you have the mark of Christ's sheep, for to all of them Christ is All.

I said also that Christ is all *in us*, and so He is. Whatever there is in us that is not of Christ and the work of His Spirit will have to come out of us, and blessed be the day in which it is ejected. If I am growing and advancing, but it is a growth in the flesh and an advance in self, it is a spurious fungus growth. And, like Jonah's gourd, it will perish in a night. Wood, hay, stubble are quick building, but they are also quick burning—only that which belongs to "Christ formed in me the hope of glory," will prove to be gold, silver, precious stones. These may seem slow building, but they will abide the fire.

O Christian, pray much and labor much to have Christ in you, for He is all that is worth having in you. He is only the husk of a Christian who has not the precious kernel of Christ in his heart. Christ *on the Cross* saves us by becoming Christ *in the heart*. Jesus is, indeed All for us, All to us, All in us.

**4.** Shift the kaleidoscope, and take the same Truth of God in another way—*Christ is the channel of all, the pledge of all, the sum of all.* The *channel* of all. All love and mercy flow from God through Christ the Mediator. We get nothing apart from Him. "No man comes unto the Father but by Me." Other conduits are dry, but this channel is always full. "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them." Christ is the *pledge* of all. When God gave us Christ, He did as much as say, "I have given you all things." "He that spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

He is a Covenant to us, the title deeds of the promised rest. And, indeed, Christ is not only the Channel of all, and the Pledge of all, but the Apostle says He is All—so I take it He is *the Sum* of All. If you are going to travel on the Continent, you need not carry a bed with you, nor a house, nor a table, nor medicine, nor food. If you only have gold in your purse, you have these condensed. Gold is the representative of everything it can

buy—it is a kind of universal talisman, producing what its owner wishes for. I have never yet met with a person in any country who did not understand its meaning. “Money answers all things,” says the wise man, and this is true in a limited sense.

But he that has Christ, has, indeed, all things—he has the Essence, the Substance of all good. I have only to plead the name of Jesus before the Father’s Throne, and nothing desirable shall be denied me. If Christ is yours, all things are yours. God, who gave you Christ, has in that one Gift summed up the total of all you will want for time and for eternity, to obliterate the sin of the past, to fulfill the needs of the present, and to perfect you for all the work and bliss of the future.

**5.** Once more let us view our text in another light. *Christ is all we need, all we desire, and all of good that we can conceive.* He is all I need. Jesus is the living water to quench my thirst, the heavenly bread to satisfy my hunger, the snow-white robe to cover me, the sure refuge, the happy home of my soul, my meat and my medicine, my solace and my song, my light and my delight. He is all I *desire*, and when most covetous I only covet more of His Presence. When most ambitious, it is my ambition to be like He. When most insatiable in desire, I only long to be with Him where He is. He is all I can *conceive* of good. When my imagination stretches all her wings to take a flight into realms beyond where the eagle’s wing has been, yet even then she reaches not the height of the Glory which Christ Jesus has promised her.

She cannot conceive with her most expanded powers of anything more rich and precious than Christ, her Christ, herself Christ’s, and Christ all her own. Oh, if you want to know what Heaven is, know what Christ is, for the way to spell Heaven is with those five letters that make up the word JESUS. When you get Him He shall be All to you that your glorified body shall need, and all your glorified spirit can conceive. O precious Christ, You are All in All!

**III.** I have shown you then, in a very hurried way, what it is that this Truth includes. Now, with greater brevity still, WHAT DOES THIS TRUTH INVOLVE? It involves a great many things. First, it involves the Glory and excellence of Christ. Of whom else could it be said that He is All in All? There are many things in this world that are good, but there is nothing that is good for everything. Some plants may be a good medicine, but not a good cordial. The plant of renown is good every way.

Good clothing is not able to stay your hunger, but Christ, the Bread of Heaven, is also the Father’s best robe. You cannot expect any finite thing to be good for all things, but Christ is Infinite Goodness. This Tree of Life bears all manner of fruits, and the leaves are for the healing of the nations. He is Strength and Beauty, Safety and Sanctity, Peace and Plenty, Healing and Help, Comfort and Conquest, Life here, and Life forever. Glory be to the Lord Jesus Christ! What can He be less than God, if He is All? “All.” Is it not a synonym for God? We say there cannot be two Gods, because the one God is everywhere, and fills all space.

And who, then, can He be who is called “All in All,” but “very God of very God?” Worship Him, my Brethren, with all your hearts! Rejoice in Him! Bless Him from day to day. Let not the world think you poor who are

so rich in Him. Never suffer men to think you unhappy, who have perfect happiness in the ever blessed Immanuel!

See, in the next place, the safety and the blessedness of the Believer. Christ is All. But the Believer can add, "And Christ is mine." Then the Believer has all things—all that he *will* want, as well as all he *does* want. No emperor that has not Christ is half as rich as he that has Christ and is a beggar. He that has Christ, being a pauper, has all things. And he that has not Christ, possessing a thousand worlds, possesses nothing for real happiness and joy. Oh, the blessedness of the man who can say, "Christ is mine!"

On the other hand, see the wretchedness of the man who has not the Savior—for if Christ is All, you who believe not on Him are devoid of All—in being destitute of Christ. But you say, "I try my best, I attend public worship, I do a great deal that is good." You have nothing if you have not Christ. Do not flatter yourself that you are getting on and adding goods to goods in spiritual things. If you have not a Savior you are naked and poor and miserable. You are without All if you are without Christ, who is All. The Christian, then, is rich, but everyone who is destitute of Christ is poor to the extreme of poverty.

See, too, in the Truth of God before us a rebuke for the doubts of many seekers. They will say, "I have not this, I have not that." Suppose you have it not—Christ has it—if it is good for anything. "I would gladly cast myself upon the mercy of God in Christ this day, but,"—Ah, away with your "buts." What do you want? "I want true belief," says one. Come to Christ for it, then. "I want a broken heart," says another. If you cannot come with a broken heart to Christ, come *for* a broken heart—

***"True belief, and true repentance  
Every Grace that brings us near,  
Without money  
Come to Jesus Christ and buy."***

We have an old proverb about the folly of taking coals to Newcastle. But what folly must that be which makes a man think that he can take *something* to Christ, when Christ is All? Come, come, come, come to Him, poor Sinner, and let Him be All in All to you! Simply rely upon Him and be at peace.

How this, again, rebukes the coldness of saints. If Christ is All in All, then how is it we love Him so little? If He is so precious, how is it we prize Him so little? Oh, my dull, dead, cold Heart, what are you doing? Are you harder than adamant, and baser than brutish, that you are not much more moved with ardor and fervent affection towards such a Lord as this? Christ is All, my Brethren, yet look how little we offer to Him—of our substance how scant a portion—of our time how slender a part—of our talents how small a parcel!

God stir us to holy fervency, that if Christ is All for us, we may be all for Christ! May we lay ourselves out without reservation to the utmost stretch of our power, asking fresh strength from Him that we may do all that can be done by mortal men! And by His Grace may all be done with us by God, that He shall see it to be compatible with His Glory to do!

Again, by our text another lesson is furnished us. We learn here how to measure young converts. We ought not to expect them to be philosophers or divines—Christ is All. If they know Christ, and are resting in Him, we

are bound to say, "Come, and welcome." Be they poor, be they unlettered—if Jesus Christ is formed in their hearts, even though we can see Him there only as a dim outline—we are to open wide the gate, and receive *them* as Jesus received *us*. Here is a measure, too, by which to measure *ministers*. The fashion of the world is to admire him most who shall speak most rhetorically. Accursed be the day in which oratory was tolerated in the Christian pulpit! It has been the ruin and plague of the Church of God!

This labor after flowery speech. This seeking after polished periods and gaudy sentences—what is it but a pandering to the world, and a prostitution of the ministry of reconciliation? Had men learned what the Apostle meant when he said, "I Brethren, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom," they would have preached far otherwise than they have done. We should strive to speak the Gospel simply from our hearts, and then men's hearts will be impressed with the Truth of God.

Alas, this toying with fair words, and seeking after pleasing expressions—this dressing up of the Truth of God in the flaunting finery of falsehood—degrades rather than adorns the Gospel! And it has done incalculable damage to souls, and to the advance of Truth. Measure ministers by this—What is there of Christ about them? That ministry which has no savor of Christ in it, be it what it may, is a ministry which the Lord will not own, and that *you* ought not to own. It is not God-sent, and ought not to be received by you. Give me Christ Jesus, though the speech in which He is set forth is of the most uncouth kind, rather than the choicest inventions of the most ingenious thinkers, from which Jesus Christ is absent, or in which He is not exalted.

Brothers and Sisters, this will also help you to estimate your own devotions. You came to the communion table the other day, but you did not enter into fellowship with Christ. Ah, then there was a lost opportunity. You were in your closet this morning in prayer, but you did not plead the name of Jesus. Ah, then again there was a lost season of devotion. You are a Bible reader, and your eyes glance over the holy Words but you do not see Jesus in each page—then your reading has failed.

You have been giving to the poor of late, but have you done it for Christ's sake? You have sought to win souls—have you done it in Christ's strength? If Jesus is absent, you have offered a sacrifice from which the heart is gone. And among the Romans, no omen was supposed to be so damaging as the absence of the heart from the sacrifice. No Christ, then there can be no acceptance! But a fullness of Christ proves a fullness of acceptance with God.

**IV.** There are many other things which I could have said, but time has failed me, and therefore I must close by noticing WHAT THIS TRUTH REQUIRES OF US. Christ is All in All! Therefore "put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, heart of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering." The exhibition of the Christ-life in the saints is the legitimate inference from the fact that Christ is All to them. If Christ is All, and yet I, being a Christian, am not like Christ, my Christianity is a transparent sham—I am nothing but a base pretender, and my outward religiousness is a pompous pageantry for my soul to be carried to Hell in—nothing more.

It is a gilded coffin for a lifeless spirit. I shall perish with a double destruction if I have dared to profane the name of Christ by taking it upon me, when I have not the essence of the Christian religion within me. Orthodoxy, though it is of the most assured sort, is vanity of vanities, unless there is with it an orthodoxy of *life*. And experience—whatever man may say about it, is but a dream, a fiction of his own imagining—if it does not display itself in shaking off the sins of the flesh, and putting on the adornments of holiness.

O Brethren, these are searching things to every one of us. Who among us lives as he should at home? Could you bear that the angel who visits your house should publish, before the great cloud of witnesses, all that he has seen there? In your shops, in your businesses—you professors—are you always upright and straightforward as Christians should be? You merchants on the Exchange, are not some of you who profess to be Christians as greedy and as overreaching as others? I charge you, if you have any respect for Christ, lay down His name! If you will not endeavor to honor it you will be lost! You covetous money-grubbers, you earth-scrapers who live only for this world—you will be lost! You need not doubt of that, you will be lost sure enough.

But why need you make the assurance of your condemnation doubly sure by the base imposture of calling yourselves Christians? Meanwhile, let the Ethiopian call himself white if he will. Let the leopard declare that he has no spots. These things shall not matter. But the falsehood of a man who lives without Christ, while calling himself a Christian, brings such dishonor upon Him who was nailed to the tree, and whose religion is that of holiness, that I beseech you, by the living God, give up your profession if you do not endeavor to make it true.

If you are not living as you should, do not pretend to be what you are not! Seek you unto God, that the life of Christ being in you, you may manifest it in your conversation. Without Christ you are nothing, though you are baptized, though you are members of churches, though you are highly esteemed as deacons, elders, pastors. Oh, then, have Christ everywhere in all things, and constrain men to say of you, "To that man Christ is All in All—I have marked him. He has been with Jesus, he has learned of Him, for he acts as Jesus did.

God grant a blessing on these words, for Christ's sake. Amen.

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—  
Colossians 3, and 4:1-6.**

Sermon Readers are respectfully reminded that the 200 boys at the Stockwell Orphanage are supported by voluntary contributions and that these are always thankfully received by C. H. Spurgeon, Clapham.

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# ALL AND ALL IN ALL

## NO. 2501

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, JANUARY 24, 1897.**  
**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**  
**AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,**  
**ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, MAY 3, 1885.**

*“Christ is all, and in all.”*  
*Colossians 3:11.*

*“That God may be all in all.”*  
*1 Corinthians 15:28.*

IN our two texts there are three “alls” rising, one out of the other—the first leading to the second and the second conducting to the third. You will notice at once that the first two are in the present tense. “Christ is all” and, “Christ is in all.” The third one refers to the future—it is yet to be fulfilled. When the great consummation shall come, then shall God be, “all in all.” I shall not detain you with any sort of preface, for my sole endeavor at this time will be to impress these texts upon your memory—in the hope that the Spirit of God may make them a living and abiding influence upon your hearts and lives—that to you, Christ may be all, that Christ may be in you all, and that so, in all that you do, and say, and are, God may be all in all.

**I.** We begin at THE FOUNDATION WHERE ALL BLESSING BEGINS. “Christ is all.”

These are but few words, yet what Divine shall ever fully expound them? “Christ is all.” Here is sea-room enough for all godly mariners! Yet with the best wind that ever blew to speed the ship along, and with every sail set and filled with the breeze from Heaven, who shall ever be able to go from one shore of this great Truth of God to the other—“Christ is all”? I shall not venture upon such a voyage! I can but look across this sea and ask you to kindly notice the connection in which the text stands that we may learn exactly what the Apostle meant. Writing, “to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse,” Paul says, “There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all.”

That is to say, *in the matter of salvation*, “Christ is all.” That which had often seemed the most important thing in the world is here thrown into the background by the Apostolic declaration, “There is neither Greek nor Jew.” For a long time it seemed as if the eternal Light of God was only revealed to the eyes of the seed of the house of Israel. They sat in the brightness and all the rest of the world lay in dense darkness. But, behold, the Christ has come, “a Light to lighten the Gentiles,” and henceforth salvation is “not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man,” but, “Christ is all.”

It is a great privilege to be born of godly parents, to have come of a race that for generations has feared the Lord. But let no man trust merely in his natural descent. If you had sprung from a lineage of saints. If every one of your progenitors had feared God, yet still, nothing of all this could matter for your own salvation. "Christ is all." Now may the Gentile dog eat of the crumbs that fall from the Master's table where He feeds His Israel! No, the dog is transformed into a child—he who was far off is made near! In the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, both Jew and Gentile are made one and all the sheep of the Good Shepherd are sheltered in the same fold! We who believe in Jesus are children of him who was called the father of the faithful and though, according to the flesh, "Abraham was ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledges us not," yet by faith we become the spiritual seed of the great father of all Believers! As he believed in a son being born according to God's promise, and in a seed to which the Covenant promises were given, even so do we. And entering into union with Christ Jesus, that blessed Son of the promise, we become joint-heirs with Him, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." You see, then, dear Friends, that it is not *race*, or *pedigree*, or *descent* that saves the soul, but that "Christ is all."

Then Paul goes on to say, "There is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision," from which I gather that *there is nothing in outward ceremonies which can save*. Everything is still of Christ—"Christ is all." That circumcision in the flesh was ordained of God and it was the mark of the seed that He had chosen. It was not, therefore, lightly to be spoken of. But now, "we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." At this day even the ancient Divine ordinance is put in the background, for, "Christ is all." So is it with every other ordinance, whether ordained of God or of man. It must never be placed in the front, as if it were the means of salvation! I say to you who may have been sprinkled, or to you who may have been immersed—to you who may bow at your altars, or to you who may come to the Communion Table—I do not place all these rites on a level, certainly, for some are of God and some are not, but I do place them all on a par in this respect—that they enter not into the essence of our salvation! And I say to all of you, "These things cannot save you, for, 'Christ is all.'" Be you who you may, and do you what you may, you shall not be saved because of your natural birth, nor because of any supposed holy acts that you may perform! Neither shall you be saved by any transactions that may be the work of a human priest! You must have Christ as your Savior and you must rest in Him, alone, or you cannot be saved! He is the one foundation and, "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," for, "Christ is all." The Lord Jesus Christ sums up everything that ordinances can possibly mean and all that pedigree and descent can possibly bring—and He is infinitely more than all of them!

Read on in this Epistle and you will find that as race and ceremonialism are both put into the background, so also is culture. "There is neither Barbarian nor Scythian, but Christ is all." Of course it was for many reasons much better to be a Roman citizen than to be a rude barbarian.

And it is much better, now, to be a civilized man than an untutored Indian of the Wild West. But so far as vital godliness and the soul's salvation are concerned, there is no difference! The simplest and most illiterate, upon believing in Jesus Christ, shall find that "Christ is all." And the most learned and most fully instructed, if they bring any of their learning and their culture and put it side by side with Christ as a ground of trust, shall sorrowfully discover that none of those things can be placed on an equality with Him, but that, "Christ is all."

I rejoice, Brothers and Sisters, in this Truth of God! If the Gospel of Christ were something eclectic which could only be received by a superior few, what a poor prospect there would be for the great mass of people among whom we dwell! If the Gospel of Christ were a matter so deep and profound that it could not be understood except by years of educated thought, where would they be who have never had any culture and, perhaps, can scarcely read the letters of a boy's schoolbook, if, this day, they were lying upon the bed of sickness, expecting soon to stand before God? Blessed be God, we have a remedy for sin's sickness which the Great Physician understands! And if *He* is well acquainted with it, it matters not whether the patient fully comprehends it or not! Blessed be God, the effect of Christ's medicine does not depend upon the degree in which we can realize how it acts, but if we receive it by *faith*, if it penetrates into the *heart*, if it takes possession of the *affections*, it will work in us that wondrous change by which we shall be delivered from the love of sin and saved both from its condemnation and its power! Thank God for a simple Gospel! Blessed be His name that "Christ is all"! If, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, you have learned that Christ died for the ungodly. If you know that He is the Son of God and the one great Propitiation for sin, and if you accept Him as such, you have that which has delivered you from going down into the Pit, for God has found a ransom even for you!

Once more. By this expression, Paul means us to understand that *all conditions and position of men in this life are put on a level before Christ*, for He adds, "There is neither bond nor free; but Christ is all." When the Gospel of Jesus Christ came into the world, it contemplated the saving of bondmen as well as of freemen. Of course there was a great distinction between being bond or free, and the Apostle wrote, "If you may be made free, use it rather," but as to the real power of God's Grace, there was no distinction between the noblest citizen of Rome and the poor slave who wore an iron collar and was fastened, like a dog, at his master's gate! Christ's Grace could enter into the heart of the servile, as well as into the heart of the noble—and could work alike in each.

Now, hear you, Sirs! It is well that you should be industrious, that you should be thrifty and that you should make your way in the world. But this is not the way to eternal life! What if you should work till your fingertips were raw? What if you labor during the livelong day and night and deprive yourselves of needed sustenance, that you may hoard up gold and silver? With all this, you cannot buy salvation, or be an inch nearer to it. "Christ is all." And if you lie penniless upon a workhouse bed, there is that in Christ which can save you! If you beg your food from

door to door, yet shall you not stand at a disadvantage with this great and blessed Gospel, for it comes freely to you with this message and, as it asks of you no *learning*, so it asks of you no wealth, no rank and no position—for, from first to last—“Christ is all.”

Thus have I taken the words in their connection and they are full of important teaching. Remember that they mean just this—that *to the man who is saved, Christ is all his trust*. Our healing lies in His stripes. Our life lies in His death. Our pardon lies in His having suffered the punishment due to us. Our eternal life is in the fact that He once died for us and that He now lives to make intercession for us. “Christ is all.” You must not add anything to Christ as your ground of confidence, but just lean the weight of your sin, your sorrow, your needs and your desires wholly and entirely upon Him who lives to stand for you before God. Christ, then, is all our trust!

And, as for our belief, *Christ is all our creed*. What He has taught us personally and by His Holy Spirit through the Epistles—what He gives us in His Word—this is what we believe, and nothing else! The Bible and the Bible, alone, is the religion of a Christian! “Christ is all”—and all the Truth that there is in this Book is in Him. This revelation of the Word of God is the same revelation as that which is made in the Christ, Himself, who is the true Logos, the Word of God. “Christ is all” as our creed.

And, further, *Christ is all as our example*. You may safely do what He did and you may not do what *He* would not have done. You may judge of the right or wrong of everything by this question—What would Jesus Christ do in these circumstances? You may thus know what you should do. And what you cannot suppose He would have thought of doing, you must not venture to do, for, “Christ is all.” He draws a ring around us and we must not go outside that circumference. He is the atmosphere in which we are to live. He is about us. He is above us. He is beneath us. He is within us. He is everywhere and, to us, if we are Christians, “Christ is all.”

There is the foundation of all our faith and hope—and I want you who preach and you who teach the children to always keep to this one Truth of God—that “Christ is all.” Many other things have a measure of instruction in them, but Christ is all that is necessary. If you want to save men, if you truly wish to elevate men, if you desire still further to exalt them to the very highest degree of which human nature is capable, remember that “Christ is all” as your lever, and in Him is your fulcrum, and in Him is the power to use the lever! “Christ is all.” You need not go abroad for anything, for “you are complete in Him.” The ship is furnished from stem to stern in Him. The house, from its foundation to its rooftop, is all complete in Him. “Christ is all.” Oh, to know Him! Oh, to have Him as our own! Oh, to live wholly upon Him! Oh, to grow like He and always to keep before our mind’s eyes this great Truth that, “Christ is all”!

**II.** Now we are going a step farther to consider the second part of our first text—“Christ is all, *and in all*.” This is a matter of experience and it reveals to us HOW THE WORK OF GRACE PROCEEDS. Christ is in all His people, this gracious possession is the work of the Spirit of God, by whose means Christ is formed in us, the hope of Glory.

To my mind it is a very beautiful thing that the Lord Jesus Christ, when He comes into the soul, does *not annihilate any part of the personality*, but shines in each separate being, for He is not only all, but He is *in* all His people! There is, for instance, the Greek—the “Gentile”—shall be the word. Very well, the Grace of God does not turn the Gentile into a Jew. He remains a Gentile, but Christ is in him and, therefore, he is made into a new creature. There have been some beautiful specimens of holiness and Grace found in many of the Gentile nations dwelling in the islands of the sea, or among all sorts and conditions of men scattered up and down the world—and Christ has shone gloriously in them. Then comes the Jew. When he is saved, Christ is in him. The Apostles of Jesus were mostly, at least, of that race, and many later Believers have been of the seed of Abraham. But Christ has been in them and He has gloriously displayed Himself in them. The Lord Jesus Christ, dwelling in the Jew, leaves him still a member of the house of Abraham, but, through the Presence of the Lord Jesus within him, how wondrously his whole character is exalted!

Then you have the man who is circumcised and the man who is uncircumcised—and in each of these, if he is saved, Christ dwells. And each one, therefore, lives according to his light, his knowledge and his standing. Christ enters into the barbarian and though in certain natural respects he remains, to a large extent, what he was before, yet, as soon as Christ enters into him, all of his barbarism that is *sinful* disappears! He still retains the free spirit of the child of the wilderness or the son of the woods, but how grandly has Christ displayed Himself in such men as he is! The personal piety of a Red Indian, or of an African freshly taken from the wilds of the Dark Continent has been as brilliant and as beautiful—certainly as fresh, bright, clear and striking as the piety of the most educated of the Caucasian race! Whether he is barbarian or Scythian, if Christ is formed in him, the hope of Glory, it is only another form of the same exquisite beauty!

It is always a pity when our missionaries try to make other nations into English people. If we have pride enough to think so, we may regard ourselves as the model for others to imitate, but it would be a great pity if we should be such a model that every native of India must copy the Englishman! I like the worship of our Black friends in Jamaica and in the Southern States of America, with its delightful simplicity, its vivacity—yes, and I venture to say, even its grotesqueness. And I would not have a black man begin slavishly to imitate the white man. Let him continue to be a black man and let Christ shine in the black man’s face right gloriously. Yes, let a man be a brown man, or a yellow man, or a red man, or whatever color God made him! The more he keeps to his own nationality and reflects the Glory of Christ from that angle, the more will Christ’s Gospel triumph and the more will Christ Himself be honored!

The Apostle adds, as we have already noticed, “Neither bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all.” May the day speedily come when there shall not be a bondsman under Heaven! But in those days of the worst of all slavery, the Christian slaves were among the most brilliant gems in the Redeemer’s diadem. Oh, what brave deeds they did for the Crucified One!

I should think that it was harder to be a Christian *freeman*, in those days, than to be a Christian slave. But whether bond or free, whether the man took his place in the Forum among the senators, or his lot was cast yonder among the slaves—either case, if Christ was in him—the Light of God shone gloriously from Him and God was magnified thereby! Christ is all, and Christ is in all His people, each one remaining the same in His individuality, but Christ shining in each one!

I must again refer you to the connection of our text and ask you to read in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> verses, where Paul says, “You have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.” You recollect that Adam was made in the image of God and that he lost that image by his sin. But when Christ enters into a man and he is created anew in Christ Jesus, then *he receives afresh the image of God*. The image of God is Christ Jesus, for He is the express image of His Father’s Glory. He that has seen Christ has seen the Father and, inasmuch as Christ enters into all Believers and makes them like Himself, the image of God is thereby restored in all Believers.

So, note again that because Christ dwells in him, *every Believer becomes a copy of Christ*. Read the 13<sup>th</sup> verse—“Forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if anyone has a quarrel against another, even as Christ forgave you, so also do you.” Is not that beautiful—Christ in every Believer—that Christ the image of God, and that Christian the image of Christ so that, just as Jesus freely forgave, so does every Christian freely forgive! Do you find it difficult to forgive one who has wronged you? Then you will find it difficult to get to Heaven! If you cannot enter Heaven unless you are like Christ, how can you be like Christ unless you can freely forgive? This seems a grand opportunity for you to stand on the same platform with Christ and, in some respects, to do the works of Christ when, having been slighted, ungratefully treated, misrepresented, slandered and injured, you can say, “I as freely forgive you as the Lord Jesus Christ forgave *me*.” This is the token and evidence that Christ is in you—when you become imitators of Christ as dear children!

It is a remarkable fact, as I have often said to you, that, although our Lord Jesus Christ is more perfect than any other example—indeed, the *only perfect example*—yet it is more easy to imitate Christ than it is to imitate some of the best of His people! That is curious, but it is a fact. I know a Brother whom I greatly admire, an eminent Christian—I would not mention my own name in the same day with his, he lives so near to God and is such a truly gracious man—yet I could not imitate him. It is quite impossible that my nature should ever become exactly like his. Another Brother, whom I used to know—he is now with God—was equally good, but he was as different from the other good man as anyone could be. They were as opposite as the poles in their temperament and behavior. The first Brother I mentioned is solid, calm, quiet, unexcitable. And I should think that he very seldom laughs and that even then, he does not know that he has done it!

My other friend used to, sometimes, literally roar with laughter! He was full of earnest love for the souls of men and God blessed him greatly

in his service. He had a merry vein and a humorous spirit—and I was more at home with him than I was with the first one. Yet the Lord Jesus Christ is far more easy to imitate than either of my two friends, for sometimes I am so depressed that I cannot show all the cheerfulness of the one. And at other times, having such a humorous vein in my nature, I would be hypocritical and unnatural if I suppressed it and always acted as if I were as solemn as death itself! But in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ, albeit that there is never any mention of laughter, yet there were ripples of holy pleasantry in His life and in His Character though He was “a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief.” He is more of a Man than the best of other men, and more imitable, though altogether inimitable, than those who can be imitated and, perhaps, can even be excelled.

What is more, Christ in each one of these Believers *creates them all into one body*. Read the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> verses—“And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you are called in one body and be you thankful.” The same life is in all Believers—in you and in me—well, then, we are one! The same life is in ten thousand Christians—then they, also, are all one! If the same life quickens them and they live under the same influences, and they act according to the same rule, then are they one and Christ becomes the glorious Head of a body which He renders glorious by quickening it with His own indwelling!

I like to think of this blessed Truth of God—Christ in all Believers creating them into one body—this is the beginning of true unity. Here, for instance, is a man who says that he is baptized as I am, but if he has not the life of God within him, I cannot get on with him, whatever he may call himself—I am not in union with him. There, perhaps, comes a Methodist, and we begin to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ and I find that he loves Him with all his heart, and I know that I do, though I wish that I loved Him more. And directly we two get on together—we feel that we are one in Christ because of the one Life which quickens us. Do you not feel it to be so? Have you not been reading a book, sometimes, and said to yourself, “Oh, what a blessed book this is! How full of the Divine life”? Yes, and after you have read it, you have been surprised to find that the person who wrote it was a Romanist—for there are many books of that kind—or the writer was a member of some church that, in many respects, lies in very dangerous error! You say to yourself, “I do not care where this man lived, or what he did, I am one with him as far as he is one with Christ.”

The one common feeling of union to Christ and Christ being in us makes us feel that we are one with each other. Wherever there is, as Augustine used to say, “*aliquid Christi*”—“anything of Christ”—there our love must go forth, we cannot help it! Christ in you all makes you into one body and unites you together in a mysterious and unique manner. There is not a parallel to it anywhere else—it gives such a living, loving, abiding, undeniable unity that even if you wish to forget it, you cannot! If the man is in Christ, you must love him, do what you may, for you are one body with him.

Such is this manifestation of Christ in His people, that it leads, further, to *the offering of one oblation*. Read the 16<sup>th</sup> verse—“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with Grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Yes, all God’s people love God’s Word! They all find a great sweetness in “Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.” They all delight to sing praises unto the Most High. Montgomery truly wrote—

**“The saints in prayer appear as one,”**

but it is equally true that the saints in *praise* appear as one. And the saints in love to the Word of God appear as one because Christ, being in them, and Christ being one, they are knit to one another. Oh, how blessed it is for us to have Christ in us!

And lastly upon this point, all that I have said leads up to each *one acting to the glory of one name*, for if Christ is in you, the 17<sup>th</sup> verse is true of you—“Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.” What a life to lead—Christ taking such entire possession of a man that everything he does, he does as if Christ, Himself, were doing it, because he does it in Christ’s name and by Christ’s power! As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God,” so that it shall no longer be yourselves that do it, but Christ that dwells in you. This shall sanctify the most common actions of everyday life and make the whole of the Christian’s career to be sublime, so that while he treads the earth beneath his feet, literally, he is also doing it *spiritually*— and all the while his conversation is in Heaven.

I must just linger one minute here. You all agreed with me when I spoke about Christ being all. You understood clearly that He is the only ground of our hope. Can you also go with me in this part of my subject—Christ is in all His people? Is Christ formed in *you*, the hope of Glory? Do you know anything about an *indwelling* Christ? Verily I say unto you, the Christ on the Cross will never save you unless there is also Christ *within you*! It is the Christ on the Cross in whom we trust, but the outcome of that trust is that He is born in our hearts! His power comes from His love, His Grace, His truth, Himself—and we live because He lives in us. Do you understand this? If you do not, I pray God that you may, for, unless Christ is in you, you know what the Apostle says—“Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith; prove yourselves. Know you not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are reprobate?” If you are disapproved of God, Christ is *not* in you. If Christ is not in you, you are disapproved of God. But if He lives in you, you are “accepted in the Beloved” and that life of yours shall never die out, but you shall, by-and-by, behold your Savior’s face in the kingdom of His Glory.

Brothers and Sisters, we are not what we ought to be! We are not what we want to be, we are not what we shall be! But we are something very different from what we used to be. The change in us is as great as in that blind man who said, “One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.” The change is not merely external, but it is vital! The Lord has taken away the heart of stone out of our flesh and given us back the heart of flesh which belonged to man in his unfallen nature—and then

upon this heart of flesh He has also worked wondrously, making it conscious to spiritual influences which once did not affect it, and writing upon the fleshy tablets of that renewed heart, His perfect Law. Glory be to the name of Jehovah, a notable miracle has been performed upon us! A miracle so marvelous that it is comparable to the resurrection from the dead and, in some respects, it even surpasses the wonders of creation, itself! We shall tell this story in the streets of the New Jerusalem and we shall draw around us attentive crowds as we narrate our experience and tell the tale of the sin which ruined us, and of the mercy which reclaimed us!

Thus have we gone up the second rung of this golden ladder. First, "Christ is all." Next, "Christ is in all."

**III.** Now kindly turn back in your Bibles to our other text—the 1<sup>st</sup> Epistle to the Corinthians, 15<sup>th</sup> chapter, and 28<sup>th</sup> verse—"That God may be all in all." First, Christ is all. Next, Christ is in all His people, but THE CONSUMMATION, the top-stone of all is "that God may be all in all."

The passage in which this text stands seems to be a very difficult one to understand. The common meaning that is given to it by nearly every interpreter I have ever met with, I do not believe or accept. It seems to a great many to be taught here that there is to come a time, called, "the end," when the Lord Jesus Christ, having conquered all His enemies, is to resign His position, abdicate His Throne and cease to be King, "that God may be all in all." Let us read the connection of the passage—"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then comes the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He has put all things under His feet. But when He says all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son, also, Himself, be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

The general meaning given to these words is that there is to be a time when the mediatorial Kingdom of Christ will come to an end of itself and He will deliver up the Kingdom to God, ceasing, Himself, to be King. I can only say that if this is the teaching of this text, it is not taught anywhere else in the whole Bible—nobody can find any parallel passage to it, or anything like it. Neither do I believe that it is taught in the Bible at all—neither here nor anywhere else! And I can say that for this reason I cannot see that there is to be any end whatever to the mediatorial Kingdom of Christ.

You perceive that *it is the Son who is to be subject to the Father* but it is of the Son that we read in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Unto the Son He says, Your Throne, O God, is forever and ever," where the Father, manifestly speaking to the Son, in His complex Person declares that His Throne is to be forever and ever. Brethren, in the day when the Christ shall have overcome all His enemies and Death, itself,

shall be destroyed, there will be no abolition of His mediatorial kingdom! There still stands in the Scriptures this promise of our Lord Jesus Christ—"To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me on My Throne, even as I, also, overcame, and am set down with My Father on His Throne." Does that mean that we are to have a temporary reign with a temporary Christ—a brief rule with a short-lived Monarch? I do not believe it!

Moreover, the priesthood enters into the mediatorial office most eminently, yet "the Lord swore and will not repent, You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." If the priesthood is to continue forever—and Melchisedec was king as well as priest—then the kingdom of Christ is to continue, world without end. Moreover, in the Book of the Revelation—not to mention the almost innumerable passages to the same effect—we find that when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, it is added, "*and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.*" When the kingdoms are brought back, they will be the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ. Then we read of "the throne of God and of the Lamb." And when all kingdoms are subdued and the Lord God Omnipotent reigns, then we are told to expect the announcement, "The marriage of the Lamb is come and His wife has made herself ready." What does all this mean but a continuance of that dispensation in which the Christ, the Son of Man, as the Son of God, shall be still at the head of His people, still their Priest and still their King and still reigning? And that is exactly what this passage says, if you will kindly look at it again and dismiss all previous prejudices from your minds!

The fact is our Lord Jesus Christ has performed and is still performing, *a work which will end in putting everything into its proper order.* Now, the proper order, according to the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter, and the third verse, is this—"I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." This is how it stands—the woman with the man for her head, the man with Christ for his Head—and Christ with God for His Head. Such is the Scriptural order—an order which has been disturbed all through except with regard to the Father and the Son, for God has always been the Head of Christ! Now, Christ has come into the world to restore that right order from the bottom, right up to the top! And it is to be so restored, first, by Christ becoming the Head of men—when He shall have put down all His enemies under His feet and when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, "for He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Christ is come into the world that all the evil that is in the world should be subdued. And He will drive it out of the world. There shall remain no power that shall dare revolt against the majesty of Heaven! Over the whole surface of this globe, beneath the new heavens and on the new earth, there shall yet be the Kingdom established of which Jesus Christ shall be the supreme Head and over which He shall reign forever, King of Kings and Lord of Lords! The Lord hasten it in His own time!

Well, and what then?" asks one. "Does it not say that He is to deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, and to be subject to the Father?" Exactly so. Supposing that India had been in revolt against our Queen and that a Viceroy had been sent there, and that he had warred against all the rebellious tribes and kingdoms, and they had all been conquered. He telegraphs to the Queen, "Your Majesty's empire is at your feet." Does he therefore cease to be Viceroy? Not necessarily in the least degree! He may still remain as ruler and yet have delivered up the kingdom. I believe that to be the meaning of this passage—that Christ has so conquered the Kingdom that it is all God's.

But what does it mean when it says that *then* shall the Son also be subject unto the Father? It means that He is subject, now, and that *even then* He will continue to be subject to the Father, that is all. It cannot mean that at a certain time Christ will *become* subject to God, because He has been so ever since that day of His glorious humiliation when, for His people's redemption, he took upon Himself the form of a Servant—and that condition is not to cease. He is still to be the Representative of God even when He shall have put down all power and all authority under His feet and when God has put all things under His feet. It is manifest that He that did put all things under Him is not, Himself, under Him. And it is clear, from the text, that even then, God shall be the Head of Christ. I do not know whether you catch my thought yet, but it is just this—all evil subdued, all the saints having Christ dwelling in them, Christ the Head of all these saints, and then God, still as God, all the more surely and securely supreme over all things—for the Head of Christ is God and God is all in all.

The conclusion of the whole matter is this, that every day this should be the great consummation to be kept in view, "that God may be all in all." For this, the heroic labors of the Son of Man here on earth! For this, His cruel death! For this, His rising again! For this, His grasping of the mediatorial scepter! For this, His ruling in Providence! For this, His management of the world's affairs! For this, His Second Coming and the glory of His saints! All this, while it continues to bring Glory to Him, has been done in subjection to His great Father's will. He has accomplished it all as the Father's Representative and Messenger, sent by Him to do it and then, when it is all done, and He shall reign forever and ever, even then, the Son, Himself, shall continue in that position in which He put Himself long, long ago, "that God may be all in all." Then will the whole universe, restored and brought back to its proper place, be ordered according to the eternal Covenant arrangement.

And the practical outcome of it all is this. I want you, beloved Friends, so to live as to be persuaded that it will be so one day, that God shall be all in all—that there shall come a time when we shall stand before the Throne of God, God in us all, and everything in us of God, when all His elect, all His redeemed, all to whom Christ is all, and all in whom Christ is, shall only know God as their All in All! God all in their very existence. God their all in every hymn. God their all in every pulsing of their joy. God their all in every hope. God their all in every memory. God all to them and God *in* all of them to the very fullest—all redeemed, all deliv-

ered from the power of sin, all quickened into the Divine and God-like life, all summed up in Christ, Christ comprehending them all—and then Christ Himself Head over all things to His Church, standing and giving unto God the Glory forever and ever, that the Father may be All in All.

I see no abdication of a throne here. I see not even a change of dispensation and I do not believe in any! But, as surely as God lives, our King lives, and our Priest still ministers before Him. And He shall still be King over His people, though still, as the Christ, in His infinite goodness, abiding as subject unto God, Himself, God forever and ever, and yet, in His complex Person, making the Father to be All in All. Looking forward to that glorious consummation, we can join again in the jubilant hymn we sang just now—

***“Hallelujah!—hark! the sound,  
From the center to the skies,  
Wakes above, beneath, around,  
All creation’s harmonies!  
See Jehovah’s banner furled,  
Sheathed His sword! He speaks—‘tis done!  
And the kingdoms of this world  
Are the kingdoms of His Son.  
He shall reign from pole to pole,  
With illimitable sway.  
He shall reign when, like a scroll,  
Yonder heavens have passed away!  
Then the end—beneath His rod,  
Man’s last enemy shall fall!  
Hallelujah! Christ in God,  
God in Christ is All in All.”***

Now let us begin at the beginning. This is very simple—“*Christ is all.*” Then may the Spirit of God help us to go on to the next rung of the ladder—“*Christ is in all His people.*” There is the difficulty! Is He in you, Beloved? Have you received Him by faith? Then comes the third step—this may be, at present, full of mystery, but we shall see it in brighter light, by-and-by—*God shall be all in all.* So shall He be to us even now! Amen and Amen.

### **HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—412, 355, 813.**

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# “CHRIST IS ALL”

## NO. 2888

A SERMON  
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 1904.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,  
ON LORD’S-DAY EVENING, JUNE 4, 1876.**

***“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised,  
Barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is All and in all.”  
Colossians 3:11.***

PAUL is writing concerning the new creation and he says that, in it, “There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, Barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is All.” The new creation is a very different thing from the old one. Blessed are all they who have both seen the Kingdom of Heaven and entered into it. In the first creation, we are born of the flesh—and that which is born of the flesh is, even at the best, nothing but flesh and can never be anything better. But in the new creation, we are born of the Spirit and so we become spiritual and understand spiritual things. The new life in Christ Jesus is an eternal life and it links all those who possess it with the eternal realities at the right hand of God above.

In some respects the new creation is so like the old one that a parallel might be drawn between them, but, in far more respects, it is not at all like the old creation. Many things are absent from the new creation which were found in the old one—and many things which were accounted of great value in the first creation are of little or no worth in the new—while many distinctions which were greatly prized in the old creation are treated as mere insignificant trifles in the new creation. The all-important thing is for each one of us to put to himself or herself the question, “Do I know what it is to have been renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who creates anew? Do I know what it is to have been born twice, to have been born-again—born from above by the effectual working of God, the Holy Spirit? Do I understand what it is to have spiritually entered a new world wherein dwells righteousness?” It is concerning this great Truth of God that I am going to speak and, first, I shall say something upon *what is obliterated in the new creation*. And, secondly, upon *what stands in its place*.

**I.** First, as to WHAT IS OBLITERATED IN THE NEW CREATION. “There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, Barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free.”

That is to say, first, in the Kingdom of Christ *there is an obliteration of all national distinctions*. I suppose there will always be national distinc-

tions in the world until Christ comes, even if they should then be all terminated. The mischief was worked when men tried to build the city and tower, in the plain of Shinar, and so brought Babel, or confusion into the world. The one family became transformed into many—a necessary evil to prevent a still greater one. The unity at Babel would have been far worse than the confusion has ever been, just as the spiritual union of Babylon, that is, Rome, the Papal system, has been infinitely more mischievous to the Church and to the world, than the division of Christians into various sects and parties could ever have been. Babel has not been an altogether unmitigated evil. It has, no doubt, worked a certain amount of good and prevented colossal streams of evil from reaching a still more awful culmination.

Still, the separation is, in itself, an evil and it is, therefore, in the Lord's own time and way to be done away with. And *spiritually* it is already abolished. In the Church of Christ, wherever there is real union of heart among Believers, nationality is no hindrance to true Christian fellowship. I feel just as much love toward any Brother or Sister in Christ who is not of our British race as I do toward our own Christian countrymen and countrywomen. Indeed, I sometimes think I feel even more the force of the spiritual union when I catch the Swiss tone, or the French, or the German breaking out in the midst of the English, as we often do here, thank God. I seem to feel all the more interest in these beloved Brothers and Sisters because of the little difference in nationality that there is between us. Certainly, Beloved, in any part of the true Church of Christ, all national distinctions are swept away and we “are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God.”

Under the Christian dispensation, the distinction or division of nationality has gone from us in this sense. We once had our national heroes—each nation still glories in its great men of the heroic age, or in its mythical heroes—but the one Champion and Hero of Christianity is our Lord Jesus Christ who has slain our dragon foes, routed all our adversaries, broken down the massive fortress of our great enemy and set the captives free! We sing no longer of the valiant deeds of our national heroes—St. George, St. Andrew, St. Patrick, St. Denis and the other so-called “saints” who were either only legendary, or else anything but “saints” as we understand the term! We sing the prowess of the King of all saints, the mighty Son of David who is worthy of our loftiest praises! King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table we are quite willing to forget when we think of “another King, one Jesus,” and of another Table, where they who sit are not merely good knights of Jesus Christ, but are made kings and priests unto Him who sits at the head of the festal board. Barbarian, Scythian, Greek, Jew—these distinctions are all gone as far as we are concerned—for we are all one in Christ Jesus. We boast not of our national or natural descent, or of the heroes whose blood may be in our veins. It is enough for us that Christ has lived, Christ has died and Christ has “spoiled principalities and powers” and trampled down sin, death and Hell even as He fell amid the agonies of Calvary.

Away, too, has gone all our national history, so far as there may have been any desire to exalt it for the purpose of angering Christian Brothers and Sisters of another race. I wish that even the names of wars and famous battlefields could be altogether forgotten, but if they do remain in the memories of those of us who are Christians, we will not boast as he did who said, "But 'twas a famous victory." Nor will we proudly sing of—

***"The flag that braved a thousand years  
The battle and the breeze."***

As Christians, our true history begins—no, I must correct myself, for it had no beginning except in that dateless eternity when the Divine Trinity in Unity conceived the wondrous plan of Predestinating Grace, electing love, the Substitutional Sacrifice of the Son of God for the sins of His chosen people, the full and free justification of all who believe and the eternal glory of the whole redeemed family of God! This is our past, present and future history! We who are Christians take down the Volume of the Book wherein these things are written and we make our boast in the Lord—and thus the boasting is not sinful.

As to laws and customs, of which each nation has its own, it is not wrong for a Christian to take delight in a good custom which has been long established, or earnestly to contend for the maintenance of ancient laws which have preserved inviolate the liberty of the people age after age. But, still, the customs of Christians are learned from the example of Christ—and the laws of Believers are the precepts laid down by Him. When we are dealing with matters relating to the Church of Christ, we have no English customs, or French customs, or American customs, or German customs. Or, if we have, we should let them go and have only Christian customs henceforth. Did our Lord Jesus Christ command anything? Then, let it be done! Did He forbid anything? Then away with it! Would He smile upon a certain action? Then perform it at once! Would He frown upon it? Then mind that you do the same! Blessed is the Believer who has realized that the laws and customs for the people of God to observe are plainly written out in the life of Christ and that He has become to us, now, "All and in all."

Christ, by giving liberty to all His people, has also obliterated the distinctions of nationality which we once located in various countries. One remembers, with interest, the old declaration, "*Romanus sum*," ("I am a Roman"), for a citizen of Rome, wherever he might go, felt that he was a free man whom none would dare to hurt, else Roman legions would ask the reason why! And an Englishman, in any country wherever he may be, still feels that he is one who was born free and who would sooner die than become a slave, or hold another man or woman in slavery. But, Brothers and Sisters, there is a higher liberty than this—the liberty with which Christ has made His people free! And when we come into the Church of God, we talk about *that* liberty and we believe that Christians—even if they have not the civil and religious rights which *we* possess—should still be as free in Christ as we are. There are still many in various parts of the world who do not enjoy the liberties that we have,

who, notwithstanding their bonds, are spiritually free, for, as the Son has made them free, they are free, indeed!

Christ also takes from us all inclination or power to boast of our national prestige. To me it is prestige enough to be a Christian—to bear the cross Christ gives me to carry and to follow in the footsteps of the great Cross-Bearer. What is the power, in which some boast, of sending soldiers and cannon to a distant shore, compared with the Almighty Power with which Christ guards the weakest of us who dares to trust Him? What reason is there for a man to be lifted up with conceit just because he happens to have been born in this or that highly-favored country? What is such a privilege compared with the glories which appertain to the man who is born-again from above—who is an heir of Heaven, a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ—and who can truthfully say, “All things are mine, and I am Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”

What is the wondrous internationalism that levels all these various nationalities in the Church of Christ and makes us all one in Him? Spiritually we have all been born in one country—the New Jerusalem is the mother of us all. It is not my boast that I am a citizen of this or that earthly city or town. It is my joy that I am one of the citizens of “a city which has foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.” Christ has fired all of us who are His people with a common enthusiasm. He has revealed Himself to each one of us as He does not unto the world and, in the happy remembrance that we belong to Him, we forget that we are called by this or that national name and only remember that He is our Lord and that we are to follow where He leads the way! He has pointed us to Heaven as the leader of the Goths and Huns pointed his followers to Italy and said, “There is the country whence come the luscious wines of which you have tasted. Go and take the vineyards and grow the vines for yourselves.” And so they forgot that they belonged to various tribes and they all united under the one commander who promised to lead them on to the conquest of the rich land for which they panted. And now we who are in Christ Jesus, having tasted of the Eshcol clusters which grow in the heavenly Canaan, follow our glorious Leader and Commander as the Israelites followed Joshua, forgetting that we belong to so many different tribes, but knowing that there is an inheritance reserved in Heaven for all who follow where Jehovah-Jesus leads the way!

The next thing to be observed in our text is that *ceremonial distinctions are obliterated*. When Paul says that “there is neither circumcised nor uncircumcised,” he recalls the fact that, under the Law, there were some who were peculiarly the children of promise to whom were committed the oracles of God. But there is no such thing as that now. Then there were others who stood outside the pale of the law—the sinners of the Gentiles, who were left in darkness until their time for receiving the Light of God should come. But Christ has fused these two into one and now, in His Church, “there is neither Greek nor Jew.” I marvel at the insanity of those who try to prove that we are Jews—the lost ten tribes, forsooth! I grant you that the business transactions of a great many citizens of London afford some support to the theory, but it is only a theory—and a very

crazy one, too! But suppose they were able to prove that we are of the seed of Abraham after the flesh? It would not make any difference to us, for we are expressly told that “there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised”—for all Believers are one in Christ Jesus!

The all-important consideration is—Are we Christians? Do we really believe in Jesus Christ to the salvation of our souls? The Apostle truly says, “Christ is All,” for He has done away with all the distinctions that formerly existed between Jews and Gentiles. He has leveled down and He has leveled up. First He has leveled down the Jews and made them stand in the same class as the Gentiles, shutting them up under the custody of the very Law in which they gloried—and making them see that they can never come out of that bondage except by using the key of faith in Christ. So our Lord Jesus has stopped the mouths of both Jews and Gentiles and made them stand equally guilty before God, for, on the other hand, He has leveled up the outcast and despised Gentiles and has admitted us to all the privileges of His ancient Covenant, making us to be heirs of Abraham in a *spiritual* sense, “though Abraham is ignorant of us and Israel acknowledge us not.” He has given to us all the blessings which belong to Abraham’s seed because we, too, possess like precious faith as the father of the faithful had. So, “now in Christ Jesus we who sometimes were far off are made near by the blood of Christ. For He is our Peace, who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of two, one new man, so making peace.” Oh, what a blessing it is that all national and ceremonial distinctions are gone forever and that “Christ is All” to all who believe in Him!

A more difficult point, perhaps, is that of *social distinctions*. But that also has gone from the Church of Christ. “There is neither slave nor free,” says the Apostle. Well, blessed be God, slavery has almost ceased to exist! Among Christians it has become a by-word and a proverb, though there was a time when some of them pleaded for it as a Divinely-ordained institution. But, oh, may the last vestige of it speedily disappear and may every man see it to be both his duty and his privilege to yield to his brother man his God-given rights and liberties! Yet, even in such a free country as ours happily is, there are still distinctions between one class and another and I expect there always will be. I do not suppose there can ever be in this world, any system, even if we could have the most profound philosophers to invent it, in which everybody will be equal. Or, if they ever should be all equal, they would not remain so for more than five minutes. We are not all equal in our form, shape, capacity and ability—and we never shall be! We could not have the various members of our body all equal—if we had such an arrangement as that, our body would be a monstrosity! There are some members of the body which must have a more honorable office and function than others have—but all the members are in the body and necessary to its due proportion.

So it is in the Church of Christ which is His mystical body. Yet, Brothers and Sisters, how very, very minute are the distinctions between the

various members of that body! You, my Brother, are rich, as the world reckons riches. Well, do not boast of your wealth, for riches are very apt to take to themselves wings and fly away! Probably more of you are poor, as far as worldly wealth is concerned. Well, then, do not murmur, for "all things are yours" if you are Christ's! And soon you will be where you will know nothing of poverty again forever and ever! True Christianity practically wipes out all these distinctions by saying, "This man, as one of Christ's stewards, has more of his Lord's money entrusted to him than others have, so he is bound to do more with it than they do with their portion—he must give away more than they do." This other man has far less than his rich brother, but Christ says that he is responsible for the right use of what he has—not for what he has not. As the poor widow's two mites drop into the treasury of the Lord, He receives her gift with as sweet a smile as that which He accorded to the lavish gifts of David and Solomon. In His Church, Christ teaches us that if we have more than others, we simply hold it in trust for those who have less than we have—and I believe that some of the Lord's children are poor in order that there may be an opportunity for their fellow Christians to minister to them out of their abundance.

We could not prove our devotion to Christ, in practical service such as He loves best, if there were not needy ones whom we could succor and support. Our Lord has told us how He will say in the Great Day of Account, "I was hungry and you gave Me meat," but that could not be the case if there were not one of the least of His brethren who was hungry and whom we could feed for His sake. "I was thirsty and you gave Me drink." But He could not say that if none of His poor brethren were thirsty. "I was sick and you visited Me." So there must be sick saints to be visited and cases of distress, of various kinds, to be relieved, otherwise there could not be the opportunity of practically proving our love to our Lord. In the Church of Christ it ought always to be so, Brothers and Sisters—we should love each other fervently with a pure heart, we should bear each other's burdens and so fulfill the Law of Christ—and we should care for one another and seek, as far as we can, to supply one another's needs. The rich brother must not exalt himself above the poor one, nor must the poor Christian envy his richer Brothers and Sisters in Christ, for in Him all these distinctions are obliterated and we sit down, at His Table, as members of the one family of which He is the glorious and ever-living Head—and we dwell together in unity, praising Him that national, ceremonial and social distinctions have, for us, all passed away and that "Christ is All and in all."

**II.** Possibly I have taken up too much of our time in describing what is obliterated from the old creation, so, now I will try more briefly to show you WHAT TAKES ITS PLACE IN THE CREATION—"Christ is All and in all."

First, Christ is *all our culture*. Has Christianity wiped out that grand name, "Greek"? Yes, in the old meaning of it and, in some senses, it is a great pity that it is gone, for the Greek was a cultured man. The Greek's every movement was elegance itself. The Greek was the standard of clas-

sic beauty and eloquence, but Christianity has wiped all that out and written, in its place, “Christ is All.” And, Brothers and Sisters, the culture, the gracefulness, the beauty, the comeliness, the eloquence—in the sight of the best Judge of all those things, namely, God, the Ever-Blessed—which Christ gives to the true Christian, is better than all that Greek art or civilization ever produced! So we may cheerfully let it all go and say, “Christ is All.”

Next, *Christ is all our Revelation*. There was the “Jew”—he was a fine fellow and there is still much to admire in him. The Semitic race seems to have been specially constituted by God for devout worship and the Jew, the descendant of believing Abraham, is still a firm Believer in one part of God’s Word. He is, spiritually, a staunch Conservative in that matter, the very backbone of the world’s belief. Alas, that his faith is so incomplete and that there is mingled with it so much tradition received from his fathers! Will you wipe out that name, “Jew”? Yes, because we who believe in Jesus glory in Him even as the Jew gloried in having received the oracles of God. Christ is “the Word of God” Incarnate—and all the Divine Revelation is centered in Him—and we hold fast the eternal Truths of God which have been committed unto us because of the power of Christ that rests upon us.

Then, next, *Christ is all our ritual*. There is not a circumcision now. That was the special mark of those who were separated from all the rest of mankind. They bore in their body undoubted indications that they were set apart to be the Lord’s peculiar possession. Someone asks, “Will you do away with that distinguishing rite?” Yes, we will, for, in Christ every true Christian is set apart unto God—marked as Jesus Christ’s special separated one by the circumcision made without hands!

Further, *Christ is all our simplicity*. Here is a man who says that “uncircumcision” is his distinguishing mark and adds, “I am not separated or set apart from others, as the so-called ‘priest’ is. I am a man among my fellow men. Wherever I go, I can mingle with others and feel that they are my brethren. I belong to the ‘uncircumcision.’ Will you rule that out?” Yes, we will, because we have, in Christ, all that uncircumcision means, for he who becomes a real Christian is the truest of all men—he is the most free from that spirit which says, “Stand by yourself, come not near me for I am holier than you.” He is the true philanthropist, the real lover of men, even as Christ was! He was no separatist, in the sense in which some use that word. He went to a wedding feast. He ate bread in the house of a publican. And a woman of the city who was a sinner was permitted to wash His feet with her tears. He mingled with the rest of mankind and “the common people heard Him gladly.” And He would have us to be as He was—the true Man among men, the great Lover of our race.

Once more, *Christ is all our natural traditions and our unconquerableness and liberty*. Here is “the rude barbarian,” as the poet calls him. He says, “I shall never give up the free, manly life that I have lived so long. By my unshorn beard,” (for that is the meaning of the term, Barbarian), “I swear it shall be so.” “By the wild steppes and wide plains over which I roam unconquerable,” says the Scythian, “I will never bend to the con-

ventionality of civilization and be the slave of your modern luxuries.” Well, it is almost a pity to have done with Barbarians and Scythians, in this sense, for there is a good deal about them to be commended—but we must wipe them all out. If they come into the Church of Christ, He must be “All, and in all,” because everything that is manly, everything that is natural, everything that is free, everything that is bold, everything that is unconquerable will be put into them if “Christ is All” to them. They will get all the excellences that are in that freedom—without the faults appertaining to it!

Further, “*Christ is All, as our Master, if we are a “slave.”*” I think I see, in the great assembly at Colosse which Paul addressed, one who said, “But I am a slave! A man bought me at the auction mart and here, on my back, are the marks of the slave-holder’s lash.” And I think I hear him add, “I wish that disgrace could be wiped out.” But Paul says, “Brother, it is wiped out! You are no slave, really, for Christ has made you free.” Then the great Apostle of the Gentiles comes and sits down by his side and says to him, “The Church of Christ has absorbed you, Brother, by making us all like you—for we are all servants of one Master. And look,” says Paul, as he bares his own back and shows the scars from his repeated scourging, “from henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” “And so,” he says, laying his hand on the poor Christian slave, “I, Paul, the slave of Jesus Christ, share your servitude and with me you are Christ’s free man.”

Lastly, *Christ is our Magna Charta. Yes, our liberty itself if we are “free.”* Here comes the free man who was born free. Shall that clause stand, “neither slave nor free”? Oh, yes, let it stand! But not so stand that we glory in our national freedom, for Christ has given us a higher freedom! I may slightly alter the familiar couplet and say—

**“He is the free man whom  
The Lord makes free,  
And all are slaves beside.”**

Oh, what multitudes of people in London are slaves—miserable slaves to the opinions of their neighbors—slaves to the caprice of Mrs. Grundy—slaves to “respectability!” Some of you dare not do a thing that you know to be right because somebody might make a remark about it. What are you but slaves? Yes, and there are slaves in the pulpit, every Sunday, who dare not speak the Truth of God for fear somebody will be offended! And there are also slaves in the pews and slaves in the shops and slaves all around. What a wretched life a slave lives! Yet, till you become a Christian and know what it is to wear Christ’s bonds about your willing wrists, you will always feel the galling fetters of society and the bonds of custom, fashion, or this or that! But Jesus makes us free with a higher freedom, so we wipe out the mere terrestrial freedom which is too often only a sham—and we write, “Christ is ALL.”

So, to conclude, remember that if you have Christ as your Savior, you do not need anybody else to save you. I see an old gentleman, over there in Rome, with a triple crown on his head. We do not want him, for “Christ is All.” He says that he is the vicegerent of God. That is not true, but if

it were, it would not matter, for "Christ is All," so we can do without the Pope! Then I see another gentleman with an all-round dog collar of the Roman kennel type—he tells me that if I will confess my sins to him as the priest of the parish, he can give me absolution—but, seeing that "Christ is All," we can do without that gentleman as well as the other one, for anything that is over and above "all" must be a superfluity, if nothing worse. So is it with everything that is beside or beyond Christ—faith can get to Christ without Pope or priest! Everything that is outside Christ is a lie, for "Christ is All." All that is true must be inside Him, so we can do without all others in the matter of our soul's salvation.

But supposing that we have not received Christ as our Savior? Then how unspeakably poor we are! If we have not grasped Christ by faith, we have not laid hold of anything, for "Christ is All!" And if we have not Him who is All, we have nothing at all. "Oh," says one, "I go to chapel regularly." Yes, so far, so good. But if you have not Christ, you have nothing, for "Christ is All." "But I have been baptized," says another. Ah, but if you have not savingly trusted in Christ, your Baptism is only another sin added to all your others! "But I go to communion," says another. So much the worse for you if you have not trusted in Christ as your Savior. I wish I could put this thought into the heart of everyone here who is without Christ—no, I pray the Holy Spirit to impress this thought upon your heart—if you are without Christ, you are without everything that is worth having, for "Christ is All."

But, Christians, I would like to make your hearts dance by reminding you that if you have Christ as your Savior, you are rich to all the intents of bliss, for you have "all" that your heart can wish to have! Nobody else can say as much as that! The richest man in the world has only got something, though the something may be very great. Alexander conquered one world but you, Believer, in getting Christ as yours, have this world and also that which is to come—life and death, time and eternity! Oh, revel in the thought that, as Christ is yours, you are rich to an infinity of riches, for "Christ is All."

Now, if Christ really is yours and as Christ is All, then love Him, honor Him and praise Him! Mother, what were you doing this afternoon? Pressing that dear child of yours to your bosom and saying, "She is my all"? Take back those words, for they are not true! If you love Christ, *He* is your All and you cannot have another "all." Someone else has one who is very near and very dear. If you are that someone else and you have said in your heart, "He is my all," or, "She is my all," you have done wrong, for nothing and no one but Christ must be your "all." You will be an idolater and you will grieve the Holy Spirit if anything, or anyone except Christ becomes your "all." You who have lately lost your loved ones and you who have been brought low by recent losses in business—are you fretting over your losses? If so, remember that you have not lost your "all." You still have Christ and He is "All." Then what have you lost? I know that you have something to grieve over, but, after all, your "light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for you a far more exceedingly and eternal weight of glory." Therefore, comfort yourself with this thought—"I

have not really lost anything, for I still have All.” When you have all things, find Christ in All and when you have lost all things, then find all things in Christ. I do not know, but I think that the latter is the better of the two!

Now, if Christ is all, then, beloved Brothers and Sisters, let us live for Him! If He is All, let us spend our strength and be ready to lay down the last particle of it that we have and to die for Him—and then let us, whenever we need anything, go to Him for it, for “Christ is All.” Let us draw upon this bank, for its resources are infinite—we shall never exhaust them!

Lastly, and chiefly, let us send our hearts right on to where He is. Where our treasure is, there should our hearts be, also. Come, my Heart, up and away! What have you here that can fill you? What have you here that can satisfy you? Plume your wings and be up and away, for there is your roosting-place! There is the Tree of Life which can never be felled. Up and away and build there forever! The Lord help each one of you to do so, for Jesus’ sake! Amen.

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
ISAIAH 43:1-25.**

**Verse 1.** *But now thus says the LORD that created you, O Jacob, and He that formed you, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed you, I have called you by your name; you are Mine.* I cannot pause to comment upon each of the precious sentences here, but every word is full of marrow and fatness. Ask the Lord to enable you to feed upon each sentence as it passes before your mind.

**2-5.** *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not flow over you: when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior: I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for you. Since you were precious in My sight, you have been honorable, and I have loved you: therefore will I give men for you, and people for your life. Fear not: for I am with you.* That always seems to me to be the master-consolation—“I am with you.” What more does the most troubled heart need than God’s Presence?

**5.** *I will bring your seed from the east, and gather you from the west.* O Church of God, your elect members shall all, in due time, be fetched in—however far they may have wandered!

**6, 7.** *I will say to the north, Give up; and to the South, keep not back: bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the ends of the earth; even everyone that is called by My name: for I have created him for My glory, I have formed him; yes, I have made him.* And that in a double sense, for God’s people are twice made—made first in creation, but marred by the Fall—and then new-made as “new creatures in Christ Jesus.”

**8.** *Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.* There are plenty of them, for our proverb is true, “There are none so

blind as those that will not see, and none so deaf as those that will not hear.” But even to such people as these God makes His appeal.

**9.** *Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth.* God challenges all the false gods and their worshippers to produce a single fulfilled prophecy—to show one instance in which they have truly and correctly foretold any event or a chain of events! But all Jehovah’s prophecies have been fulfilled, or will be in due season.

**10-13.** *You are My witnesses, says the LORD, and My servant whom I have chosen: that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside Me there is no Savior. I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore you are My witnesses, says the LORD, that I am God. Yes, before the day was, I am He and there are none that can deliver out of My hand: I will work, and who shall reverse it?* It is a great blessing to know that the Lord is God—and not merely to know that as a matter of fact, but to feel it, to realize it—and to trust in God and act towards Him conscious that He, and He alone, is the living and true God.

**14-17.** *Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry is in the ships. I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. Thus says the LORD, which makes a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; who brings forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as a wick.* You know what happened to the army of Sennacherib when it came against Jerusalem. Horses and chariots were there in vast numbers and all the pomp and pageantry of a vast host of armed men. But they slept their last sleep—from which they never rose—when the Angel of the Lord flew through their ranks. So was it with Babylon itself. When the set time came, that long-established empire with its colossal power, was swept away like a vision of the night! It blazed like a wick and then was quenched forever. What cannot God do for His people when He lifts up His almighty arm?

**18.** *Remember not the former things, neither consider the things of old.* For something better is going to be done in the future than all that God has done in the past! He will eclipse all His previous achievements and outdo the mightiest of His own miracles!

**19, 20.** *Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honor Me.* As it slakes its thirst at an unknown spring.

**20.** *The dragons and the owls.* Alarmed and startled, as God’s people pass by on their way to the land which God would give them.

**20-22.** *Because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen. This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise. But you have not called upon Me, O Jacob.* Have any of you restrained prayer of late? Has your path to the Mercy Seat been but little trodden? Then listen to God’s gentle rebuke—“You have not called upon Me, O Jacob.”

**22.** *But you have been weary of Me, O Israel.* Weary of God? Have any of us grown weary of fellowship with Him? Weary of His Truth? Weary of His Day? Weary of His service? Oh, what strange ingratitude this is on our part!

**23.** *You have not brought Me the small cattle of your burnt offerings; neither have you honored Me with your sacrifices.* There are some of God’s people, at any rate, who forget to offer their sacrifices to God. If they do love Christ at all, their love is not practical, not self-sacrificing—it does not lead them to bring love-gifts to Him.

**23.** *I have not caused you to serve with an offering, nor wearied you with incense.* “I have made no irksome tax of it. I have not demanded anything of you. I have left it to your own free will to give according as your love suggests.”

**24.** *You have bought Me no sweet cane with money, neither have you filled Me with the fat of your sacrifices: but—*Alas, instead of good, there has been evil!

**24.** *You have made Me to serve with your sins.* What? Made God our servant when we ought to have served Him? Alas, I fear it is often so even with some of His own people!

**24.** *You have wearied Me with your iniquities.* O Sirs, how sad it is when God’s people are weary of Him and He is weary of them! What shall we read after this? Surely the next sentence will be a thunder-clap and a lightning flash will blaze out of the sacred page! Listen—and be amazed at the mercy of the Lord!

**25.** *I, even I, am He that blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and will not remember your sins.* What a blessed God to deal so graciously with His ungrateful erring people!

### **HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—136 (SONG 1), 738, 732.**

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307

**PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON  
TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.**

# “CHRIST IS ALL”

## NO. 3446

A SERMON  
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1915.

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

“*Christ is all.*”  
*Colossians 3:11.*

MY text is so very short that you cannot forget it and, I am quite certain, if you are Christians at all, you will be sure to agree with it! What a multitude of religions there is in this poor wicked world of ours! Men have taken it into their heads to invent various systems of religion and if you look around the world, you will see scores of different sects. But it is a great fact that while there is a multitude of *false religions*, there is but one that is *true*. While there are many falsehoods, there can be but one truth—real religion is, therefore, one. There is but one Gospel—the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. What a wonderful thing it is that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should be born of humble parents and live as a poor Man in this world for the purpose of our salvation! He lived a life of suffering and trial and, at last, through the malignity of His enemies, was crucified on Calvary as an outcast of society. “Now,” they said, “there is an end of His religion! Now it will be such a contemptible thing, that nobody will ever call himself a Christian—it will be discreditable to have anything to do with the name of the Man, Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth.” But it is an amazing fact that this religion has not only lived, but is at this hour as strong as ever! Yes, the religion He founded still exists and is still powerful, and constantly expanding. While other religions have sunk into the darkness of the past, and the idols have been cast to the moles and to the bats, the name of Jesus is still mighty—and it shall continue to be a blessed power so long as the universe shall endure!

The religion of Jesus is the religion of God. Hence, notwithstanding all the disgrace and persecution which it has had to encounter, it still exists, and still flourishes! It is this religion which I shall attempt to preach to you—the one Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ—and the text embraces it all in the most comprehensive manner, “Christ is all.”

I shall use it, first, as *a test to try you* and, afterwards, as *a motive to encourage you*. I want, first, to sift you, to see how many of you are the people of God, and how many are not. I shall make my text a great sieve and put you in it to see which is wheat and which is chaff. We must consider this passage in two or three senses in order, first, to use it as—

### I. A TEST TO TRY YOU.

*Christ must be all, as your Great Master and Teacher.* There are some who set up a certain man as their authority. They regard him as their

master, they look up to him as their teacher—and whatever he says is right—it is the truth and is not to be disputed. Or, perhaps, they have taken a certain book, other than the Bible, and say, “We will judge all things by this book”—and if the preacher does not teach exactly the creed written in that book, he is set down as not sound in the faith—and this they do not hesitate to say at once, because he does not come up to the standard of their little book! We meet with many people in this world who make their creed, their one little narrow creed, everything—and they measure everything and everybody by that. But, my Friends, I must have you say that “*Christ* is all,” and not any man, however good or great, before I can allow that you are Christians. We have not to follow men. Our faith stands not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God! We are to follow no man, except as far as he follows Christ, who alone is our Master! Be not deceived—submit not yourselves to creeds, to books, or to men—give yourselves to the study of God’s Word, derive your creed and the doctrines of your faith from it, alone, and then you will be able to say—

**“Should all the forms that men devise  
Assault my faith with treacherous art,  
I’d call them vanity and lies,  
And bind the Gospel to my heart.”**

Let Christ be your only Master, and say, in the words of our text, “Christ is all.” Now can you say this, or are you boasting, “The Baptists are all”—“The Wesleyans are all”—“The Church of England is all”? As the Lord lives, if you are saying that, you do not know His Truth because you are not testifying that, “Christ is all,” but simply uttering the Shibboleth of your little party! I should like to see the word, “party,” blotted out from the vocabulary of the Christian Church! I thank God that I have no sympathy whatever with that which is merely sectarian, and have Grace given me to protest against it, and to exclaim—

**“Let party names no more  
The Christian world overspread”**

since—

**“Gentile and Jew, and bond and free,  
Are one in Christ, their Head.”**

If “Christ is all” to you, you are Christians, and I, for one, am ready to give you the right hand of brotherhood! I do not mind what place of worship you attend, or by what distinctive name you may call yourselves—we are Brothers and Sisters in Christ and I think, therefore, that we should love one another. If, my Friends, you cannot embrace all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, no matter to what denomination they may belong, and cannot regard them as your Brothers and Sisters in the Lord, and as belonging to the universal Church, you have not hearts large enough to go to Heaven because, if such are your contracted views, you cannot possibly say, “Christ is all.”

Next, *Christ must be all as your principal object in life—your chief good.* Your great aim must be to glorify Christ on earth, in the hope and expectation of enjoying Him forever above. But as it regards some of you, Chr-

ist is not your all. You think more of your shop than you do of Him. You are up early in the morning looking at your ledgers, and all day long toiling at your business. Do not misunderstand me—I dislike lazy people who let the grass grow over their shoes—and God disapproves of them, too! We want no lazy preachers of the Gospel. The true Christian will say, "I know that I am bound to be diligent in business, but I want to work for eternity as well as for time. I need something besides earthly riches. I need an inheritance not made with hands, a mansion not built by man, a possession in the skies." Are you making this world your all? Poor Souls, if you are, the world and the fashion thereof are passing away—your all will soon be gone! I fancy I see a rich man, one whose gold is his all, when he gets into the next world, looking for his gold, and wondering where it is, and being, at last, compelled to exclaim, in despair, "Oh, my all is gone!" But if you can say that Christ is your all, then your treasure will never be gone, for He will never leave you, nor forsake you. Not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, you shall be happy and blessed, for you shall be crowned with glory and made to sit with Christ on His Throne forever!

"Well," says some easy-going gentleman, "I do not make business my all, I assure you. Not I! My maxim is, let us enjoy this life, let us fill the glass to the brim and live in pleasure while we may." I also have a word for you. Do you think that such a course of conduct will fit you for Heaven, for the enjoyments of eternity? Do you imagine that when you come to die, it will be any pleasure for you to think of your drunkenness? When you are lying on a sick bed, will your oaths bring you any peace, as they reverberate upon your conscience, just as I hear my voice, at this moment, echoing back to my ears the words I am saying? I think I see you starting up as you hear your blasphemies against God thus returning upon you, while, with a mind oppressed with anguish and eyes starting from their sockets, you exclaim, in your terror, "I hear my own oaths again! God is coming to call me to judgment, to demand of me why I dare blaspheme His name!" And the Judge will say, "You, with oaths and curses, profaned My holy name! You asked Me to curse your soul and now I will do it! You prayed in your profane moments that you might be lost, and now you shall be!" How horrible that would be! You who say pleasure is all, let me warn you that you will have to drink the bitter dregs of the cup of pleasure to all eternity, no matter how sweet the draught may now be to your taste!

But there are some more moderate people who are by no means extravagant in their pleasures and are great sticklers for religion! They go to Church or Chapel every Sunday and believe themselves to be a very good sort of people—such as will be accepted at the Last Day, and placed at the right hand of the Throne of God. Again I put the question, can you say, "Christ is all"? No, you cannot say that. Many of you make the externals of religion your all, resting in the letter, but knowing or caring nothing for the spirit. This will not do! And you are not such Christians as Christ will acknowledge if you are making anything your all but Him!

Religion is not to be stowed away in the dark attic of the brain. Christianity is a *heart* religion, and if you cannot say, from the very depths of your being, “Christ is all,” you have neither part nor lot in the blessings and privileges of the Gospel—and your end will be destruction, everlasting banishment from the Presence of the Lord! God grant it may not be so, but that in both your lives and mine we may each be enabled to say of a truth, “Christ is all”—and that we may meet again around the eternal Throne of God!

Next, *Christ will be all as the source of your joy*. Some people seem to think that Christians are a very melancholy sort of folk, that they have no real happiness. I know something about religion and I will not admit that I stand second to any man in respect of being happy. So far as I know religion, I have found it to be a very happy thing—

**“I would not change my blest estate,  
For all that earth calls good or great.”**

I used to think that a religious man must never smile, but, on the contrary, I find that religion will make a man’s eyes bright, cover his face with smiles and impart comfort and consolation to his soul, even in the deepest of his earthly tribulations! In illustration of this, I might tell you the story of a poor man who lives in one of the courts in Holborn, who experiences great joy in religion, even in the midst of the deepest poverty. A Christian visitor, going up into the poor man’s room at the top of the house, said, “My Friend, how long have you been in this place?”

“I have not been downstairs, nor walked across the room, these 12 months.”

“Have you anything to depend upon?”

“Nothing,” he replied, but recollecting himself, he added, “I have a good Father up in Heaven, and I depend upon Him entirely, and He never lets me down. Some kind Christian friends are sure to call, and they never go away without leaving me something. And I get enough to live on and pay my rent, and I am very happy. I would not change places with anybody in the world, for I have Jesus Christ with me, and my heavenly Father will take me Home, by-and-by, and then I shall be as rich as any of them—shall I not, Sir? Sometimes I get very low, and Satan tells me that I am not a child of God, and that I had better give up all as lost, but I tell him that he is a great coward to come and meddle with a poor weak creature like I am, and I show him the blood, Sir. And I tell him the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin—and when I show Satan the precious blood, Sir, he leaves off tempting me, and immediately flees, for he cannot bear the sight of the Savior’s blood.”

Thus we see that true religion can cheer the sick man’s couch, can make the poor man feel that he is rich and bid him be joyful in the Lord! Well did the old man say that the devil cannot bear the sight of the Savior’s blood! And if, beloved Friends, you can take Christ’s blood and put it on your conscience, however sinful you may have been, you will be able to sing of Christ as all your hope, all your joy and all your support! I ask you who love Jesus—does religion ever make you unhappy? Does

love to Jesus distress you and make you miserable? It may bring you into trouble, sometimes, and cause you to endure persecution for His name's sake. If you are a child of God, you will have to suffer tribulation. But all the afflictions which you may be called upon to endure for Him will work for your good, and are not worthy to be compared with the glory which is to be revealed hereafter!

Now, then, let me ask, could you agree with me while I have been speaking? Can you now say that Christ is your only Master, your chief good, your only joy? "Oh, yes, I do love Jesus because He first loved me." Then, welcome, Brother! Welcome, Sister! You are one with Jesus, and we are one with each other! But if you cannot say it, how terrible it shall be with some of you when you shall find your gourds wither, the crops whereon you now lean struck down at a blow, your false refuges swept away and, deprived of all your feathers and finery, your soul will appear before God in its true character! May it not be so with any of you, but may you be united to Christ by living faith which works by love and purifies the heart! Secondly, I shall now consider the text as—

## II. A MOTIVE TO ENCOURAGE YOU.

"Christ is all." My beloved Friends, in what is He all? Christ is all in the entire work of salvation. Let me take you back to the period before this world was made. There was a time when this great world—the sun, the moon, the stars and all which now exist throughout the whole of the vast universe—lay in the mind of God like unborn forests in an acorn cup. There was a time when the Great Creator lived alone and yet He could foresee that He would make a world, and that men would be born to people it. And in that vast eternity a great scheme was devised, whereby He might save a fallen race. Do you know who devised it? God planned it from first to last! Neither Gabriel nor any of the holy angels had anything to do with it. I question whether they were even told how God might be just and yet save the transgressors. God was all in the drawing up of the scheme, and Christ was all in carrying it out! There was a dark and doleful night! Jesus was in the Garden, sweating great drops of blood which fell to the ground—nobody then came to bear the load that had been laid upon Him. An angel stood there to strengthen Him, but not to bear the sentence. The cup was put into His hands and Jesus said, "Father, must I drink it?" And His Father replied, "If You do not drink, sinners cannot be saved"—and He took the cup and drained it to its very dregs! No man helped Him. And when He hung upon that accursed tree of Calvary, when His precious hands were pierced, when—

***"From His head, His hands, His feet,  
Sorrow and love flowed mingled down,***

there was nobody to help Him. He was "all" in the work of salvation!

And, my Friends, if any of you shall be saved, it must be by Christ alone! There must be no patchwork! Christ did it all and will not be helped in the matter. Christ will not allow you, as some say, to do what you can, and leave Him to make up the rest! What can you do that is not sinful? Christ has done all for us! The work of Redemption is all finished.

Christ planned it all and worked it all out! And we, therefore, preach a full salvation through Jesus Christ!

What could we poor mortals do towards saving ourselves? Our best works are but mean and worthless to that great end. I am sure I could not do it. My preaching—I am ashamed of that, and there are a thousand faults in my prayers! God needs nothing of us by way of "making up" Christ's work, but He cancels all the sins and blots out all the transgressions of everyone who trusts to His Son's death!

If I have found Christ, I have found all. "I have not strong faith," you say. Never mind, Christ is all. "I do not sufficiently feel my sins"—but Christ is all. Many people think they must feel a load of repentance before they may hope Christ will receive them. I know every child of God will repent, but we are not all brought to the Cross by the terrors of the Law. It is not your *feelings*, my Friends, that will save you, but only Christ—Christ standing in your place, Christ being your Substitute! If, feeling your need of His Grace to pardon you, and His righteousness to justify you before God, you can but just look to Christ, though you have nothing good about you, you will have done all that is necessary to carry you to Heaven—because it is not *your* act that can save you—but the act of Christ alone! A little while ago I had a conversation with an Irishman who had been to hear me preach. He had come to ask me, he said, the way of salvation. "What troubles me," he said, "is this—God says that He will condemn the sinner, and punish him—then how can God forgive, because He must punish if He would keep His word?" I placed before him the Scriptural view of the Atonement, in the substitution of Christ for the sinner, and the poor man was astonished and delighted beyond measure, never having understood the beauty and simplicity of the Gospel way of salvation before! "Is it really so?" he asked. "It is in the Bible," I replied. "Then the Bible must be true," he said, "for nobody but God could have thought it!"

If Jesus Christ is our Surety, Friends, we are safe from the demands of the Law. If Christ is our Substitute, we shall not suffer the penalty due to sin, for God will never punish the same sin twice. If I have nothing but Christ, I do not need anything else, for Christ is all! If Christ is your all, you will not need anything to help you, either in living or in dying! Now for two thoughts before I close.

**1.** *If a man has Christ, then what else does he need?* If a man has Christ, he has everything! If I need perfection, and I have Christ, I have absolute perfection in Him! If I need righteousness, I shall find in Him my beauty and my glorious dress. I need pardon, and if I have Christ, I am pardoned! I want Heaven and if I have Christ, I have the Prince of Heaven, and shall be there, by-and-by, to live with Christ and to dwell in His blessed embrace forever! If you have Christ, you have all! Do not be desponding, do not give ear to the whispers of Satan that you are not the children of God, for if you have Christ, you *are* His people and other things will come, by-and-by. Christ makes you complete in Himself. As the Apostle says, "You are complete in Him." I think of poor Mary Magda-

lene—she would have nothing to bring of her own—she would remember that she had been a harlot, but when she comes to Heaven's gates, she will say, "I have Christ," and the command will go forth, "Let her in, Gabriel! Let her in!" Here comes a poor squalid wretch. What has he been doing—he has never learned to write, he scarcely went even to a Ragged School, but he has Christ in his heart! "Gabriel, let him in!" Next comes a rich bad man, with rings on his fingers and fine clothes upon his person—but the command is, "Shut the gates, Gabriel! He has no business here!" Then comes a fine flaming professor of the Gospel, but he never knew Christ in his heart. "Shut the gate, Gabriel!" If a man has Christ, he has all for eternity—but if he has not Christ, he is poor, blind, naked and will be miserable forever! Will not you, then, who are listening to me now, resolve, in the strength of the Lord, to seek Him at once and make Him your Friend? No matter what may be your state or condition, you are invited to come to Him!

You blind, you lame, who are far from Christ, come to Him and receive your sight, and obtain strength! He is made your all—you need bring nothing in your hand to come to Him. "Ah!" say one, "I am not good enough yet." Beggars do not talk thus! They consider that the more needy they are, the more likely are they to obtain that for which they ask. The worse the dress, the better for begging. It is the same with respect to the Gospel—you are invited to come to Christ just as you are, naked and miserable—that He may clothe and comfort you!

**2.** My last thought is this—*How poor is that man who is destitute of Christ!* If I were to say to some one of you that you are poor, you would reply, "I am not poor—I have £250 a year coming in—a decent house and an excellent job." And yet, if you have not Christ, you are a poor man, indeed. Look at that poor worldling with a load of £10,000 upon his back, a quantity of stocks and annuities in one hand, policies and railway scrip in the other—but he is wretched with all his wealth, though he can hardly carry it! There is a poor beggar woman, who says to him, "Let me take a part of your burden." But the miserable man refuses all assistance and resolves to carry all his load himself. But by-and-by he comes to a great gulf and, instead of finding these riches help him, they hang around his neck like millstones and weigh him down! Yet there are some who would do anything for gold. If there is one man more miserable than another in Hell, it must be the man who robbed his neighbors to feather his own nest—such feathers will help the flight of the arrows which shall pierce his soul to all eternity! No matter what your wealth, if you have not Christ, you are miserably poor—but with Christ, you are rich to all eternity!

I think I see one of you ungodly ones in your last moments. Someone stands by your bedside and watches your face. The death-sweat comes over you and the big drops stand on your brow—the strong man is bowed down and the mighty one falls—and now the eyes close and the hand falls powerless—life is fled. Ah, but the soul never dies! Up it flies to appear at God's bar. How will it appear there? Oh, the poor soul without

Christ! It will be a naked soul—it will have no garment to cover it—it will be a perishing soul, no salvation for it! Mercy cannot be secured, then! It will be in vain to pray, then, because the lamp will be put out in eternal darkness! And the Judge will say, in tones that will pierce you to the quick, "Depart from Me, you cursed!"

May God give all of you Grace to repent and to embrace the salvation which is revealed in the Gospel! Every sin-sick soul may have Christ, but as for you who are Pharisees and trusting in yourselves that you are righteous—if you know nothing about sin, you can know nothing about Christ. The way to be saved is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "But what is it to believe?" you ask. I have heard of a captain who had a little son, and this little boy was very fond of climbing aloft. One day he climbed to the masthead, and the father saw that if the boy attempted to return, he would be dashed to pieces. He therefore shouted to him not to look down, but to drop into the sea. The poor boy kept fast hold of the mast, but the father saw it was his only chance of safety, and he shouted once more, "Boy, the next time the ship lurches, drop, or I will shoot you." The boy is gone! He drops into the sea and is saved. Had he not dropped, he would have perished. This is just your condition! As long as you cling to works and ceremonies, you are in the utmost peril! But when you give yourselves up entirely to the mercy of Christ, you are safe! Try it, Sinner! Try it, that is all. "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved," is Christ's promise, and it shall never fail you. The invitation is to all who thirst. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is thirsty come, and take the Water of Life freely."

I have heard that in the deserts where they can only get water at long intervals, they send a man on a camel in search of it. When he sees a pool, he springs off his beast, and before he drinks, he calls out, "Come," and there is another man at a little distance, and he shouts, "Come," and one further away still repeats the word, "Come," until the whole desert resounds with the cry, "Come," and they come rushing to the water to drink! Now I do not make the Gospel invitation wider than the declaration of the Word of God, "Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Whoever you are, and whatever you may have been, if you feel your need of Christ, "Come," and He will receive you, and give you to drink of the Water of Life freely!

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
COLOSSIANS 3; 4:1-4; PSALM 28:1-6.**

**COLOSSIANS 3.**

**Verse 1.** *If you, then, are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.* Oh, how often we need to be called to this, for the flesh is groveling and it holds down the spirit. Very often we are seeking the things below as if we had not yet attained the new life, and did not know anything about the resurrection power of

Christ within the soul! Now, if it is that you, Believers, have risen with Christ, do not live as if you had never done so, but “seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.”

**2.** *Set your affection.* Not “your affections.” Tie them up into one bundle. Make one of them.

**2.** *On things above, not on things on the earth.* You say that you were dead with Christ and that you have risen with Christ. Live, then, the risen life, and not the life of those who have never undergone this matchless process! Live above.

**3.** *For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.* The old life is dead. You are dead to it. You will not be consumed by it—you cannot be controlled by it. You have a newer and higher life. Let it have full scope.

**4.** *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory.* Christ was hidden while He was here. The world knew Him not. So is your life. But there is to be a glorious manifestation! When Christ is made manifest, so shall you be. Wait for Him.

**5.** *Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth—fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.* Since you are dead, let all the lusts of the flesh be put to death. Kill them! They were once a part of you. Your nature lusted this way. Mortify them! Do not merely restrain them and try to keep them under! These things you are to have nothing to do with.

**6, 7.** *For which things the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience. In which you also walked some time, when you lived in them.* “When you lived in them.” But now you do not live in them. You are dead to them. If it should ever come to pass that you fall into any of these things, you will loathe yourself with bitterest repentance that you could find comfort, satisfaction, life in them. You are dead to them.

**8-10.** *But now you also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not to one another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.* No lies. Such communications are filthy. But you put these things away through your union with Christ in His risen life. Therefore, abhor them. Avoid the very appearance of them and cry for Grace to be kept from them, for you have been “renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.”

**11.** *Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.* In the new life there is no distinction of race and nationality! We are born into one family. We become members of Christ’s body and this is the one thing we have got to keep up—separation from all the world! No separations in the Church, no disunion, nothing that would cause it, for we are one in Christ and Christ is all! Now, as we have to put off these things, that is the negative side—that is the Law’s side, for the Law says, “You shall not.” But now look at the positive side.

**12.** *Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, hearts of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.* This is what you have got to wear, even on the outside—to put them on, not to have a latent kindness in your heart and a degree of humbleness deep down in your soul if you could get at it—but you are to put them on. They are to be the very clothes you wear! These are the sacred vestments of your daily priesthood. Put them on!

**13.** *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man has a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do you.* Just as readily, just as freely, just as heartily, just as completely!

**14-15.** *And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts.* For that is the great foundation of every godly fruit. We are in such a hurry, in such dreadful haste, so selfish, so discontented, so impetuous, and the major part of our sins spring from that condition of mind! But if we were godly, restful, peaceful, how many sins we would avoid! “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.”

**15.** *To which, also, you are called in one body; and be you thankful.* It looks like a very small virtue to be thankful. Yet, dear Friends, the absence of it is one of the grossest of vices! To be ungrateful is a mean thing. To be ungrateful to God is a base thing! And yet how many may accuse themselves of it! Who among us is as grateful as he should be? Be thankful.

**16.** *Let the word of Christ dwell in you—*Alexander had a casket of gold studded with gems to carry Homer’s works. Let your own heart be a casket for the command of Christ. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you.”

**16-18.** *Richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with Grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.* See how our being Christians does not relax the bonds of our Christian relationship? On the contrary, it calls us to the higher exercise of the responsibilities and duties connected therewith!

**19.** *Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter against them.* Oh, there are some spirits that are very bitter! A little thing puts them out and they would take delight in a taunt which grieves the spirit. I pity the poor woman who has such bitterness where she ought to have sweetness—yet there are some such husbands.

**20-21.** *Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.* The duties are mutual. Scripture maintains an equilibrium. It does not lay down commands for one class, and then leave the other to exercise whatever tyrannical oppression it may please! The child is to obey, but the father must not provoke.

**22.** *Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers.* How much there is of that! How quick-

ly the hands go when the master’s eye looks on! But the Christian servant remembers God’s eyes and is always diligent. “Not with eye service as men pleasers.”

**Colossians 4:1-2.** *But in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord you shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for you serve the Lord Christ. But he that does wrong shall receive for the wrong which he has done; and there is no respect of persons. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that you, also, have a Master in Heaven. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. See how he keeps putting that in—“Be you thankful”—“with thanksgiving.”* Why, that is the oil that makes the machinery go round without its causing obstruction! May we have much of that thanksgiving.

**3, 4.** *Meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.* So the preacher of the Gospel asks your prayers—and it is a part of the duties arising out of the relationship between Christians that those who are taught should pray for those who teach God’s Word.

### **PSALM 28:1-6.**

**Verse 1.** *Unto you will I cry, O LORD my Rock: be not silent to me: lest, if You are silent to me, I become like those who go down into the pit.* Oh, if God did not hear prayer, we would become like dead men—yes, like lost men. Our fall or despair would be terrible, indeed. “Lest, if You are silent to me, I become like those who go down into the pit.”

**2.** *Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto You, when I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary.* Is that the way you pray, dear Friend? I know there are some who, if they have uttered certain good words—got through a form of prayer—are perfectly satisfied. As to whether God hears them or not, that does not trouble them. But if you are a true child of God, it will be your main thought in prayer, “Will He hear me? Will He hear me? Will He answer me?” And you will think nothing of a prayer at all unless you have the comfortable, believing persuasion that your prayer has reached the ear and heart of God. Oh, believe us, for some of us know by experience that prayer is a real thing! It is no repetition of words. It really is the heart speaking into the ear of God—and God does graciously respond when prayer is truly offered.

**3.** *Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbors, but mischief is in their hearts.* We are often afraid lest we should get numbered with them—

**“Oh, were it not for Grace Divine,  
Their fate so dreadful had been mine.”**

“Gather not my soul with sinners,” is the prayer of many a godly man. When he looks within and sees the sin that is there—and what he deserves from the hand of God, apart from the blood and righteousness of Christ—he begins, indeed, to pray, “Draw me not away with the wicked.

O Lord, do not let me wander into doctrinal error or into errors of life, or into laxity of behavior, or into backslidings, but keep me fast, for unless You hold me fast—

***‘I feel I must, I shall, decline,  
And prove like them at last.’***

Draw me not away with the wicked.”

**4.** *Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.* And a just mind feels that such ought to be the case. God is a Judge and He will punish sin—and gracious men do not wish that it should be otherwise. Even to that terrible side of God’s Character which is seen in His vengeance upon the ungodly, the Christian turns the loving eye. He is not reconciled to half a god, or to a god with half the attributes of God, namely, love and tenderness, but he loves God as he finds Him. He loves that God who is a consuming fire! I would be afraid if I could not love God under any aspect in which He is presented to me, because just as I would feel that I did not love a man truly if I said, “In such a character I cannot endure him,” I would feel that there was some difference between him and me. We must love God in *every* Character—upon the Throne of Justice, as well as upon the Seat of Love.

**5, 6.** *Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of His hands, He shall destroy them, and not build them up. Blessed be the LORD, because He has heard the voice of my supplications.* Can you say this? Excuse me putting the question again and again to all now present, for it is a very vital question. If you never knew what answered prayer means, God help you to begin to pray, “Blessed be the Lord, because He has heard the voice of my supplications.”

—Adapted from the *C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

**PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON  
TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.**

# DIVINE FORGIVENESS ADMIRIED AND IMITATED NO. 1841

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, MAY 17, 1885,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

***“Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a quarrel  
against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do you.”  
Colossians 3:13.***

To whom is this exhortation addressed? The Apostle told us in the 12<sup>th</sup> verse—“Elect of God, holy and beloved.” Here are three particulars. They are, first of all, “elect of God,” that is to say, chosen according to His eternal purpose. They are made choice ones by being thus chosen. Next, they are sanctified by the Spirit of God and are, therefore, called “holy”—this holiness appertaining to their persons and their pursuits, their calling and their conversation. When the Spirit of God has fully done His work, He sheds abroad in their hearts the love of God, so that *experimentally* they feel themselves to be “beloved.” To abide in the love of God is the fruit of election and the result of holiness. If any of you can, with humble confidence, claim these three titles, “elect of God, holy and beloved,” you are among the most favored of all mankind! The Father has made of you a special choice! In you His Holy Spirit has worked a special work and you possess, within your souls, the special joy of living in the love of God! “Elect of God, holy and beloved”—it is as you enjoy these three things that you will find it easy to carry out the precept which is now set before you, “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do you.”

Note in our text, before we proceed to the full discussion of it, what an honor this Scripture puts upon our Lord Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 4:32 a similar precept is placed in a rather different form, for it runs thus—“Even as God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven you.” Here, as if to show the true and proper equality of the Christ with God, it is written, “Even as Christ forgave you.” In the Revised Version they read, “even as the Lord forgave you,” but they place in the margin, “Many ancient authorities read *Christ*.” In that case we see that *Lord* and *Christ* were interchangeable terms when those ancient authorities were alive. None can forgive sins but God. He alone forgives against whom the sin is committed. Sin, therefore, being against Christ and Christ being able to forgive it, we see that He is exalted on high to give remission of sins. He shares in the high and royal prerogative of God, seeing He is able to forgive sin.

Does not this expression seem to say that albeit the Apostle and other inspired writers had many things to write of, yet one thing was always upon their hearts, namely, to honor their Lord? Is not this a proof of how

thoroughly they were under the influence of the Spirit of God, of whom Jesus said, "He shall glorify Me"? Whatever He is teaching, whatever duty He is enforcing, whatever promise He is delivering, the Holy Spirit takes care to do it so that the Lord Jesus Christ is exalted in the hearts of His people! Let us, in our hearts, adore the Anointed One, Christ Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God—and never let us hesitate to honor the Son even as we honor the Father. Let us, as penitents, adore the pardoning Savior, seeing He has power to forgive sins and has cleansed the myriads of His redeemed from all their iniquities.

But, Brothers and Sisters, while this gives glory to Christ, what a weight is lent to the precept, since it is supported by the example and the authority of our Divine Lord—"Even as Christ forgave you, so also do you." What a model is set before us! How perfect is that spirit of love which we are to manifest! Even as Christ forgave us, we are bid to forgive others. What nobler pattern could have been chosen? Surely He that trifles with this precept, or thinks it one that is left to our option—to obey or to neglect—cannot rightly know the dignity of the Christ in whose pierced hands this Law is held forth before our eyes! Depend upon it, this command, so wondrously linked with the Person of the pardoning Christ, is of no common importance. If the Law given by Moses was so solemnly binding, what shall we say of this Law which is embodied in the life of the Lord Jesus?

Surely I shall scarcely need to plead with you, who are His disciples, that you give your heart's best attention to such teaching! Your Lord, Himself, stands before you! You remember how He forgave you all your trespasses? Then I am sure you will give earnest heed to His exhortation to forgive. May the dove-like Spirit now brood over this assembly and create love in all our bosoms.

Two things are to be done. First, let us *study the pattern of forgiveness* here set before us. And then, secondly, let us *copy it for ourselves* in our forgiveness of those who trespass against us.

**I. Carefully STUDY THE PATTERN OF FORGIVENESS** set before us in the text. "Even as Christ forgave you, so also do you." *What is this forgiveness of Christ?* You know how He exhibited it in His daily life. He was much tried, but He was never provoked to wrath. Both by friends and by enemies He was made to suffer, yet He neither accused the one nor the other to His great Father. He never reviled those who reviled Him, but patiently yielded to their malice, giving His back to the smiters and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. His disciples He gently rebuked, but He never spoke to them in anger. A life of forgiveness was crowned by His dying prayer for His persecutors, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." He loved His enemies. He lived for His enemies. He died for His enemies. He was Incarnate gentleness, the mirror and paragon of forgiveness.

Observe, also, that He forgave offenses most great and grievous. It was a horrible thing that when the Lord Jesus came into the world, moved by pure love, He was not welcomed, but Herod sought to slay the young Child. Afterwards, when He appeared publicly among men, the Jews took up stones to stone Him. He was treated with contumely. His miracles were

ascribed to the devil and His holy and unspotted Character was traduced by His being called a drunk and a winebibber. He was the firstborn of the Lord of the vineyard, but when the husbandmen saw Him, they said, "This is the heir; come, let us kill Him and the inheritance shall be ours." You know with what scornful cruelty they treated Him in the hour of His passion. What could the malice of Hell have invented more contemptuous and cruel than that which men used towards the Well-Beloved? Had He been the basest of beings, His sufferings would have been too cruel. Men did all they could against Him.

Say not that you have never thus transgressed. Oh, Sirs, we, also, have crucified Him, for our sins were laid upon Him by Jehovah. We, also, must confess, "He was despised and we esteemed Him not." There was a time when we, who are now His followers, once "hid, as it were, our faces from Him." He called us, but we gave Him no answer! He wooed us, but we were blind to His beauties! We can never remember this without deep emotions of regret. We used no other friend so evilly. We crucified Him and slew Him, as far as we were able to do it, by our rejection of His love. And yet He has forgiven us! He is ready to forgive all such as seek His face. Oh, the splendor of that love which blots out sins like ours! What a flood of Grace is this which rises above the tops of the mountains of our sins and covers them forever!

It matters not how black or crimson our transgressions may have been, the moment we come to Jesus He makes us whiter than snow! He puts away the most horrible of offenses, the most glaring of transgressions in a moment! He says, "I forgive you. Go and sin no more"—and we, then and there—receive a perfect pardon! I would that all of you who have never sought that Grace would be induced by this blessed fact to come with all your sins and receive immediate absolution from the hand of your Lord!

Remember, also, to increase your wonderment at His forgiveness, that these offenses which were committed against Christ were altogether wanton and unprovoked. He could demand of His adversaries, "For which of those works do you stone Me?" Towards no man had He acted unjustly or even harshly. He had been all tenderness and lowliness in every place towards all sorts of men—and yet certain men became incensed against Him because of His goodness! Did they refuse to love Him because He was altogether lovely? Did they despise Him because He was so truly great? Such is the depravity of the human heart, that the very virtues of Christ provoked the hostility of men! What has my Lord Christ ever done against any of you? Why do you refuse Him?

I have heard many a man say, "If I had done anything whatever to provoke this ill-will, I could account for it, but they persecute me wrongfully." It was pre-eminently so in the case of our Lord, who says in the Psalm, "They hated Me without a cause." Yet He forgave this wanton malice! He continues to forgive such causeless wrong. With His own blood, He blots out horrible insults against Himself, His people, His Gospel and His love. Even you who oppose His Kingdom and refuse His service shall be, at once, forgiven, if you will bow your hearts before Him and accept that rich mercy which His hand is so ready to bestow! See what a pattern is here of

the passing-by of the greatest and most malicious offenses! How can hatred live in the Presence of such love?

Christ has shown this pardon to the most unworthy persons. Of all whom He forgave when He was here below, *none* deserved such kindness. In fact, to talk of *deserving* forgiveness is a contradiction in terms! Certainly in me—and I have no doubt in you, my Brothers and Sisters—who have tasted of His infinite mercy, there was no presence of claim to His mercy in our cases. If He had left us in our sin. If He had passed by us and allowed us to perish, what complaint could we have brought against Him? Since He loved us and forgave us, it must have been because of something within *Himself*—it could not have been from anything in us! We are unworthy, but He is gracious—and herein He teaches us to pardon the most provoking and worthless of those who trespass against us.

Be it never forgotten that He always had the power to have executed vengeance upon any one of us if He had been pleased to do so. Some men pardon because they cannot punish—they are too weak to execute vengeance and, therefore, they refrain from it. Half the forgiveness in the world comes from a feeble hand rather than from a forgiving heart. But the Christ could have crushed His adversaries in a moment if He had willed it, and yet He freely forgave! When they said, “Come down from the Cross”—suppose He had instantly loosed the nails and leaped among them—where had they been, then? They would have begged the rocks to fall upon them and the mountains to cover them from His face if He had but manifested the glory of His power! But He was not provoked to leave the Cross, or to break the silence of His passion by so much as a rebuke. Mercy was stored like honey in His heart and pardon dropped its sweetness from His lips.

The Lord has been greatly long-suffering with ourselves when a breath might have destroyed us. We might easily have been destroyed in accidents which befell us, or we might have died in our various sicknesses and so have sunk to the lowest Hell. But instead of slaying us, our Lord even interposed to spare us—to spare us when our life was rebellion! When He could so easily have blotted out our lives, He did not do so, but in boundless mercy blotted out our *sins*. Let us magnify His amazing Grace and imitate it in our lives.

I want you, for a moment, to consider the question, *How did He forgive?* The manner of our Lord’s forgiveness is as noteworthy as the pardon, itself. The Lord Jesus came and pardoned us when that act of Grace was unsolicited! Before we had *thought* of mercy, He had thoughts of mercy toward us! I remember reading in one of our magazines a story of a city missionary who discovered a poor girl who had wandered from the ways of virtue. He had sought to restore her to a better life. He spoke with her till she became somewhat tender of heart. He enquired about her family and learned that she had once enjoyed a happy home and had known a tender father’s love. “But he would never look at me now,” she said. “I am sure he never would—I am such a degraded creature that I could not venture near his door.” “Have you never written to him?” “No, I could not write to him. It would be of no use. I could not expect him to send me an answer and it would break my heart to be refused.”

“We will try,” said the good man, “we will write to him.” He wrote to the father and the next post brought back an answer, with the word, “Immediate,” written upon the envelope. The sum of the letter enclosed within was, “Ready to forgive.” She was taken to her father. She was soon locked in his embrace. All was forgiven—the wanderer was restored! Notice that her father had been praying for her, night and day, ever since she left his roof—and he had longed to receive her to his home again. Her seeking his forgiveness did not *cause* it—it was in his heart long before—and no doubt it was because of his cries and tears that God, in mercy, touched his girl’s heart and brought her home. O Sinner, before you think of Christ, He has thoughts of love towards you! He says, “I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, your transgressions, and, as a cloud, your sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed you.” The forgiveness is *first* and the returning to the Lord is urged as a *consequence* of that forgiveness! Pardon is not first in the matter of our personal experience, but it is first as matter of fact with God. Oh! the mercy of the Lord Christ, that before we know our sin, He has made atonement for it by His own precious blood!

The Lord Jesus Christ is to be held up as an example of pardoning love for the true and hearty way in which He forgives sin. Forgiveness, when it comes from human lips in measured, studied phrases, is not worth having, for the heart is not in it, or it would be more free and joyful. The Lord Jesus Christ absolves sinners with all His heart. He never acts in a cold, formal manner. Never does He outwardly forgive and in secret retain His wrath—but wholly, entirely, joyfully, He puts away the sin of those whom He forgives—and puts it away forever! When He forgives, He forgives the whole of our faults, follies, failures and offenses. There is a certain solidarity about sin, so that it makes up one lump. I read the other day of a certain theologian speaking of Christ having put away original sin while He left actual sin. Nonsense! Sin is one and indivisible! Iniquity is not to be done up in separate parcels. The sin, the iniquity of men, is spoken of in the Bible as one thing. Although we sin multitudes of times, the various streams all flow into one sea of evil—when sin is forgiven, *all* sin is put away—not a shred, nor fragment, nor particle remains! The Lord Jesus drowns all the hosts of sin in the depths of the sea and the whole of our guilt is swallowed up forever. This is great forgiveness, indeed! Glory be to Him who gives it! Let us follow Him in His truth and heartiness.

This forgiveness, again, is given by the Lord Jesus Christ in the most complete possible manner. He keeps no back reckonings. He retains no reserves of anger. He so forgives that He forgets. That is the wonder of it! He says, “I will not remember your sins.” He casts them behind His back—they are wholly and completely gone from His observation or regard. Alas, such is poor human nature that even fathers, when they have forgiven a wayward child, will, perhaps, throw the offense in his teeth years after when he again offends. But it is never so with Christ. He says, “Your sins shall not be mentioned against you any more, forever.” He has done with the sins of His people in so effectual a way that not a whisper concerning them shall ever come from His mouth so as to grieve them. They will, themselves, remember their sins with deep repentance, but the

Lord will never challenge them on account of their past rebellions. Blessed be the name of Christ for such complete forgiveness as this!

The Lord Jesus Christ forgives His people in a continuous manner. He forgave us long ago—He still forgives us. He does not forgive and afterwards accuse. His forgiveness is eternal. It is not a reprieve He gives to you, believing ones, but a free pardon, under the King's hand and seal, which shall effectually protect you from accusation and punishment. "In those days, and in that time, says the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve." He has finished transgression, made an end of sin and brought in everlasting righteousness. Send to Hell a pardoned sinner?! It were a contradiction to the very nature of God! Condemn those for whom Jesus died?! Why, the Apostle mentions that death as a conclusive answer to the challenge, "Who is he that condemns? It is Christ who died, yes, who is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us." How shall He intercede for us and yet accuse us? It is impossible for Christ to be both Redeemer and Condemner to the same persons. So perfect is His pardon that our sin has ceased to be! He has put away sin forever by the sacrifice of Himself.

Greatly do I admire the very gracious way in which that pardon is given. Some people offer forgiveness in an ungracious way. They make it appear that they are coming down from such awful heights when they forgive a fellow mortal. In great dignity they march down in state from their own splendid innocence to the poor Brother who has done them a wrong—as good as saying, "I will condescend to do this, though it is an awful stoop for such an angelic being as I am." You never feel that about the Christ, for He places His pardon down so low that He seems to say, "Receive My mercy, I beg you to receive it." He speaks as if He were *favoured* by a sinner's accepting His forgiveness! He humbles Himself and never scalds a sinner with scornful pity.

Though the Christ condescends more than all the condescensions of all men put together, "for worms were never raised so high above their meanest fellow worms," yet the condescension is so real and royal that there is no ostentation in it! He is born to the manner—He condescends naturally, like condescension's own self. Some are most proud when they stoop, but Jesus graciously seems to put Himself on a level with us, yes, and even to go *lower* than we are, that He may lift us up! Admire as much the way in which Christ forgives as the forgiveness which He bestows. It breaks my heart to think what a loving Christ He was to me when I sought His forgiveness. Truly, "He gives liberally and upbraids not"—He frowned and thundered when I looked to my own righteousness—but when I turned to His Gospel of Free Grace, I had from Him not even a hard word—He was all love and tenderness to me, the chief of sinners!

Above all, the greatness of His forgiveness is seen in the fact that the offense had brought great trouble into the world and He bore that trouble. The sinner, by his wrong doing, had subjected himself to great loss and calamity. Now, when we forgive a person who has done us a wrong, we say, "I freely forgive you, but you have involved yourself in certain conse-

quences which you will have to bear, and out of these I cannot help you.” Our blessed Master seemed to say, Sinner, you have sinned yourself under the curse of God. You have sinned yourself into misery and into death—and as the proof that I do freely forgive you—I will take all this suffering and this death upon Myself. You have done the wrong wantonly and wickedly, but I will bear the consequences. You have knotted the whips, but they shall scourge My shoulders. You have sharpened the nails, but they shall pierce My hands and feet. You have put yourself under curse and penalty, but I will bear the curse of death that you may be free.”

Was there ever mercy like this? Do not all who know this love accept it gladly? Sinner, do you not know this? Have you never heard about it? Know you not that the Lord, even Jesus, the Son of God, is able to forgive you all your trespasses—that it will be a joy to His heart to do so—and to do it at once? Oh, that before that clock shall strike again you may be able to say, “There is, therefore, now no condemnation, for Christ has put away my sin.” This is not according to the manner of men—it is Godlike! It is a sure proof that Jesus is the Son of God, for who could act like this but One who is Himself the Son of God?

Thus have I set before you, in my poor way, this great forgiveness and the manner of it. I trust you have had an experience of it. Assuredly we all need such forgiveness—do any of you deny it? May the Holy Spirit open your blind eyes and melt your hard hearts. According to the text, those who have received pardon know that they have it, for Paul speaks positively—“Even as Christ forgave you”—as if it were a matter of fact well known among the people of God. There is a theory abroad that we may be forgiven and not know it—that Jesus may forgive and we may never discover it until we come to our dying moments. That is a wretched kind of Gospel! By the *true* Gospel we may know we are forgiven and be sure of it—surer than if we saw, written by the autograph of Christ, the words—“I have forgiven you.” The eyes may deceive, but the witness of the Spirit of God within the heart can never delude us! If you believe that Jesus is the Christ and if you are resting, alone, on Him, your sins, which are many, are forgiven you, “for the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.” In knowing that we are forgiven by Christ, let us be clear and decided in our forgiveness of others—not only in *word*—but in deed and in truth let us exhibit a forbearing spirit.

**II.** You see your example. Our second word is, COPY IT FOR YOURSELVES. If the Holy Spirit enables you to write according to this copy, you will have the approval of the Lord resting upon you. See how large and clear the letters are! It will be no small success if you can reproduce them. “Even as Christ forgave you”—the imitation should be as exact as possible. Mark the, “even,” and the, “so,” and endeavor to keep up with your gracious Lord.

Notice, however, in the text, that this precept concerning the imitation of Christ in forgiveness is *universally applicable*. The text is not long, but see how unqualified is its range. “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a quarrel against any.” You see it is not put that *superiors* are to forgive inferiors, or, on the other hand, that the less are to forgive the greater—but the circle of the command includes the

whole! It is, “forbearing one another.” The rich are to be forbearing to the poor. The poor are to be forbearing to the rich. The elderly man is to forgive the junior for his imprudence. The junior is to bear with the petulance and slowness of the elder. It is an all-round business, implying that one of these days I shall have to forgive you and you will have to forgive me!

Personally, I tax your forbearance to put up with me and I need not say that, sometimes, I have need to exercise forbearance towards one and another in so large a Church! We have all our own angles and edges and these are apt to come into contact with others. We are all pieces of one puzzle and shall fit in with each other one day and make a complete whole. But just now we seem misshapen and unfitting. Our corners need to be rounded. Sometimes they are chipped off by collision with somebody else and that is not comfortable for the person with whom we collide. Like pebbles in the river of the Water of Life, we are wearing each other round and smooth as the living current brings us into communion—everybody is polishing and being polished—and in the process it is inevitable that some present inconvenience should be sustained. But nobody must mind it, for it is part of a great process by which we shall all come into proper shape and be made meet for endless fellowship.

“Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another”—you see it has two sides. “Ah,” says one, “I cannot understand it. People ought to be far more forbearing to me.” Just so, but the first point is that *you* should be forgiving towards them. What numbers of Church members think that the duties of a Church are all one-sided. “I was ill and nobody came to see me.” “Did you send for anybody to see you?” “No, I did not.” Brother, before you find fault, remember your own fault—you have violated the command, “Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church.” “But nobody exhibits Christian love,” says one. Is that true of *yourself*? I have noticed that the man who says that love is dead is usually rather short of love, himself. How very different the Church looks to different eyes—one sees a thousand virtues to admire—and another a world of evil to expose! One gratefully cries, “When I was ill, the dear Brethren came to see me so often that I had to ask them not to stay very long.” Another grumbles, “I might have laid there a month and nobody would ever have come near me.” We understand the reason for this difference—the tone of the speech is the key to the riddle. As a rule, with what measure we mete, it is measured to us. I do not find Christ’s people to be one half so faulty as I am, myself. I meet with many Christians whom I think it an honor to know and commune with—and those of another sort are useful to me as warnings and as fields for exercising my Graces. The forgiveness and the forbearance are needed all round and we must both give and take. By the sweet love of Jesus, let us not fail in this business.

Let me say, here, that this matter is an absolutely essential one—*this forbearance and this forgiveness are vital*. Be not deceived, God is not mocked! No man is a child of God who has not a likeness to God and no man is forgiven who will not, himself, forgive. In the Middle Ages a certain baron had a feud with another nobleman and determined to avenge himself for some insult, real or imaginary. His enemy was to pass by the cas-

tle with a small retinue and, therefore, the baron determined to waylay him and kill him, or, at least, to punish him severely and exact a ransom. A holy man who lived in the castle begged and entreated the baron to forbear from bloodshed and make peace. But, for some time, he pleaded in vain. The baron would not be appeased, but swore that he would be avenged of his adversary. So this godly man begged one favor of him, namely, that he would come with him into the chapel and offer prayer before he sallied forth.

They knelt together in prayer and before they rose the saintly man said, "My lord, repeat after me the Lord's Prayer." He went on saying, word by word, as the other did, till he came to that, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." There the good man stopped and said, "I charge you not to say this unless you really mean it! Do not mock the Lord! You may not go out and fight if you thus speak with God. You will have to appear before God and be judged for your sins, for you will not be forgiven if you do not forgive. Choose, then, either to utter this prayer and forgive and be saved, or to refuse the prayer and go forth to battle and be lost." The baron paused and bit his lips but, at last his better spirit prevailed and he cried, "I cannot renounce my hope of Heaven! I cannot renounce my hope of forgiveness! Therefore my enemy shall pass by my castle in safety and I *will* say, 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.'"

Do not attempt to deceive God! If you must lie and cheat, practice your impositions upon your fellow men, but do not *imagine* that you can flatter your Maker or deceive the Omniscient One! If you will not forgive, say so, and expect eternal perdition! But if you profess to be a Christian, obey this great and essential precept and forgive as Christ forgave you! Be honest, be straight with God, for He will be honest and straight with you. But if you cannot and will not forgive, then look forward to a portion with the tormentors, for even the loving Jesus says, "Neither shall My heavenly Father forgive you."

In urging you to this copying of Christ, let me notice that this forgiveness of those who offend against us is *gloriously ennobling*. We are not asked to perform a duty which will, in the least, degrade us. Revenge is paltry—forgiveness is great-minded. Was not David infinitely greater than Saul when he spared his life in the cave and when he would not kill him as he lay asleep on the battlefield? Did not the king humble himself before David when he perceived David's forbearance? If you would be the greatest among men, bear injuries with the greatest gentleness! If you would win the noblest of conquests, subdue yourself! To win a battle is a little thing if it is fought out with sword and gun. But to win it in God's way, with no weapons but love, patience and forgiveness—this is the most glorious of victories! Blessed is that man who is more than a conqueror because he inflicts no wounds in the conflict, but overcomes evil with good! In the process of such a conquest the warrior is, himself, a gainer.

A nation in fighting, even if it wins the campaign, has to suffer great expense and loss of life. But he that overcomes by love is the better and stronger man through what he has done. He comes out of the conflict not only victor over his adversary, but victor over sin within himself—and all

the readier for future war against evil. He glorifies God and, he, himself, becomes strong in Divine Grace. Nothing is more glorious than love! Your Master, who is King of kings, set you an example of gaining glory by enduring wrong. If you would be knights of His company, imitate His graciousness.

Notice that this imitation of Christ is *logically appropriate to you all*. Brothers and Sisters, if Christ has forgiven you, the parable we read just now shows that it is imperative that you should forgive your fellows. If our Lord has forgiven us our 10,000 talents, how can we take our brother by the throat for the 100 pence and say, "Pay me what you owe"? If we are, indeed, members of Christ, should we not be like our Head? If we profess to be His servants, are we to pretend to a dignity greater than our Master, who washed His disciples' feet? If He forgave so freely, how dare we call ourselves His brethren if our spirit is hard and malice lingers within us?

I say, to conclude, that this copying of Christ is *most forcibly sustained by the example given in the text*. We are to forbear and to forgive. "Even as Christ forgave you, so also do you." I have heard it said, "If you pass by every wanton offense and take no notice of it, you will come to be despised and regarded as a person of mean spirit—your honor demands vindication." When Christ forgave you, did His honor suffer by that forgiveness? You transgressed most wickedly and yet He forgave you—do you regard Him as less honorable because of that readiness to pass by offenses? Far from it—it is His Glory to forgive! The hallelujahs of saints and the songs of angels are sent up to His Throne the more heartily because of the richness of His Grace and the freeness of His mercy! Dishonor, indeed! What pride it is on the part of such poor creatures as we are to talk about our honor! Where is the honor of revenge? It is a dishonorable thing to put yourself on the level of him who injures you.

A heathen philosopher used to say, "If an ass kicks you, is it necessary for the maintenance of your honor to kick that ass, also?" That speech looks like a noble one, but yet it is too much flavored with contempt. When you speak, or even *think* of another who has wronged you as though he were only worthy to be regarded as a *beast*, you are not right in spirit—a degree of evil remains in your heart. Think of the offender without contempt as well as without resentment! Believe that he is a brother worth winning. Say, "If he does me an injury, for that very reason I will do him a double service. My only vengeance shall be double *love*. I will not allow myself to even *think* harshly of him. I will put the best possible construction on all that he does and thus show that the spirit of Christ is in me, conquering the spirit of fallen humanity both in me and in him."

Says one, "If we always overlook offenses, other people may also be tempted to do us wrong." Our text furnishes us with a ready answer to this. The Lord Jesus Christ forgave *you*. Have you met anybody who has been tempted to do wrong because the Lord has forgiven you? He has freely forgiven myriads of poor unworthy sinners and has that promoted sin? No. Is it not the very groundwork and case of holiness in the world, that Jesus is so gracious as to pardon sin? Why, then, should your forbearance do harm? Do not pretend to be so very wise, for therein you censure your Master! You are not the ruler of the world. It is not for *you* to be

refraining from good for fear that evil may come of it—attend to your own ways—forgive everyone his brother his trespasses and leave consequences with God.

“Oh, but,” says one, “I know several pious persons who are very unforgiving.” You do not know any really good man who is of that character! I make bold to say that no man is really good if he has not a forgiving spirit. Unwillingness to forgive is a grievous flaw in anyone’s character. But if there *were* such good people, what have you to do with them? Is the servant to imitate his fellow servant, especially in his faults? The example set before you is, “Even as *Christ* forgave you.” You have nothing to do with either saints or sinners in this matter! Your Lord says to you, “What is that to you? Follow Me.” Perhaps you do not know all the story which you think proves that a good man has been unforgiving—and if you do know it, you are no judge of others. Mind your own business and even “as *Christ* forgave you, so also do you.”

But I hear another one saying, “These persons would not have forgiven *me*.” Just so, but then you are a child of God—you are, “elect, holy and beloved.” You are not to lower your standard to that of publicans and sinners. Does not *Christ* continually say, “What do you more than others? Do not even the publicans and the sinners the same?” “If you love them that love you, what thanks have you?” But if you love them that despitefully use you, then blessed are you when men shall persecute you! In that case you have an opportunity of showing your love to your Lord. When Dr. Duff first read to some young Brahmins in the Government school the precept, “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you,” one of the Brahmins cried out with delight, “Beautiful! Beautiful! This *must* have come from the true God. I have been told to love those that love me and I have not always done that—but to love my *enemies* is a Divine thought.” That young man became a Christian under the influence of that precept. Do not darken this Light of God, but be sure to display it in your life, that many may be attracted to *Christ* by its luster. Let your goodwill go forth even to the worst of men, for *Christ*’s sake. Forget *their* evil as you behold *His* goodness.

“Well,” says one, “I would forgive the fellow, but he does not deserve it.” That is why you are to forgive him! If he *deserved* it, you would be bound to do him the justice which he could claim. But, as he does not deserve it, you have, here, an appeal to your Christian love. Does not your heavenly Father give good things to the unthankful and to the evil? Did not *Jesus* forgive the undeserving when He forgave *you*? Does He not overlook our wretched characters when He has mercy upon us?

I hear one say, “I cannot forgive!” That is a terrible confession. The Apostle of the Gentiles said, “I can do all things through *Christ* which strengthens me.” Is not the same strength available for you? Some persons find forgiving and forgetting to be hard work, but, as you are bound to do it, or stay out of Heaven, you must cry to God for help and set about it with determination. If you are, indeed, a child of God, you will soon find the difficulty gone. Indeed, forgiveness will become easy to you! To be forgiven is such sweetness that honey is tasteless in comparison with it! But

there is one thing still sweeter—and that is to forgive. As it is more blessed to give than to receive, so to forgive rises a stage higher in experience than to be forgiven. To be forgiven is, as it were, the root—to forgive is the flower. That Divine Spirit, who bears witness with our spirit when He breathes peace into us because we are pardoned, bears yet a higher witness with us when He enables us to truly pardon all manner of trespasses against ourselves!

Let it never be said, in a Christian Church, that members bear a grudge against one another. I do not know that it is so in your case—assuredly it should not be so *anywhere*. Let it not be said of any Christian man that he is unloving, ready to take offense, apt to bear malice, or quick to anger. Cultivate forbearance till your heart yields a fine crop of it. Pray for a short memory as to all unkindnesses. I bless God that I know a man who finds it easy to forgive and to forget all offenses against himself. He takes no credit for so doing, for no one ever offends him in a way which is worth remembering. That man has been reminded again and again of the misbehavior of unreasonable and unkind men, but he has honestly said, “I had quite forgotten it.” He does not claim this forgetfulness as a virtue, for as a matter of fact his memory has become weak in that direction and he has no desire to strengthen it. He has never tried to recollect unkindnesses and now, by long disuse, his memory happily fails him upon such matters! That man has often enjoyed exquisite pleasure in doing good to those who have injured him—and he can truly say that, at this moment, he bears no ill-will to any soul upon this earth.

He does not think this to be any singular attainment, for his belief is that every follower of Jesus should be of the same mind. Do you not think the same? I am sure I do. I heard this man once say of another, “He spoke against me that which was false, but if he had known more about me, he might have said something far worse and have been nearer the truth. Perhaps my false accuser believed what he said and thought he was doing a right thing in protesting against what he thought was my fault. At any rate, no one can harm my character, unless I do so myself.” It is a wise thing to profit by every accusation, whether true or false, by trying to be better!

Let us so live as to be able to say, “I am as much at peace with all men as a new-born child.” Thus shall we wear the mark of the Spirit of God. In a word, my Brothers and Sisters—“Even us Christ forgave you, so also do you.” Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Matthew 18.  
HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—30, 202, 203.**

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# THAT HORRIBLE EAST WIND!

## NO. 1693

**DELIVERED AT THE THURSDAY EVENING LECTURE,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

*“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you are  
also called in one body; and be you thankful.”  
Colossians 3:15.*

I do not know how it is, but during the last two or three days I have been called to sympathize with an amount of sorrow such as I have seldom met with before in so short a space of time. One messenger of misery has followed on the heels of another, each one with heavy tidings. Nor is that all, for I have also been perplexed with a large amount of sinning, quarrelling and fault-finding. People are murmuring, grumbling, fretting and fighting on all sides. This has tried me so much that I feel little fitted to act as comforter, for I need comfort, myself. I have endeavored to cheer others till I have drunk of their cup of sorrow and put my own mouth out of taste—I have tried to make peace for others till I am half afraid of losing my own—I have answered the people’s grumblings till I am tempted to have a growl or two on my own account.

Perhaps I may relieve my own mind by the sermon which I hope to deliver. I said to one whom I greatly esteem, “I do not know how it is, but everybody seems out of sorts with everybody else just now.” His wise answer was, “THE WIND IS IN THE EAST.” This fact accounts for a great deal, for—

***“When the wind is in the east,  
’Tis neither good for man nor beast.”***

This is that ill wind which seems to blow no man any good. Some humanities feel the east wind terribly—it sets their teeth on edge and they feel that they must bite the first person they meet. I am glad to find some sort of excuse for my fellow Christians and, if I can find it nowhere but in the east wind, I will make the best I can of it. But I earnestly hope that the wind may soon blow from another quarter and not come from the east, again, till we have had a little respite and laid in a new stock of patience. If a cutting wind causes despondency, vexation, discontent and bad temper—may soft gales visit us frequently and bring us healing in their wings!

As fair weather will not last forever, it will be well to prepare ourselves to breast the blast. It will never do for us to have a religion which can be killed by the wind—we must be made of better stuff than that! Yet this wind is blamed and I wish, therefore, that it would take itself off. If I could find a snug corner where the cruel east wind was never felt, I would feel inclined to promote an emigration movement for certain persons whom I will not mention! As for myself, I am afraid that it would not suit me to be altogether screened from the wind, for trials are necessary to one who is called to this ministry. Troubles and east winds will come to the servants

of God and they are sent to do us good, for perhaps, if we could get our backs against a protecting wall and sit forever in the sunshine, with no east wind to interfere with us, we would go to sleep, or waking, we might come to love this world so well as to be loath to leave it!

It would be a horrible thing for any one of us if the south wind should softly breathe upon our cheeks and whisper gently in our ears of long-continued joy to be found on earth—for then we would be tempted to sit down and say, “Soul, take your ease. You have, at last, found a place free from the trials of time. Therefore eat, drink and be merry, and let the future world care for itself.” When I turn over in my mind the events of the last few days I do not suppose that there is more discord or discontent in the world just now than at any other time, but it happens that a number of black lines have all found their center in me and my thoughts have had to travel out in all those directions—all which is trying enough, but all the more so when the wind is in the east.

It is a coincidence, but the same has happened before. I have had to unravel many tangled skeins in my time out of love to others. I did not get the threads into a ravel, but people are very fond of bringing me their snarls to disentangle and, when I have a hope of succeeding, I try my best. Gladly would I be a peacemaker, but it is much easier to make a snarl than to put it straight, again—especially in the east wind. I have tried to set things right and, meanwhile, I have asked myself, “Is there not a remedy for these mischiefs?” I feel assured there is such a remedy. Family discomfort, husbands and wives that cannot agree, domestic difficulties, brothers and sisters that fall out, Church troubles, members that are not treated kindly by others, (not generally the kindest sort of people, themselves, I notice), difficulties in business, difficulties in preaching—the world teems with these things!

When the wind is in the east, we meet with many people who cannot earn enough wages, others who do not believe they were ever treated well since they were born. There are others, again, who are highly deserving people, but have never yet been appreciated as they should be. And these all come out in crowds when the wind is in the east. Good men become rabid for something new, find fault with old friends, invite debate and quarrel about nothing—and this happens most often when the wind is in the east. When this kind of spirit gets among Christian people, it is very sad. But surely there must be a remedy for it! Many nostrums are proposed, many quacks are ready to prescribe this and that form of remedy for troubles and discords, but the results of the east wind are not to be removed in that way—a higher power is needed.

I have heard of pills for the earthquake and medicine for the comet—but I have no such patent medicine for the east wind! All I have to tell you is borrowed from an old Book in which the wisest prescriptions are to be found—prescriptions so excellent that if they were followed, the inhabitant would no more say, “I am sick.” This windy night I shall take you to the great Physician of souls, Jehovah-Rophi—The Lord Who Heals Us—who is able to cure all our diseases and to give permanent relief from all evil so that our spirits shall be at rest. I believe that we have a prescription in

this verse, which, if it is well attended to, will deliver you out of all troubles, make you sing all your lives long, help you to travel from earth to Heaven and be, all the while, as happy as the birds in the air!

Here it is—"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you are also called in one body; and be you thankful." If we dissect our text, we shall find, in it, four pieces of advice.

**I. First, POSSESS THE PEACE OF GOD**—"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts." It cannot rule in your hearts if you have never felt its power! Therefore, make certain that you are truly reconciled to God by Jesus Christ. Many persons have peace, but, alas, it is false peace. They have the peace of a soft, gentle, timorous, time-serving character—a mean sort of peace, which, if it hurts no one else, often ruins its possessor. Some have the peace of ignorance, the peace of stupidity, the peace of utter indifference—false peace. These are the followers of those false prophets who cried, "peace, peace," where there was no peace. Woe to the man whose peace of mind is like the deadly smoothness of the current just as it nears the waterfall!

Many are at ease in a condition which might make a wise man's hair turn gray in a night. They were never emptied from vessel to vessel and, therefore, they are settled upon their lees—but they shall be poured out to their utter confusion. They think right well of themselves, but already the axe of judgment is lifted against them. The peace that we need to possess is the peace of God, which means, I think, first, peace *with* God. Oh, what a blessed thing it is to feel that the great cause of quarrel between our fallen spirit and the great Spirit is taken away—that we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son—that sin, the great divider, has been cast into the depths of the sea and that there is established between us and God, a happy fellowship!

I hope many of you are, at this hour, enjoying such peace. If you have it, rejoice in it! If you, then, are at peace with God, do not perpetually act as if that peace were questionable and doubtful. Do not sigh and cry as if the matter trembled in the balance. If we believe in Jesus Christ, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Oh, the joy of knowing that, "as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" and that, therefore, they can never return from so immense a distance—yes, never return at all, for the Lord Jesus Christ has cast them into the depths of the sea—and if they are searched for, they shall not be found! Yes, they shall not be, says the Lord! Blessed is that man who has peace with God through the atoning blood!

Growing out of this there comes, next, a peace with God with regard to all His Providences which can only come through a complete and entire submission to the Divine will, for some there are who are *not* at peace with God, even about a certain Providence that afflicted them years ago. They remain quarrelling with God about the decease of a beloved wife, or child, or mother—they cannot forgive God for having taken a flower out of His own garden. If they were wise, they would not thus rebel, but find in their loving Savior a recompense for all their losses. Was not that fine of An-

dromache, when she remembered that she had lost all her relatives except her husband, and, gazing on him with delight, said—

***“While my Hector still survives, I see  
My father, mother, brethren, all in thee!”***

Cannot a Believer say the same of the Lord Jesus? Far be it from us to raise a question about what the Providence of God has already done! It must be right! The point is to keep on submitting to that Providence in what is now transpiring. If, for the present, the will of the Lord should send me poverty, obscurity, pain, weariness, reproach, I must be at peace with God about it all.

If the Lord says to me, “Go across the sea and leave all your friends,” I must not delay. If He says, “Preach unwelcome Truths of God which will make you enemies,” I must not hesitate. If He says, “Stay in the house with rheumatism,” I must not come out of doors. If the Lord says, “Lie on your back and cough,” it is not for me to quarrel with Him and say it ought not to be so. If He denies us that which we think would make us not only more happy, but more useful, it is of no use for us to kick against the pricks. The Divine appointment will certainly be fulfilled and the misery to us will be in struggling against the yoke, in endeavoring to have it otherwise than Divine love and infinite wisdom have determined it should be!

If you cannot change your place, change your mind till your mind shall take to your place and you shall love it! Why, there have been men so helped of God to conquer self that they have hugged their crosses! I think it is Rutherford who somewhere says that he was half afraid lest he should begin to love his cross better than Christ. That is a fear which will seldom need to cross our minds, but, oh, we ought to be perfectly satisfied, perfectly content with that which pleases God! “If this is the Lord’s will, it is my will”—such a saying comes from a happy heart! But if God has one will and we have another, it is clear that the peace of God does not yet rule our hearts. Though forgiven and though the grand cause of quarrel is gone, yet we are raising minor points of difference and these instill strife. It is like a great lawsuit that has been decided on all the grand features of the case and yet, here is the plaintiff picking little points, raising little questions and getting up fresh litigation! The point with us is to say, “It is all given up. Whatever You will, Lord, I will; or at least I wish to will. I ask for Grace that I may will it because You will it.”

This voluntary submission to our Father’s appointment is the peace of God. This peace of God is, also, peace such as God commends—such as God approves. That, you know, is first, perfect peace with Himself and then with all men—certainly with His people, but also with all mankind. “If it is possible, as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all men.” Take heed that you do not offend! And if you are offended by others, do not offend in return, but accept the offense in patience—forgive it and forget it. Forbear, and when you have done so, forbear! And when you have done so again, forbear! And when you have forbore seven times, still forbear! I will not repeat the advice 70 times seven, though if I did, I should not go beyond the measure of forbearance and of forgiveness which the Lord Je-

sus would have us display. Be so at peace with God that you feel perfectly at peace with your fellow men.

Whenever I have suffered a grievous wrong, it has been a satisfaction to me to feel that, if my Lord Jesus Christ made atonement for my offenses and my wrongs, I can look at His Atonement as an atonement for the wrong done to me as well as to God, for He satisfied all parties in that quarrel. Gladly do I say, "Surely, this poor soul may well be forgiven by me, for You have died as the sinners' Substitute." In comparison with my own offenses against God, I may well look upon this man's offense as less than nothing! What if men should do the worst they can do to us? What is it? What if they slay us? It is but a small loss to a Christian to die! Therefore let us harbor no malice, but feel, "No, we have entered into the truce of God and we are the friends of every man that breathes." For my own part, I have a crusade against the devil and all evil, but the truce of God is upon me with regard to all my fellow men and, from now on, that peace which was proclaimed at Bethlehem by the angels shall stand for me—"Peace on earth: good will toward men." This is a sweet part of the peace of God! Cultivate it carefully.

But this peace is called the peace of God because it is peace which God works in the soul. I think I hear you exclaim, "To have such a peace as that—a perfect consciousness of full forgiveness, complete acquiescence in the will of God, perfect forgiveness towards all mankind and an intense desire to live in perfect peace with all, both saints and sinners—how can I get such a peace within me?" Ah, indeed, how can you? It is *impossible* to unrenewed human nature! Man, by nature, is worse than any wild beast, for he is a menagerie. There is lion in him and there is serpent in him. There is tiger in him and there is wolf in him. There is dog in him and there is devil in him. He is half beast and half devil through the Fall. I do not caricature him—his body allies him to the beast and sin makes him a child of Satan!

Mr. Whitefield used to describe fallen nature and he was pretty near the mark. "How shall this wild beast be taught to love? Shall the lion eat straw like an ox? It never will till it leaves off being a lion. It cannot do so—it has not fit teeth for eating straw, nor a fit stomach for digesting grass. It cannot live on straw, like an ox, till God changes it and gives it an ox-like nature." So it is with us—we need a new nature before we can possess this peace with God. But how is that to be done? Shall the Ethiopian change his skin? No. He cannot do that. And if he could, it would not equal the miracle which we require. Our default is not skin deep, only, it is much more than that. Changing skins is difficult, but changing *hearts* is impossible except to God. Shall the leopard get rid of his spots? Well, that is difficult, but still, the task of taking spots out of leopards would be small compared with the miracle of taking evil out of the very core of our wild beast-like heart and putting into it the peace of God that makes us love. Only God can do it!

God's own mighty Spirit must put forth that same energy with which He will raise the dead out of their graves at the Resurrection—for nothing short of creation and Resurrection power is able to transmute this beastly,

devilish heart of ours into a heart in which the peace of God shall reign supreme! Well is it called the peace of God! My dear Hearer, do you know this peace? If so, you will understand that because of its excellence, it is called the peace of God. It is a Hebraism, for among the Hebrews they called certain mountains that were higher than others the hills of God—and certain gigantic trees, such as the cedars of Lebanon, were the trees of God that were full of sap. So the peace that is greater than every other peace is called the peace of God—it means the holiest, deepest peace. It is “perfect peace”—peace that nothing disturbs. It is a deep peace—“the peace of God, which passes all understanding”—solemn peace at which you almost stand in awe! It is a hush within the soul in which there is heard nothing of discord or of fear, but a stillness reigns like that which was maintained in the Holy of Holies, within the veil, where seraphim were silent above the Mercy Seat.

“The peace of God” signifies the peace that never ends, everlasting peace—the peace that will live with us throughout the whole of our mortal sojourn till we come into the land of the immortal!—

***“There shall I bathe my weary soul  
In seas of heavenly rest,  
And not a wave of trouble roll  
Across my peaceful breast.”***

“The peace of God.” Oh, I have known it! You, too, my Brothers and Sisters, must have known it when the Lord, Himself, has dwelt within your hearts and kept all adversaries far away. You have then known days of Heaven upon the earth. It has left nothing to wish for except the perpetuation of itself, for you have been satisfied with favor and full of the goodness of the Lord—filled with all the fullness of God, anchored fast, settled, grounded, established!—

***“My heart is resting,  
O my God!  
I will give thanks and sing.  
My heart is at the secret source  
Of every precious thing.”***

That is the peace of God! Win it, dear Friends, and wear it! By God’s good Spirit enter into this serene haven. Rest in the Lord and be happy in Him, for He is our peace! When the Lord and Giver of peace once comes to tarry in your heart, let Him rest there and charge all about you, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that they stir not up nor awake your Love until He pleases.

**II.** But now let us consider the second piece of advice that grows out of the text. If you possess this peace of God, let it occupy the throne—LET THE PEACE OF GOD RULE IN YOUR HEARTS. In order to there being any peace in the heart, or anywhere else, there must be a ruler. Those people who are for putting down all kings and principalities and powers may bid farewell to peace. Anybody who is inclined to anarchy should read Carlyle’s, “French Revolution,” with care and ask himself whether the worst king is not, after all, a great deal better than the despotism of the mob—the carnival of misrule wherein every man does that which is right in his own eyes—all eyes love darkness rather than light.

Let loose the reins of government, let everybody be equal to everybody else—and a little bigger than everybody else as well—and you will soon see what confusion ensues! See how it is in a house! I hear that there was great deliberation over those census papers, in many families, to know who was the head of the household. But I am quite clear that it was not a happy household where that question took long to answer, for the husband is the head of the wife and where he is not so, everything is out of order—monstrous and outrageous. Where the head is not the head, the hand is not the hand, the eye is not the eye, the heart is not the heart—and nothing is itself at all! All is what it should not be and all is misery. You *must* have a governing faculty somewhere and, within your own soul, if nothing governs, I tell you boldly, the devil governs! That man who does not control himself is controlled by the devil, for he must have a master somewhere.

We cannot have two masters, but it is quite as certain that we must have one! One power or another will master you. Shall it be your Creator, or His enemy? Your Savior, or your destroyer? It is a blessed gift of Grace if a man is enabled by the Holy Spirit to say—“The peace of God shall rule in my heart.” Paul advised this—“Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.” If it is in your hearts at all, it must rule, for it has power to put down all rebellion. You know, when we have a government and a magistracy with power at their back, if a riot arises, we appeal to the lawful power to come and protect us and put down the uproar. So in our hearts, if we have a master principle and that master principle is the peace of God, we may, with confidence, pray, “O Lord, put down this riot. I am tossed to and fro in my heart about my circumstances. I do not like them and I quarrel with You about them. Come, peace of God! Come and put down my murmuring! Come and calm my wicked, discontented spirit.”

Or do I feel some discord in my spirit towards one whom I ought to love? I must cry, “Come, peace of God. Come, and arrest this bad temper of mine! Handcuff it. Take it off to prison. Give it hard labor and short commons! Bring it down till it is no longer able to rebel as it does. Come, peace of God, and help me in the struggles of my daily life, that I may not break out into anger, wrath, malice and all uncharitableness. Come, peace of God, put forth Your mighty power over my soul.” This is the great remedy for the discord within and the discords without—the grand cure for all distempers of the east wind and all besides. Yield yourself to the control of the blessed peace of God, for I find that the Greek word has that force—“Let the peace of God *umpire* in your hearts.”

You know the umpire in the Greek games decided how the runners should run; how the wrestlers should wrestle and he ruled a contest to be, or not to be, according to the law of the festival. He said, perhaps, that such-and-such a blow in the fight was a foul blow, and if he said so, there was no questioning him—it was decided. He stood at the finish line when the runners came in and he declared a certain swift-footed racer to be the winner. No man ever questioned the dictate of the umpire! His voice ended all debate. He was the man who decided in the games and whose verdict was never to be disputed.

Now, the peace of God is to do the same in our hearts. We ought to be resolved to judge all things by the peace of God. "What ought I to do in this case? Must I humble myself? I do not like it, but how ought I to act? Shall I yield?" Pride says, "Never! No, no! Play the man. Never give in!" But what does the peace of God say? It says, "Yield. Submit." Christ says, "I say unto you, that you resist not evil: but whoever shall smite you on your right cheek, turn to him the other, also. And if any man will sue you at the Law, and take away your coat, let him have your cloak, also." Christ decides that it will be good to be a sufferer rather than to take revenge. We ought to have the peace of God ruling in our hearts so as to let it decide our course and lead us to do that which is consistent with our own peace with God.

I do not know how *you* find it, but I know that I cannot afford to be angry. It takes so much that is valuable out of me. I am sure it does. It does a man, physically, an immense mischief. To some men it is a dangerous thing to get excited, it even endangers their lives. But, spiritually, I believe that to get into a state of enmity towards *anybody* is one of the most grievous diseases which can befall a Christian! In such a case you cannot pray as you did. You cannot read some passages of Scripture as you did. You cannot look the Well-Beloved in the face, and say, "I am acting in a way that pleases You." It is, therefore, a very serious thing for a Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ to break his own peace—serious to himself as well as to those that are round about him.

I pray you, therefore, dear Friends, let the peace of God decide for you in all trials of temper, enduring of wrongs and questions which lead to debate and separation. Set Peace in the chariot and let it hold the reins, for anger will, like Phaeton of old, set the world on fire. Oh, Peace of God, rule me! Pray God that the power of this peace may be constantly upon you. If you lose your peace with God, you lose your power to judge under difficulties. You lose your power of self-control under provocations. You lose the best sovereign that ever held a scepter! I believe that if a man is walking with God in the Light of God and enjoying full fellowship with Heaven, he may go down into any meeting, however turbulent—into any society, however discordant the elements may be—and yet he will be wise to answer, wise to be silent, wise to do, or wise not to do—for the peace of God will keep him calm and quiet.

Once let the mind be thoroughly disturbed and unhinged before the Lord—and you are weak as any other man and you will say that which you will have to unsay—and you will do that which you would wish to wipe out with your tears! When rest of soul is gone, hard things are spoken and hard things are done which would not consort with communion with the tender Lord. Let the peace of God always rule, or otherwise you will not always be safe. Especially let the peace of God rule your affections! Be satisfied that you love God and that your heart cleaves to God and does not follow after any other. Be at peace with God as to your heart and, when that is so, and the affections are dominated by conscious love to God, it is *then* that you fight the battles of life with comfort to yourself and with honor to the name of Him to whom you belong.

**III.** Very briefly, I want, in the third place, to say, **STRENGTHEN YOURSELF**, dear Friends, **BY GOD'S SPIRIT, WITH ARGUMENTS**, in order that you may let the peace of God rule in your hearts and may be kept from any breach of that heavenly peace. Remember, you can only be happy in heart and healthy in spirit as long as you keep the peace of God. You are sure to become wretched and unhappy—you are sure to stumble, here and there, into faults—if that peace of God is gone. As you would be in the best possible condition for walking with God in joy while here, below, look to your peace. This is no mean argument—try to feel the force of it.

And, next, only thus can the Church of God prosper. I am grieved when I receive members from other Churches who come because they say that they are weary of the incessant bickering and jealousies which have disturbed their rest. I am sure that there can be no blessing where there is no peace. A house divided against itself cannot stand. A Church disputing is a Church committing suicide! Many and many a Church has come to its death by bleeding inwardly through strife—otherwise it might have defied the whole world and Hell itself! It is generally the little Churches that squabble most—if they cannot excel in anything else, they certainly claim the first rank in quarrelling. A few Christian people get together to serve God and the devil comes in, at once, and sets them by the ears—they are good men and true—but Satan bewitches them so that they dispute about nothing at all.

Whenever I have to settle a dispute, I always like to have some big, bad thing in it. This I can point out and we soon agree to set the matter right. When I cannot, with a microscope on my eyes, find out what it is all about, I find that Brothers and Sisters are hardest to be reconciled. It is easier to shoot an owl than a gnat! Little differences rankle like tiny thorns and you cannot get them out of the flesh. Oh, that the Spirit of God would come upon the Churches and turn them into masses of fire! Then they would not fall to pieces through intestine strife! When souls are being won; when the Gospel is being enjoyed; when Christ is being glorified; when the Church is marching on, conquering and to conquer through the Divine power that is in her, then is there peace within her borders and her citizens are filled with the finest of the wheat! But once let the life of God run low and let the Spirit of God depart, then peace departs, too. Oh, may God save this Church and save all the Churches from missing this blessed peace! Let the peace of God rule in your heart, dear Brother, dear Sister, for the Church's sake.

Remember, next, that God cannot be glorified unless there is the peace of God in our hearts. My dear Friend, if you are always troubled and fretting and anxious, I do not see how you can glorify God to any large extent. Seek more faith, more trust, more confidence, more calm of mind and you will personally glorify God. I am sure a Christian man who always finds fault with everybody is of little service to the cause and kingdom of our Lord. He who, wherever he goes, acts like a carrion crow that soars aloft with no other design than finding out where a carcass may be, that he may light upon it—he, I say, is not a man after God's own heart—and nei-

ther will he advance the Lord's work among men! When you love your fellow Christians so that their faults are covered by your charity and you rather admire their excellences than publish their infirmities, then it is that God is glorified by you! A happy, peaceful people of whom men can say, "See how these Christians love one another"—these shine as lights in the world and the darkness feels their power!

The passage from which our text is taken offers us other reasons. It says this—"To which you are also called." You were called to the peace of God. My dear Brother, if you are not a peaceful man, you have not inherited your true calling. When the Lord called you out from the world, He called you to be a peacemaker. He called you on purpose, that the Spirit of peace might be shed abroad in your heart and that afterwards you might carry that peace with you into your own family and among all your neighbors and spread it everywhere. The Lord Jesus never called a man to be a maker of strife! If a Christian woman, as she calls herself, goes from house to house with tittle-tattle, she was *not* called by God to do so—of that I am certain!

A man goes into his pulpit and preaches a personal sermon on purpose to empty out his own spleen—God did not call him to that, for God loves not firebrands! The man may have been sent as a messenger from other regions, but certainly not as an ambassador from Heaven, when he preaches gall and wormwood. Some seem, wherever they go, to make mischief as speedily as possible—their mission is contention, whereunto they certainly were not called of God! You who are the true heirs of Heaven are called to peace—seek peace and pursue it. Wherever you go, labor earnestly to make peace. If you see two boys fighting, make them stop. If you see two girls in a bad temper, try to make them happy with one another. If you see two people disagree in business, do not back one of them up, and cry, "Go to the law with him," but plead for peace and mutual concession. "Blessed are the peacemakers."

Whatever you may be in a household, whether father or child, husband or wife, master or servant, son-in-law or mother-in-law, let your soul be seasoned and savored with that blessed word, "Peace." There is always a war party in England—I fear the Jingo is no foreigner, but the genuine offspring of the British bulldog! An unconverted British is all for blood, fire and glory—and as the unconverted are the majority among us—we remain a fighting nation. Fighting—how we delight in it! Down with the Afghans, down with the Zulus! The Boers? Destroy them! We cannot get our fill of glory and honor unless we get knee deep in blood! The policy of peace is voted dishonorable and so we go from land to land till there is hardly a nation which has not been stained with blood by British hands. How fiercely these English talk—but it is not Christian talk! May the Lord teach us the language of peace.

Be you at peace, "whereunto also you were called." And then, notice next, "Called in one body." There must, therefore, be peace among Christians because we are called in one body to peace. What would you think of my hand, if it should say, "I will have no peace with the eye. That prying eye looked sharply at me the other day and spied out a spot. I will put it

out”? We shall not enjoy much prosperity if the members of the body thus disagree. Suppose my foot should say, “I am not going to carry that heavy body about. See what I have to suffer through it at times.” Suppose my knee should say, “I will not have it. I have been tortured quite enough with rheumatism—I will no longer carry that heavy fabric.” What will become of me if the members of my body thus fall to quarrelling? And what is to become of the Glory of Christ if His members live in contention? What is the Head to do if the members who make up His one mystical body have nothing to do but to be striving, one against the other?

Oh, no! If you have any differences, end them tonight, I pray you, if you can, even though the east wind is so piercing! If you have unwittingly done anything that grieves others, try to remedy it. Or if others have grieved you, end the matter by sweet and swift forgiveness. Let it be all ended with the east wind! We are called in one body, therefore let us dwell in hearty peace and may God the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of peace, bring us into the peace of God and keep us there, for thereunto we are called in one body.

**IV.** The last point upon which I shall speak is this—to keep yourselves right, OCCUPY YOUR MINDS HEALTHILY. “How?” you ask. The text says, “Be you thankful.” That is the way to keep up our peace with God! “Be thankful.” Do not complain, but bless His name for everything! Do not quarrel with Him, but be thankful. Say, “Shall we receive good at the hands of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil? The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.” That is the way to be at peace with Him—to be thankful at all times. Bless God for your mercies and for your miseries! Bless Him for your gains and for your losses! Bless Him for your enjoyments and pleasures, and also for your aches and pains! Bless Him for every hard thing that comes from Him, for there is as much love in the hard as in the soft—God is as kind when He uses the rod as when He gives a kiss. “Be you thankful!” Bless Him from morning to night and all through the night watches. What a mercy to be out of the hospital! What a mercy to have the use of one’s limbs and reasoning powers! What a mercy to be out of prison! What a mercy to be out of Hell! “He has not dealt with us after our sins.” Be thankful!

Last Sunday morning, when I read this chapter in the great congregation, I tried to ring it out as loudly as ever I could, and I would like to ring it out as with a whole peal of bells now. Set them all ringing a marriage-peal, if you like— “Be you thankful! Be you thankful! Be you thankful!” Up, you murmuring! Up, you discontented! “Be you thankful.” Rouse yourselves, you sullen ones! You that think you have a heavier load to carry than is fair and say, like Cain, “My burden is greater than I can bear”—“Be you thankful!” All of you, young and old, “Be you thankful.” That is the way to keep up your pence with God and your peace with your fellow men! Well, but it does not mean only, “Be thankful to God,” but be you thankful to your fellow men.

Too many receive all kinds of Christian kindness as a matter of course. They look upon the spontaneous kindness of their Brethren as a sort of right. Now, that the poor should be helped by Christian generosity is cer-

tainly according to Scripture—but this is an *obligation* not of debt but of *Grace*. Whatever is done in almsgiving and charity should be gratefully and heartily received. It is an unholy spirit which scarcely has the courtesy to say, “thank you.” Towards one another we ought to have a thankful spirit. How thankful the child ought to be to his mother and his father! What a happy home we should have if children recognized the deep debt of obligation that is really due to those who have nursed them and cared for them so long! How obliged, I think, the husband ought to be to his wife for all her tender kindnesses—those hundred unseen ministries of love!

How grateful, I think, the wife should be to her husband, for all his labors and anxieties! She receives a thousand things from him which make life comfortable. If we live in mutual gratitude, feeling that we are, each one of us, indebted to all others, how merrily will the household wheels go round and what families of love we shall all gather around us! I, of all the people in the world, am most in debt to everybody—and I feel it deeply and truly. There is hardly a person that I look upon from this pulpit but I owe something to his or her Christian love. Everybody has been kind to me and I am not unmindful of it. When I have lain upon my bed, sick and ill, I have marveled at the kindness of you all! I wonder why you treat me so lovingly! In all holy work, whether it is the College or Orphanage, you have been my ready helpers and you still are. I cannot help saying, “God bless you.”

Surely the wind is changing a point or two—we shall find it blowing from another quarter when we leave this Tabernacle! I feel intense gratitude in my soul towards the dear Brothers who surround me and the Sisters that work with me for Christ. You have often made me happy and cheered my spirit by the kind and generous way in which you have worked with me for the Lord, bearing with all my infirmities. And I believe that it is because I feel thankful that I feel peaceful and so remain the center of your unity. I am not inclined to quarrel with anybody—I would sooner run a mile than I would fight for half a minute! There is nobody in the world that I would like to contend with—my heart is full of good wishes to all men! It has been a sort of rule with me to measure a man before I fight him—if he is bigger than I am, I know he will beat me, so I decline battle! And if he is smaller and I can easily beat him, it would be cruel and cowardly to do so.

Nobody in the world is worth contending against as to our temporal interests. Even the necessary law is troublesome and vexatious. Be you thankful, then, and if, with thankfulness to God and thankfulness to those around you, you can fill up the day, oh, how happy will the days be! In the family and in the business, God will be glorified, the Church will be sweetened and welded together—we shall see better times and shall no longer grumble at the east wind! May God bless you!

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# CHRIST'S INDWELLING WORD

## NO. 2679

A SERMON  
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, JUNE 17, 1900.

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,  
ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, APRIL 10, 1881.

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom;  
teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms  
and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with  
grace in your hearts to the Lord.”*  
Colossians 3:16.

THAT is a very beautiful name for Holy Scripture. I hardly remember to have met with it anywhere else—“Let *the word of Christ* dwell in you.” Remember, dear Friends, that Christ Himself is the Word of God, and also remember that the Scriptures are the word of the Word. They are “*the word of Christ.*” I think that they will be all the sweeter to you if you realize that they speak to you of Christ, that He is the sum and substance of them, that they direct you to Christ, in fact, as John says of His Gospel, that they were “written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through His name.”

Remember, also, that the Scriptures do, in effect, come to us from Christ. Every promise of this blessed Book is a promise of Christ, “for all the promises of God in Him are yes, and in Him, Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” They all come to us through Christ, God speaks them to us through Him as the Mediator. Indeed, we may regard the whole of the Sacred Scriptures, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, as being “the word of Christ.”

The text tells us, first, *how to treat the Scriptures.* “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” And, secondly, it tells us *how to profit by them.* “In all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

**I.** First, then, we are told here HOW TO TREAT THE SCRIPTURES—“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.”

In order that it may dwell in you, *it must first enter into you.* It is implied, in our text, that the Apostle says, “Let the word of Christ *enter* into you.” Then you must read it, or hear it, for, unless you do, you will not know what there is in it. Yet there must be something more than the mere hearing or reading of it, for some hear the Truth of God with one ear, but let it go away out of the other ear. And others are great readers, yet they seem to read only what is on the surface. The letter passes un-

der their eyes, but the deep spiritual meaning never enters into their heart. If you read a portion of Scripture every day, I commend you for doing so. If you make a practice of reading right through the Bible in a stated period, I commend you still more. Some I know read the Bible through every year, in due course. This is well, but all this may be done and yet "the word of Christ" may never have entered into the reader!

You know how children sometimes learn their lessons. I am afraid that, at a great many schools, there is no true instruction—the scholars have simply to repeat their lessons without ever getting at the sense and meaning of them. And, a week or two after, they have forgotten all that they were supposed to have learned! Do not let it be so with our knowledge of Scripture—let us not merely know it so as to be able to turn to its different chapters, or to be familiar with certain passages in it, or even to repeat all its words. This is but to let "the word of Christ" pass by your door, or look in at your window! Paul says, "Let it  *dwell*  in you."

So I say again that in order that it may dwell in you, it must first enter into you. You must really know the spiritual meaning of it. You must believe it, live upon it, drink it in—you must let it soak into your innermost being as the dew saturated the fleece of Gideon. It is not enough to have a Bible on the shelf—it is infinitely better to have its Truths stored up within your soul. It is a good thing to carry your Testament in your pocket—it is far better to carry its message in your heart. But mind that you let it get right into you!

How differently some people read the Bible from the way in which they read any other book! I have seen a young woman sitting down, on board a steamboat, completely absorbed in a very suspicious looking book. I have passed behind her and passed before her, but she has not taken the slightest notice of me. Presently, I saw a tear brushed away from her eye—I knew that she was not reading the Bible—and it was my firm conviction that she was reading a novel. I have often noticed how such people let the novels get right into them, trash as they generally are—but when the most of people read the Bible, they appear to be anxious to get the unpleasant task finished and put away! In some cases they seem to think that they have performed a very proper action, but they have not been in the least affected by it, moved by it, stirred by it. Yet, if there is any book that can thrill the soul, it is the Bible! If we read it aright, we shall, as it were, lay our fingers among its wondrous harp strings and bring out from them matchless music such as no other instrument in the world could ever produce! There is no book so fitted or so suited to us as the Bible is. There is no book that knows us so well. There is no book that is so much at home with us. There is no book that has so much power over us if we will but give ourselves up to it! Yet, often, we only let it look in at our window, or knock at our door, instead of inviting it to enter our very heart and soul—and therefore we miss its power.

Then, when it once gets into you, let it  *remain there* . A person could not be said to dwell in a house even though he should enter into the most private part of it, if he only passed through it and went away. A man who dwells in a house abides, resides, remains, continues there.

Oh, to have “the word of Christ” always dwelling inside of us—in the memory, never forgotten! In the heart, always loved! In the understanding, really grasped with all the powers and passions of the mind fully submitted to its control! I love those dear Christian people who do not need to refer to the printed page when you speak to them about the things of God, for they have the Truth in their hearts. They have a springing well within their souls at all times and they have only to hear a Scriptural theme started and, at once, they begin to speak of the things which they have looked upon and their hands have handled of the Word of Life, because it dwells in them.

What is the good of merely external religion? I heard of some people who met together to pray about a certain matter, but they could not pray because the Bishop had not sent the form of prayer which they were to use on that occasion. I think that if they were believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, they might have managed to speak to God without the necessity of having a written or printed form to guide them. Yet there are many who fancy they cannot offer a proper prayer unless they have it in a book. And they cannot talk about the things of God, or they can say but very little about them because they have not “the word of Christ” dwelling within them. O dear Friends, let it be always in you, from morning to night, abiding as a constant visitor within your spirit—no, not merely as a visitor, let it dwell with you—

**“No more a stranger or a guest,  
But like a child at home.”**

Further, “let the word of Christ dwell in you” *so as to occupy your whole being*. If it dwells within you, let it take such entire possession of your being that it shall fill you. To push the truth of Christ up into a corner of your nature—to fill the major part of your being with other knowledge and other thought—is a poor way to treat “the word of Christ.” It deserves the fullest attention of the best faculties that any man possesses. The Truth of God revealed by the Holy Spirit is so sublime that its poetry outsoars the eagle wings even of a Milton. It is a deep so profound that the plumb line of Sir Isaac Newton could never find the bottom of it. The greatest minds have been delighted to yield their highest faculties to its wondrous Truths. Dear young Friends, you who have only lately put on Christ, I beseech you not to let other books stand on the front shelf and the Bible lie behind. Do not, for the most part, read those other books and only read small portions of Scripture now and then—let it always have the chief place. The most excellent of all sciences is the science of Christ Crucified and the Bible is the textbook for all who would learn it! If other forms of knowledge are useful, they are like the planets—but the knowledge of God as revealed in Christ Jesus is as the sun. Let this always be the center of your system of knowledge and let all the rest that you know move in subordination and subjection to that first and best form of knowledge.

If I may know myself, and know my Savior—if I may know my sin and the Atonement by which it is put away—if I may know my way through this life and my way into the eternal life above, I will be content if I know

but little else. Gladly would I intermeddle with all knowledge and, though "much study is a weariness of the flesh," yet would I find a pleasure in such weariness if I only knew even as much as Solomon knew. But it would be vanity of vanities, and altogether vanity, if you and I were as wise as Solomon, and yet did not know the Truth of God. Therefore, "let the word of Christ dwell in you" so as to occupy the whole of your being! Let it be the resident, the occupant, the master and ruler of your entire nature!

Once more. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you." That is, *let it be your most familiar friend*. We know the people who live in our home, but we do not really know other people. When someone asked Mr. Whitefield, "What do you think of Mr. So-and-So's character?" He answered, "I cannot say, for I never lived with him." Ah, that is the true test! It is living with people that lets you know what they are. In like manner, if you will live with "the word of Christ," especially if you will let it dwell in you and abide with you as a constant friend, you will get to know it better, and the better you know it, the more you will love it. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, if you meet with a man who finds fault with the Bible, you may be certain that he never read it. If he would but read it in the right spirit, he would be of another opinion. And if you find a professing Christian indifferent to his Bible, you may be sure that the very dust upon its cover will rise up in judgment against him! The Bible reader is always the Bible lover, and the Bible searcher is the man who searches it more and more. Various pursuits have a measure of fascination about them, but the study of God's Word is fascinating to the highest degree. Jerome said, when he was pondering a certain text, "I adore the Infinity of Holy Scripture." I have often felt that I could say the same. The Bible is a book that has no bounds to it. Its thoughts are not as men's thoughts, a multitude of which may go to make up half an ounce! Any one of the thoughts of God can outweigh all the thoughts of men. This Book is not a book of pence, or a book of silver, or even a book of gold, but a book whose every leaf is of untold value! He shall be enriched, indeed, who lets "the word of Christ" richly dwell in him.

My dear Friends, I should like you to so read the Bible that everybody in the Bible should seem to be a friend of yours. I should like you to feel as if you had talked with Abraham and conversed with David. I can truly say that there is hardly anybody in the world that I know so well as I know David. In making *The Treasury of David*, I have labored, year after year, in that rich field of Inspiration, the Book of Psalms, till I assure you that David and I are quite familiar friends. And I think I know more about him than about any man I ever saw in my life. I seem to know the ins and outs of his constitution and experience, his grievous faults and the graces of his spirit. I want you to be on just such intimate terms with somebody or other in the Bible—John, if you like, or Mary. Sit at Jesus' feet with her. Or Martha—it will not hurt you to make the acquaintance of Martha and do a great deal of serving, though I do not want you to get cumbered with it. But do find your choicest friends in the Scripture. Take the whole company of Bible saints home to your heart, let them live

inside your soul. Let old Noah come in with his ark, if he likes, and let Daniel come in with his lions' den, if he pleases—and all the rest of the godly men and women of the olden time—take them all into your very nature and be on familiar terms with them! But, most of all, be specially intimate with Him of whom they all speak, namely, Jesus Christ your blessed Lord and Master!

As for the doctrines revealed in the Bible, you should have them at your fingertips. The great Truths of the Word of God should be as familiar to you as a scholar makes his much-loved classics to be, or as the mathematician makes his *plus* and *minus*, his *a* and his *x*, familiar to him from hour to hour. So should you prize “the word of Christ.” “Let it dwell in you richly in all wisdom.”

**II.** But now, secondly, I am to tell you How TO PROFIT BY THE WORD OF CHRIST, if we once get it to dwell in us.

First, *seek to profit by it yourself*. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.” Let it make you wise. The man who studies his Bible well, will become a wise man. If God the Holy Spirit teaches him, I believe that he will become a wise man even in something more than a spiritual sense. Every Scot child used to be taught the Book of Proverbs—it was one of the class books of Scot schools—and I have heard it said that this particular form of instruction has largely helped to make our Scot friends so sharp. And I should not wonder if that is the case. They certainly are as wise a race of people as we are likely to meet with. I wish our Irish friends would also study the Book of Proverbs. If it would make them as cool as it has made our Scot friends, it might improve them without taking away any of their natural humor and warmth of heart. I wish that English people, also, would read more of the Bible. I can truly say that when I have met with men in whom “the word of Christ” has dwelt richly, I have often found them very shrewd even about common-place things.

I remember a man, in a certain workshop, making a great many very rude remarks and, at last, he was silenced by one of the workmen who said to him, “I think, Sir, you are referred to in the 20<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Proverbs.” He did not explain his meaning, but the man who was thus addressed went home and when he looked up the chapter, he found these words in the third verse, “Every fool will be meddling.” It was an admirable rebuke for him and all the better because he had an hour or two before he knew exactly what it was. And when he reached his home and was at leisure to think, he could look up the passage and see how appropriate it was to his case. If you will take the Word of God for your guide, even in domestic and business matters, you will often manifest a shrewdness which, perhaps, may not be natural to you, but which will come to you through “the word of Christ” dwelling in you richly in all wisdom. That, however, is only a small part of the profit which it will bring to you.

Do you want wisdom with which to master yourself? “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” Do you need something to cheer a naturally sinking spirit? “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” Do you wish for that which will calm an angry mind, a temper all too apt to be sud-

denly excited? "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Are you in a calling where you are sorely tempted and do you long to know how to be kept from falling into sin? "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Is your position a very difficult one? Are you scarcely able to balance the claims of different relationships? "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Are you expecting to have a time of intense strain and trial such as you have never experienced before? Prepare yourself for it by letting "the word of Christ dwell in you richly." It shall give you all manner of wisdom by which you shall be able to baffle even the subtlety of the old serpent himself! We used to have in many of our churches a number of solid, substantial men—"men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do"—and an equal proportion of deeply-taught, godly matrons, true mothers in Israel. Well, those stalwart Christians were brought up on such spiritual meat as I have been commending to you. They were diligent students of the Word of God and if we are to have a succession of such men and women, they can only be qualified by going to the University of Scripture and taking their degree by permitting "the word of Christ" to dwell in them richly!

The next way of using "the word of Christ" to profit is to *seek to profit others by it*. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." We are to know the Truth of God so as to be able to teach and admonish one another.

First, we are to seek the profit of our fellows by teaching one another. No one man can ever teach such a vast congregation as I have, so as to give the separate instruction that is needed by each one. This work must be done by the members of the Church themselves. "The word of Christ" must dwell in you and then you must become a Mutual Instruction Society. Every Christian should exercise the office of the pastorate according to his ability and his opportunity. In such a Church as this, every one of the members must look well not only to his own spiritual affairs, but also to the well-being of others. What sweet and gracious instructions the older ones among you can give if you tell your experience! It is very interesting to any of us to hear it, but how helpful it is to the beginners in the Divine life!

And if, in addition to relating your experience, you talk of the Scriptures that have been opened up to you—the promises that have been fulfilled to you—the passages in the Bible that have been applied to your heart by the Holy Spirit who Inspired them—you will greatly instruct your fellow Christians. A dear Brother in the Lord said to me, the other day, "I do not often meet, now, with those people who talk about the things of God to one another. Even when I meet with Christians, their conversation is generally concerning a meeting or a Conference that is going to be held, or something that is to be done—we do not seem to talk much about Jesus Christ, Himself, and about experimental Truth, and about the sorrows and the joys of God's people." I wish we did talk more of such things. It is well to be busy for the Lord, but it is still better to be

in communion with Him. You who are deeply taught in the Scriptures should try to teach others for their profit.

One way of teaching one another is mentioned in the text—"in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." A learned divine, a little while ago, discovered that no hymn ought to be sung unless it was distinctly directed and addressed to God and was intended to be full of praise throughout. Well, we do have some remarkably wise men nowadays—at least, in their own estimation—but it appears that the Apostle Paul thought that "Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" were to be used for *instruction and admonition* as well as for the praises of God! And, to my mind, there is no teaching that is likely to be more useful than that which is accompanied by the right kind of singing! When I am preaching, I often find a verse of a hymn the very best thing I can quote—and I have not the shadow of a doubt that, frequently, a verse of sacred poetry has struck a man who has been altogether missed by the rest of the sermon. Think how compactly the Truth of God can be taught by means of "Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," and how likely it is to be remembered when the very measure and rhyme and rhythm help the memory to treasure up the message! I shall never forget what repentance is while I can say—

***"Repentance is to leave  
The sins I loved before,  
And show that I in earnest grieve  
By doing so no more."***

It is well to have the Truth of God put into the form of a verse that the memory may be able to lay hold of it, and to retain it. Do try, dear Friends, to get so full of "the word of Christ" in all forms of it, that you may run with it. You know, it cannot come *out* of you if it is not first *in* you. If you do not get "the word of Christ" into you, you will not be instructive in your general conversation.

In addition to instruction, there is to be admonition. That is a very difficult thing to administer wisely. I have known a Brother try to admonish another and I have felt that he would have done better if he had left the task alone, for he has only caused irritation and resentment. There is a gracious way of admonishing which cannot be too frequently practiced. When I first began to preach, I am afraid that I used to say a great many strange things—which, of course, I do not do now—but having, on a certain occasion, said something rather striking and, perhaps, not quite wise, there was an excellent Christian man who wanted to set me right. He did not come and thrust himself upon me in a very solemn manner and provoke me to scoff at him and his reproof. Neither did he say anything so as to irritate me, but, finding my Bible lying about, he stuck a pin into it at the words, "Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you." When I was at home, I looked at that pin, and I looked at that text, and I said to myself, "Whose house was I in last?" When I remembered, I said, "That is the man who stuck that pin in there, depend upon it." I never felt vexed with him! On the contrary, I was very grateful and I always loved and admired him. And I thought, "Now, if he had spoken to me about what I had said, it is possible that he might have stuck

the pin into me where I should not have liked it—but as he only stuck it into my Bible, it did not irritate me.” You see, also, that I gratefully remember the rebuke even to this day.

Sometimes the best way to give an admonition will be by singing a Psalm or a hymn. The clerks in the old Meeting Houses, when they used to be allowed to choose the hymns, often took away much of the evil effect of an erroneous sermon by their wise selection of the closing verses. Now and then, if you are discreet, you can quote an appropriate verse—as people say, “accidentally on purpose”—and you can bring in a portion of a Psalm that shall exactly say for you what you might have said in a blundering way! And the dear Brother who has done wrong will accept the rebuke without being enraged by it. When you attempt to snuff the candle, do not put it out by your clumsiness, but take the golden snuffers—in the form of a verse of a Psalm, or a hymn, or a spiritual song—and even while you sing it, you will be administering the admonition and the instruction which it is your duty to give.

I wish to put this matter so that it shall be remembered by you, and I want especially to press it home upon you, dear Friends, members of this Church of more than 5,000 souls. What can we do unless you all look after one another? And how shall we ever get on unless, in addition to preaching, there shall be continual mutual instruction going on, wise and joyful and cheerful—and accepted in a kind, loving and generous spirit? God fill you with “the word of Christ,” that you may thus teach and admonish one another!

But, lastly, “the word of Christ,” when it dwells in us, is *to profit us in our relation to God Himself*, for, after all, the main objective of our singing—the principal purpose of our teaching and admonishing—must be the glory of God! “Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Oh, may “the word of Christ dwell in us” so richly that you shall bless God from morning to night! May you so overflow with holy thought and sacred knowledge that your whole being shall be a hymn of praise to the Most High and your entire existence shall be a glorious hallelujah! I do not think that we, any of us, sufficiently value the Divine ordinance of praise. Neither do I think that we ever shall, till “the word of Christ” has taken full possession of our souls.

You have been upstairs to pray, you say, and you have got no comfort from the exercise. Let me suggest that the next time you go upstairs, you sing a Psalm. “Oh, I have been up and down,” says one, “trying to awaken myself into earnestness of supplication.” May I also propose to you that you do not try that method again for a while, *but begin to praise God*. How many times a day do you praise Him? I think you do get alone to pray and you would be ashamed if you did not, once, twice, or three or even more times in the day—but how often do you praise God? Now, you know that you will not pray in Heaven—there it will be all praise. Then do not neglect that necessary part of your education which is to “begin the music here.” Start at once praising the Lord! Many of our doubts and fears would fly away if we praised God more. And many of our trials and troubles would altogether vanish if we began to *sing of our mercies*. Of-

tentimes, depression of spirit that will not yield to a whole night of wrestling, would yield to ten minutes of thanksgiving before God! Praying is the stalk of the wheat, but praise is the very ear of it. Praying is the leaf of the rose, but praise is the rose itself, redolent with the richest perfume.

Praise God, then, "in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," and if you say you do not know how to do it, then "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." It is a praise-begetting thing! Out of every Book of Scripture will stream praises unto Jehovah. Out of every promise will spring a sonnet. Out of every Divine Truth enjoyed and lived upon will rise a spiritual song. The whole Revelation of God is the condensed essence of praise—you have only to give it a fitting opportunity, by setting it simmering on the fire of a graceful heart—and you shall find a sweet cloud of holy incense rising from it, acceptable to the Most High. Therefore, Beloved, be much with your Bibles and let your Bibles be much with you—for your own profit, for the profit of others and for the glory of God! So be it, for Christ's sake! Amen.

### **EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: COLOSSIANS 3:1-17.**

**Verse 1.** *If you then are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.* Your Lord and Master has gone up to Heaven. You profess that He represents you and that you have gone up there in Him and with Him. Then do not seek the things that are down here below, the things of earth—but live where your life has gone. Where your treasure is, there let your heart be also. "Seek those things which are above."

**2, 3.** *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For you are dead.* You profess to be dead to the world. Is that profession false? You have observed that Scriptural ordinance in which you profess to be buried with Christ—was that observance only an empty form? If there was any truth in your profession, "You are dead"—

**3.** *And your life is laid with Christ in God.* You have a new life now—it is up yonder, "where Christ sits at the right hand of God." Do you not feel drawings upward? Are there no longings after the high and heavenly estate where Jesus is? Come, Beloved, let your soul break loose for a while and, like a lark, having found its liberty ascends with joyous wing, singing as it rises till it is out of mortal sight, so let it be with you!

**4.** *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in Glory.* You are hidden now, your life is veiled in Him, but, at His Second Coming He shall shine forth in all His Glory and "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Beloved, seek no greatness here! Ask not for any exaltation of yourself among the sons of men, but wait for your true manifestation with Christ in Glory!

**5.** *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness,*

*which is idolatry.* Kill all these evil things! Do not let them live in you for a single moment. The command applies not only to the grosser actions which are summed up under the head of fornication and uncleanness, but to all that leads to those foul sins. Not only to the fire, but also to the sparks, such as “inordinate affection,” a sort of softness which is seen in some persons, men and women, too, and which often leads to something far worse—and “evil concupiscence,” the first desires towards that which is unchaste. God give us Divine Grace to kill these loathsome things at once, for if thoughts of evil are indulged, they soon become *acts* of evil, and then who knows how far we may go in the way of unholiness?

Sin, if allowed to grow in the heart, will soon take gigantic strides and come out in the life. Depend upon it, whenever a professing Christian goes into overt sin of the kind mentioned here, he does not do it all of a sudden. The evil has long been festering and fomenting within his heart, or it would not have manifested itself thus. Oh, if he had only watched and destroyed the thief before he broke into the house, what a mercy it would have been! You notice that covetousness is put down with the most filthy sins and it is described as idolatry. The desire to possess the goods that belong to others—the lust to get gain at any price—this is idolatry.

**6, 7.** *For which things' sake the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience: in which you also walked some time, when you lived in them.* This was true of the Colossians and it was true of almost all those to whom Paul wrote, for these gross evils were scarcely regarded as sins in his time, so polluted had the nations become. I hope that in the case of many now living, they have been preserved by Christian training from having walked even for a time in such sins.

**8.** *But now you also put off all these.* Put them all off, like old clothes that are never to be worn again. “Put off all these”—

**8.** *Anger.* It is hard work for some to pull that garment off, for it fits them so tightly. This burning coat of wrath will not readily come off, but the Apostle's command is, “Put it off! Put it off!” It does not become a Christian to be an angry man.

**8.** *Wrath, malice.* Christ will not live in a heart that harbors malice.

**8.** *Blasphemy.* Thank God that if we ever wore that robe, we pulled it off long ago.

**8.** *Filthy communication out of your mouth.* All talking that is of a dubious character must go. Anything which savors of corruption and defilement must be put away from every Christian.

**9.** *Lie not one to another.* In Paul's day, lying was thought to be a virtue unless the liar happened to be exposed. In that case it was considered wrong. But to lie through thick and thin, and to lie so dexterously as to deceive, was looked upon by an Oriental as an accomplishment of which he might be proud. So the Apostle might well write, “Lie not one to another”—

**9, 10.** *Seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.* There is nothing false or untrue in God. God is

true and in Him is no falsehood at all. And if you and I have really been renewed, as we profess to have been, we shall hate the very semblance of a lie and our word will be as good as our bond.

**11.** *Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.* Whenever you hear certain very wise Brothers and Sisters say, "Such-and-such a promise in the Bible is for Israel, not for the Gentiles," do not be misled in the least by their assertion! Just quote this text to them—"There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." These distinctions all vanish when once we come to Christ! We are one in Him and every promise to Believers is good to all who are in Christ Jesus, for "Christ is all, and in all."

**12.** *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, hearts of mercies, kindness.* Be ready to feel for others. Be very considerate of their needs. Look at others as if they were your kith and kin. If you and they are in Christ, they are indeed your kin, so put on kinned-ness, or, "kindness"—

**12.** *Humbleness of mind.* Do not try to be a big man. He who thinks himself big has not yet learned the true spirit of Christianity. Especially towards those who are sorrowful and sad, be pitiful, be kind, be humble.

**12.** *Meekness.* If others try to provoke you, do not be provoked by them, but be gentle and meek.

**12.** *Long-suffering.* Continue to put up with others, remembering the Lord's long-suffering with you.

**13.** *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man has a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do you.* Hear this, Beloved, I pray you! Especially those of you who have hot tempers and have fallen out with one another. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Remember how much Christ has forgiven you and show a forbearing and forgiving spirit to others.

**14.** *And above all these things put on charity.* Or, rather, "love"—

**14.** *Which is the bond of perfectness.* The perfect bond, the belt that goes round and keeps every other garment of virtue in its place.

**15.** *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you are called in one body.* Do not fall out with one another. You are called to peace, for you are called in one body. Does one hand in the body fight with the other hand? Does the foot contend with the eye? Of course not, for they are in one body. So are you in one body with all your fellow Christians, therefore lay aside all strife. I deeply deplore when I see Christians—and especially eminent Christians—contending with one another about minor matters of small account. Surely, almost anything ought to be borne before there should be public strife among members of the one body! God grant that such a state of things may speedily come to an end wherever it has existed! We have enough to do to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," without contending for our own dignity or honor.

**15.** *And be you thankful.* That is a nice little text, "Be you thankful." When you are grumbling at your plain food, put this as a sandwich between your bread and butter, "Be you thankful." When you are complaining of the East wind, just try if you cannot spell this little sentence, "Be you thankful." When you are murmuring about those sharp pains and that long sickness, this is the kind of tune for the little bird to whistle at your window, "Be you thankful." We have all much for which we ought to be thankful, however sad we may think our lot to be. Look on the bright side, rejoice in God! "Be you thankful."

**16, 17.** *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.* Do not draw any line of demarcation, and say, "So far is secular and so far is religious." Let your *whole life be religious*—and if there is anything proposed to you in which you cannot glorify God—do not touch it! "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him."

If any of you go to the theater, can you go there in the name of the Lord Jesus? Why, you would not dare to cross the threshold with such blasphemy in your soul! And when you go to any place of doubtful amusement, can you go there giving thanks to God and the Father by Jesus Christ? Can you thank the Lord that you are permitted to go and pray for Divine blessing when you go and when you leave? A lady once said to a Christian minister, "The pleasures of going to the play are very great. There is the pleasure of thinking of it beforehand, the enjoyment of it at the time, and then the pleasure of thinking of it afterwards." "Yes, Madam," said the good man, "and there is one other pleasure which you seem to have forgotten—that is the pleasure of thinking of it on your dying bed. I would like you to remember that."

Let me read this verse again. "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." If you cannot do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, do not do it at all if you are a Christian! And even if you are not a Christian, you will be accountable to God, by-and-by, for all that you do.

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307

**PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY  
TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.**

# METHOD AND MUSIC— OR, THE ART OF HOLY AND HAPPY LIVING NO. 913

DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, JANUARY 30, 1870,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name  
of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by Him.”  
Colossians 3:17.*

IT is always an advantage to have the laws of a kingdom as concise as possible. No one will ever be able to tell how much of litigation and consequent calamity has been caused in this country by the confused condition of our laws. When Napoleon issued his celebrated “Code Napoleon,” which is an admirable summary of French Law, he conferred upon the empire one of the greatest gifts and proved himself a wise ruler.

We want law to be put into such a form that it can be understood, and that its application to many cases can be discovered at once. In the great moral government of God we have no room to complain in this matter—the precepts of holiness are few and comprehensive. First of all, the whole of morality was summed up in the Ten Commandments, and written upon two tablets. Then, as if this were not concise enough, we have the whole Law summarized in two commands, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself.”

And even this is brought into shorter compass still, for that one word, “love,” is the essence of all Divine Law. We, as Christians, find in the text an instance of the terseness, brevity, and clearness of Divine precepts. We have here a Law applicable to every Believer—to every action, word and thought—in every place, under all circumstances. And yet this comprehensive command is expressed in very few words. It is a great advantage to the mechanic to be able to carry with him in a small compass his square or rule by which he can adjust his materials, discover his errors, design correctly, and estimate his work when finished. Without such a rule he would be quite at a loss—with it he is ready for work.

We have before us a compendious rule of life, a standard of morals, a guide to holiness which we may carry in our memories without the slightest difficulty. And which, if we have but the will to use it, will be found never to fail us on any occasion. As the mariner's compass or the polestar, so may the text be to us. Here is an infallible directory as to the way of holiness—a judge whose decisions in the matter of righteousness and Truth none need distrust. Read the text over, and then I shall ask you to observe the points in it. “Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by Him.”

Observe, first, holy *walking* described. In the second part of the verse note holy *music* prescribed. And to enforce the whole text bear with me

patiently till we close with the third head, which will be holy *motive* inscribed—inscribed, I trust, upon all our hearts.

**I. HOLY WALKING DESCRIBED.** “Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

This rule is not applicable to every person here present. It can only be practiced by the regenerate. You must be in Christ before you can do anything in Christ’s name. Until your nature is renewed, until you have submitted yourselves unto the righteousness of Christ, until Christ is formed in you the hope of Glory, you are not capable of walking after this high and hallowed fashion. “You must be born again.”

The precept demanding your immediate attention is not the precept of this text but another. The words of Peter, in the Acts of the Apostles, are for you, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Or this, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.” You must begin at the beginning. It will but mislead you if I exhort you to walk as Believers before you have received the inner life. The root must be changed before the fruit can be bettered. You need a radical change, my unconverted Hearer, and you must have it or perish forever.

Do not imagine that any imitation of Christian manners will save you—do not conceive that hanging upon your lifeless branches the semblance of fruits will transform you into a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. Oh, no, the sap within you must be changed. The life of God must be infused into your soul. You must be made one with Christ, or you cannot serve Him. This precept, belongs, therefore, to none of you who have not believed in Christ Jesus! But it belongs to all of you, without exception, who are named by the name of Jesus Christ in Truth and sincerity. To all of you who have submitted yourselves to His government and are trusting in Him for salvation. You will listen, I trust, and give earnest heed to this message from your Beloved.

What, then, does this mean, that we are to do everything both in word and deed in the name of the Lord Jesus? Answer—there are six points in which this precept requires reverent care. First, do all through the office and name of Christ as Mediator. You as a Christian are bound to offer daily praise. You should often lift up your heart in grateful songs and Psalms to God—but see to it that you do all this work of praise in the name of the Lord Jesus. No praise of yours can be sweet with God except it is presented through your great High Priest. Bring, therefore, your gifts of thankfulness to this altar which sanctifies the giver and the gift, and ever bless God through Jesus Christ.

You are also to abound in prayer. It is your vital breath. You cannot flourish as a Christian unless you constantly draw near to God in supplication. But your supplications must always be presented through the name of Jesus Christ. His name gives prevalence to prayer. It is not so much your earnestness or sincerity as His precious blood that speaks in the ears of God and intercedes for you. Pray always, then, with your eyes upon the finished Propitiation and the living Intercessor. Always plead the merits of Immanuel, and Heaven’s gate shall open to you.

In addition to your prayers and praises, you are bound to serve Him according to the abilities entrusted to you in teaching the ignorant the way of salvation, in bringing in the unconverted, and in edifying the saints. But remember that your service to God in these respects can only be acceptable as you present it through the name of Jesus Christ. The hand of the Crucified One must offer for you the sweet cane which you have bought with money, and the fat of all your sacrifices. If you could give to God all the wealth that you possess, all the time of your mortal existence, all the talents with which you have been endowed—if you could do this from now on without a failure—if you did not present the offering through Jesus Christ it would be as though you had done *nothing*.

Your burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings would have no acceptance with Jehovah, for your sinful nature pollutes them all. How necessary it is, then, that we should often pause in our holy work, and say, “I am doing this for God, but am I presenting it in the appointed way? If I see anything of merit in what I am doing, I am acting contrary to the Gospel rule and I shall be rejected. I must bring all my work to the High Priest of my profession and offer it through Him.”—

***“The iniquity of all our holy things  
Is cleansed by His blood, which covers all,  
And adds a rich perfume divinely sweet,  
Winning acceptance at the Throne of God  
For broken prayers, and faulty songs, and even  
For service marred with sad infirmities.”***

Take heed, dear Hearer, that you see the blood sprinkled on your service for God. Almost all things under the Law were sanctified by blood, and all things under the Gospel, without exception, must be thus made sweet to God. The atoning sacrifice, the prevalent intercession of the one appointed Mediator, Christ Jesus, must be constantly before our minds in all that we attempt to do for our Lord God. Let us never forget this lest we utterly fail.

A second meaning of this precept is, “Do all under the authority of the Lord Jesus as your King.” Say of such-and-such a doubtful or evil action, “This I cannot do. I could not feel that I was authorized to do it by any precept or example of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This I cannot do, for I should be stepping aside from the allegiance which I owe to Him. Therefore this I will not do, be the consequences what they may of loss or of suffering. I am not authorized by Christ to follow this course, neither will I, come fair, come foul.”

On the other hand, when the act is allowed in Scripture, and only forbidden by the traditions of men, you may safely say, “This I feel that I may do. I see my Master has laid down no restrictions, therefore I will submit to no human traditions or regulations. The commands which will-worship would inflict upon me I cast to the wind, for superfluities of pretended holiness are but superfluities of naughtiness.” When positive duty is concerned, your language will be, “This action I find that I *must* do, for I see an express command for it—therefore, by His Grace, it shall be done. Be it difficult, it shall be achieved. Be it impossible, I will wait on Him who enables faith to remove mountains.”

O that every Christian were altogether and evermore obedient to heavenly rule! As the planet revolves undeviatingly in its orbit, because with the law imposed upon it there has come forth a constraining and impelling force—so may we also pursue our course of duty, because we have not only heard the Divine precept—but feel the sacred energy of the Holy Spirit leading us in the prescribed path. Brethren, how safe we feel, and how happy in our consciences, if we are certain that we have the authority of the Great King for all our actions! The business of a Christian upon earth is not an independent one. He is not acting on his own account, but he is a steward for Christ.

What if I compare him to a commission agent who is sent abroad by his firm with full powers from his employer to transact business for the house which he represents? He is not to trade for himself, but he agrees to do all in the name of the firm which commissions him. He receives his instructions and all he has to do is to carry them out. His whole time and talent being by express agreement at the absolute disposal of his employers. Now, if this man shall lend himself to an opposition firm, or trade on his own account, he is not true to his engagements and he has to bear the responsibility of his acts. But so long as he acts for his firm, and does his best, his course is an easy and safe one.

If he follows the instructions of his principals he is eased of all responsibility. Should his trade be profitable or otherwise, he need not be vexed with anxieties, provided he has diligently followed the commands received from home. His acts are authorized from headquarters, and they are, therefore, safe for him. He falls back on his principals who gave him the commands, and in whose name he acted.

Now if we serve ourselves or the world, we must take the consequences of our unfaithfulness. But if we honestly serve the Lord, all is clear. When a Christian can say concerning any course of conduct, “I am bid to do this by Christ Jesus my Lord—I can find chapter and verse to authorize my acts.” When he can feel that he is working for Christ and not for himself—with a single eye to the glory of God, and not with sinister aims and selfish motives—then he treads as on a rock, and defies the censures of his enemies. Let us, then, take good heed to our Lord’s words, and walk carefully in His commands, for then His authority protects us, and every tongue that rises against us in judgment we shall condemn.

This rule of acting under the authority of Christ is applicable in an emphatic sense to those who are called to special service in the kingdom of Christ. Every man is called to do all the good he can, but some men are set apart to labor in peculiar departments of Christian work—and these should be doubly careful to do all in their Master’s name. If a man were sinking through the rotten ice, any one of us would be authorized to do all we could to save him. But the iceman, who is appointed on purpose that he may save lives, has a peculiar authority for anything that he takes upon himself to do in the way of rescuing the drowning. He has the name of the Royal Humane Society at his back.

If a stranded ship were breaking up and the crew were ready to perish, we are all of us authorized to do all we can to save the shipwrecked. But

the men who belong to the lifeboat's appointed crew have a right to come to the fore and take the oars and put out to sea. They are authorized to lead the way in daring and danger. So, my Brethren, those of you who have felt the Divine call within you, the sacred impulse which compels you to devote yourself to the salvation of your fellow men, you may do it boldly and without apology.

Your authority is from Christ, for the Holy Spirit has set you apart for the work. Let no man hinder or dispirit you. Press forward to the front rank in self-denying labor. Call it not impertinence, O you carping critics! It is but holy courage which brings earliest hearts to the fore. Push to the very front, you men of God, filled with daring and self-sacrifice—for if others should impute your zeal to evil motives, the Lord who reads the heart understands you—and having given you a commission He will not fail to vindicate His faithful servants.

A third sense of the text is important. We should do all under the sanction of the Lord Jesus as our Exemplar. It is an admirable course for us all to pursue, if when we find ourselves in circumstances of perplexity we ask ourselves the question, "What would Jesus Christ have done if He were in my circumstances?" The answer to that question is the solution of your difficulty. Whatever He would have done it will be safe enough for you to do. It is certain that He would not have been unbelieving. Equally certain that He would not have done a wrong thing to deliver Himself. We are also sure that He would not have been impatient, rebellious, or despairing—nor would He have grown wrathful or morose.

Well then, I know what I must *not* be and it may be possible to learn my positive, as well as my negative behavior from the same Guide. I shall be able to discover by turning over the pages of the Evangelists some portion of the Savior's life very like my own. What He was in that situation I must pray for Divine Grace that I may be, and I shall certainly be led in the path of wisdom. The royal rule for a Christian is not what is *fashionable*, for we are not to be conformed to this world. It is not what is *gainful*, for the pursuit of gain would lead us to run greedily in the way of Balaam for reward.

It is not that which is generally prescribed in society, for full often the prescriptions of society are antagonistic to the teachings of Christ. Not even the conduct of professors, for too many even among them walk as Paul tells us even weeping, as the enemies of the Cross of Christ. Alas, my Brethren, the current holiness of the Church falls far below the Scriptural standard! Neither are the common rules of action among professors such as we could safely follow. A safe example is to be found nowhere but in the life of Jesus Christ Himself. Even the holiest of men are only to be followed so far as they follow Christ, but no further.

My Brethren, how calm will your hearts be, how serenely will you face your afflictions if you can feel, "I have done nothing but what my Master did before me. I have sought to tread in the footprints of His pilgrimage!" Why, you must be safe, you must be accepted if you do as Jesus did—for never can Christ's example lead a simple soul astray—

***"It is always safe for souls to follow on***

***Where Christ their holy Shepherd leads the way.”***

Furthermore, as we are to do all through the office of Christ as Mediator, within the authority of Christ as King, under the sanction of Christ as Exemplar, so we should do everything to the glory of the Lord Jesus as our Lord and God.

When the Spanish mariners were traversing the seas upon voyages of discovery they never touched upon new land, whether an insignificant island or a part of the main continent, without at once setting up the standard of Ferdinand and Isabella, and taking possession of the soil in the name of their Catholic Majesties of Spain. Wherever the Christian goes, his first thought should be to take possession of all hearts in the name of the Lord Jesus, consecrating all opportunities and influences to the Redeemer’s service. Such common things as eating and drinking become, by the giving of devout thanks, consecrated to Christ’s name. There is no action which is lawful, however commonplace it may be, but may be sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.

If the intense desire of our spirit shall be that we may glorify God as long as we are in this body, we shall find ways and means of accomplishing our object—and the Holy Spirit will help our infirmities. My dear Brethren, our soul’s desires should be always true to Christ—most chaste faithful so as not to tolerate any carnal motive or self-seeking. How easily do we give place to self-glorification! How almost insensibly do we expect to receive honor of men! It is very hard to keep ourselves clear of self-seeking under some form or other—for even self-denial may be used with an object which is the reverse of self-denial.

The old philosopher, seeing a fool in fine apparel, pointed at him, and said, “that’s pride,” but he was equally right when seeing certain Spartans who affected to dress meanly, he said, “and that’s pride.” Pride often stands in the doorway, but it can as readily hide in the corner. There is a pride of self-sacrifice and a pride of apparent humility, which is every way as haughty as vainglory itself.

Dear Friends, we must live for Christ, cost us what it may of watchfulness. We must not fail here. We dare not live for a party, or a sect, or even altogether for any one Church, however dear to us. We may live for the Truth, but only because God is glorified thereby. First and last, in the middle and everywhere, the constraining thought of Christian life should be, “all for Jesus.”—

***“All for the Master, all without reserve,  
All to the utmost of our manhood’s might.  
Each pulse, each throb of heart and thrill of nerve,  
Each hour of busy day and silent night.”***

Beloved, it is delightful to know that Christ is all mine, and I am all Christ’s. It is a holy aspiration to desire to enjoy as much of Christ as our nature can receive, and then to exhibit as much of Christ as Divine Grace can enable us to reveal. “Everything for Jesus.” “Christ all and in all Christ.” Let these be the mottoes of every Believer. “Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Aim in all you do to do if for His Glory.

The fifth point is, do all in the strength of the Lord Jesus as your Helper. With Him is the residue of the Spirit. And the Spirit of God is the Believer's power. "Without Me you can do nothing," says our Lord. We know the truth of that saying by unwise attempts which have ended in mournful failures. But let us in the future remember this Truth of God practically. Never let us commence a work without seeking strength from on High. We go about Christian service very often as though we felt ourselves quite up to the mark for it. We pray without asking the preparation of the heart from God.

We sing—ah, my Brethren, how universally is it so—without at all entreating the Holy Spirit to quicken our praises. And I fear some of us must confess sorrowfully that we preach at times as though the preaching were to be *our* work and not the work of the Holy Spirit through us. Do not you, as hearers, too often listen to the Word as if the mere hearing of it would do you good, or as if the speech of such-and-such a man would be certainly blessed to you? Shouldn't you, instead, wait upon God beforehand that your going up to the assembly might be profitable to your souls? Do all in the Master's strength, and how differently everything will be done!

Acknowledge all the time you are at your work that your strength comes from the Lord alone. Never let the thought cross your mind that you, as an experienced Christian, have a fitness for the work peculiarly your own—so that you can dispense with prayers for Divine aid, so necessary to the young! Never imagine that because through long years you have performed a service with acceptance that you can therefore now do it without renewed help. This is the way by which we sink into routine, degenerate into religious automata, and become like formalists and hypocrites. This is the way in which the power of God and the vitality of godliness are rendered so rare in the Churches.

If we do not feel conscious day by day of abiding weakness and consequent need of fresh strength from the Most High, we shall soon cease to be full of Divine Grace. Write this upon the tablets of your heart, "All my fresh springs are in You," and from this day forward in word and deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus—and you will derive all your spiritual energy from Him, the Source.

Sixthly, we should do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, for He should be the element in which we live. It is said of the modern Greeks that whatever may be their faults mentally, they are faultless physically, for you never saw a Greek peasant in an ungraceful attitude, however much he might be off his guard and unconscious of your gaze. Gracefulness is a part of the Greek nature. So let the Lord Jesus Christ be so woven and intertwined into your very self that you cannot be otherwise than Christ-like under any circumstances. Lord, grant us this. It would be a glorious thing to be saturated through and through with the spirit of Christ, so as to live Christ evermore.

That eminent ornithologist, M. Audubon, who produced accurate drawings and descriptions of all the birds of the American Continent, made the perfection of that work the one object of his life. In order to achieve this he had to earn his own living by painting portraits, and other labors. He had

to traverse frozen seas, forests, canebrakes, jungles, prairies, mountains, swollen rivers, and pestilential bogs. He exposed himself to perils of every sort and underwent hardships of every kind. Now, whatever Audubon was doing, he was fighting his way toward his one object—the production of his history of American birds. Whether he was painting a lady's portrait, paddling a canoe, shooting a raccoon, or felling a tree—his one goal was his bird book.

He had said to himself, "I mean to carve my name among the naturalists as having produced a complete ornithological work of America." This resolution ate him up and subdued his whole life. He accomplished his work because he gave himself wholly to it. This is the way in which the Christian man should make Christ his element. All that he does should be subservient to this one thing—"That I may finish my course with joy, that I may deliver my testimony for Christ, that I may glorify God whether I live or die."

We have thus seen what it is to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Let us stop a moment to remind you that this text administers a severe rebuke to many professed Christians. Too many Church members do nothing in Christ's name. Since the day when they were baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, they have done nothing else in that name. Ah, hypocrites! Ah, hypocrites! God have mercy upon you! Alas, how many others do but very little in Christ's name! I noted in a letter, by a certain pastor—not, I think, given to speaking severely, this remark—that he did not think in his own Church one in three of the members were doing anything for Christ.

I could not speak so sorrowfully as that concerning you, but I much fear that a large proportion of the strength of this Church is not used for the Lord. I believe that there is more used here than in almost any other Church, but still there is a great deal of wasted steam, a great deal of buried talent, and thereby Jesus is defrauded. I noticed in an American paper an observation made concerning the Baptist Churches of North Carolina. A man acquainted with them said, "There are a hundred thousand members reported in the various associations. There are a hundred thousand baptized persons, and seventy-five thousand of them are only 'baptized dead heads.'"

It is an American term, but I am afraid we shall have to import it, for it is frightfully true that numbers of professors are just so many "baptized dead heads." They are of no use. They are not working. They are perhaps grumbling—the only sign of life they have—but they are neither giving of their substance nor laying out any other talents in the cause of Christ. If there are any such present, I pray that this text may be a thorn in your side and act as a spur to you. And may you from this day on do all that lies in your power in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The text also rebukes those Christians who do much in the name of some eminent Christian man. I shall not censure any particular denomination, but if the Truth censures them, let them hear it. When George Whitfield refused to form a new sect, and said, "Let my name perish, and let Christ's name last forever," he acted as his Lord would have him. Paul

was not crucified for you, neither did Apollos die for you! Therefore take none of these names—but let the name of Christ be named among you—and under that name be known!

Though there is a Lutheran Church, it was a good saying of Luther, though couched in rugged words, “I desire above all things that my name should be concealed. That none be called by the name of Lutheran, but of Christian. What is Luther? My doctrine is not mine, but Christ’s. I was not crucified for any. How comes it to pass, that I, who am but a filthy, stinking bag of worms, that any of the sons of God should be denominated from my name? Away with these schismatic names. Let us be denominated from Christ, from Whom alone we have our doctrine.” It shall be well for all Churches when they are ruled by the like spirit. Names which indicate their difference of doctrine will probably survive till Christ comes, but the names of men they will do well to discard.

Once more—what a rebuke is our text to those professors who dishonor the name under which they profess to live! The Spaniards in America acted so cruelly, and with such a dreadful lust for gold, that when they sent their missionaries to convert the Indians, the Indians wished only to know whether the religion that was taught them was the religion of the Spaniards—for if it were they should like to believe something the very opposite. And if there was no Heaven but where the Spaniards went, they would sooner go to Hell than be with them.

Truly some professors’ lives give much the same savor to the Christian religion. Men say, “Are these Christians, these mean, covetous, quarrelsome, domineering, boastful people? Then we will sooner be infidels than Christians.” Out upon you, you caricatures of godliness! If there is one such here, may his conscience prick him. You have crucified the Lord afresh, and put Him to an open shame. How dreadful will be your punishment if you die in your present state! Repent of your sin and ask of God Grace to make your profession sincere.

And if you will not do this, at least be honest enough to give up your false profession—for you do but degrade it and yourself. There is no necessity, surely, to add to your innumerable sins, this sin of hypocrisy. What do you gain by it? No, Sir, if you must serve mammon and the devil, serve them. But why with supererogation of iniquity must you pretend to serve Christ?

**II.** We leave this first point, and find in the second part of the text, **HOLY MUSIC PRESCRIBED.** “Giving thanks unto God the Father by Him.” Soldiers march best to battle when the trumpet and drum excite them with enlivening strains. The mariner brightens his toil by a cheery cry at every pull of the rope. And it is an excellent thing when Christian men know how to sing as well as to work, and mingle holy music with holy service. The best music of a Christian consists in thankfulness to God.

Thanks should be rendered by the Believer with all the acts common to men. Our eating, our drinking, our social meetings, our quiet conversations with one with another—in all we should give thanks unto God the Father. This we should do in the labors peculiar to our vocation. Whatever your trade and calling may be, if you cannot sing aloud, you can sing in

your hearts while your hands are busy. You can ring out the praises of God as well to the sound of the hammer on the anvil as to the peal of the organ. Your feet at the sewing machine may beat time to a sacred tune.

You can as well praise God while you crack your whip as when you sing a Psalm. Why not? If the heart is right you can mount up to the heavens from any place or labor. Whatever your calling may be you shall find some peculiarity in it which shall help you to magnify God, if you will but use a spiritual eye to discover it.

We ought especially to praise God in the exercise of our religion. Whenever the assemblies of God's people meet, there should be much of holy joy. Some people are so afraid of joy that one might suppose them to labor under the delusion that all who are devout must also be unhappy. If we worshipped Baal, to lance ourselves with knives were most fitting. If we were worshippers of Juggernaut or Kalee, self-inflicted tortures might be acceptable. If we adored the pope, it might be proper for us to wear a hair shirt and practice flagellation. But we worship the ever-blessed God, whose delight is to make His creatures happy!

Holy happiness is a part of worship, and joy in the Lord one of the accepted Graces of the Holy Spirit. Brethren, let us be happy when we praise God. I have noticed with pain the way in which people will get rid, if they can, of happy words out of their hymns. The hundredth Psalm for instance, runs thus—

***“All people that on earth do dwell,  
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice,  
Him serve with \_\_\_\_\_”***

What? Well, they modernize it into—

***“Him serve with fear.”***

But, as I believe, the older form is—

***“Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell,  
Come you before Him and rejoice.”***

I am amazed some other scribe did not cut out the word “cheerful,” and put in—

***“Sing to the Lord with doleful voice.”***

In this way the Psalm might have been “improved” until there would not have been a grain of worship left in it. I mean to sing it, “Him serve with mirth.” And with a glad and merry heart will I praise my God. If you are His child, rejoice in your Father's Presence. If you are pardoned, rejoice in the mercy that washed away your sins. Even if you are tried and troubled, rejoice that your afflictions are working together for your good! “Rejoice in the Lord always. And again I say, Rejoice.”

The text tells us under what aspect we should regard God when we are thus thanking Him, “Giving thanks unto God the Father,” blessing Him that He stands in that relation to us as well as to the Lord Jesus. The belief in the Divine fatherhood will surely make the sons of God happy. It is instructive to observe that thanks are directed to be offered especially to the Father. I suppose because we are most apt to forget to praise the Father. We love Jesus Christ for dying for us. We forget not the Holy Spirit because He dwells in us. But the common idea of the Father is dishonoring to Him.

Is He not regarded as all Justice, and seldom as the Fountain of Love? Now, it is the Father who stands at the back of all in the eternal purpose. It is the Father who gave the Son to die. It is the Father who justifies us through the righteousness of Christ, and adopts us into His family. The Father is equally to be loved and worshipped with the Spirit and the Son. And through Jesus Christ we should come to God, the terrible God as He was to us in our ungodliness, and worship Him as the Father now with thankful joy, because of the mercies we have received.

The gist of this second precept is that you stir up your hearts, my dear Friends, to the cultivation of a cheerful spirit. That you excite that cheerful spirit to the use of thankful words, telling your friends and neighbors of the goodness of God to you. These words should be oftentimes elevated into songs. These songs should, as on wings of flame, ascend up to where perfect spirits praise God both day and night. O, we that love the Savior, do not neglect this, “Whoso offers praise glorifies God.” Glorify Him, then.

This praise, this cheerful spirit wins others. They, marking how you give thanks, will be attracted to your Savior and your God—while you will strengthen yourselves, also—for “the joy of the Lord is your strength.” Dependancy and murmuring will hamper you in all your efforts to glorify Christ, but to maintain an inward spring of thanksgiving is one of the best ways to keep yourselves in spiritual health. God help you, then, to carry out both these precepts—

***“Work and praise! Hearts upraise!  
Drink your fill of joy!  
Happy they who all the day  
Spend in Christ’s employ.  
For their song makes them strong,  
Ready for their toil;  
And their mirth, not of earth,  
Sorrow cannot spoil.”***

**III.** A few words upon the third point, namely, HOLY MOTIVE TO BE INSCRIBED upon our hearts to secure obedience. These motives are four. A word on each.

Beloved in Christ, you have received all you have from God the Father through Christ. That you are not in Hell is due to His longsuffering. That you have been spiritually quickened is due to His gracious operation. That you are pardoned is due to His precious blood. Owing all to Him, what arises in your mind but gratitude? And what is the dictate of gratitude? Does it not teach you that it is your reasonable service to surrender yourselves to Him who bought you at such a price? For, ah, what a return it will be—how poor compared with what He has done for you! If you give your body to be burned for Him, yet He deserves infinitely more than all the sacrifices of the most painful death to recompense His stoop from the highest Throne in Glory to the Cross of the deepest woe. Let your gratitude compel you to do everything for Jesus.

Reflect, too, that the Well-Beloved for whom I plead today is worthy. “Him has God the Father exalted.” Do you object to that exaltation? Should you not rather rejoice in it? Is not that song most true —

***“Worthy is He that once was slain,***

***The Prince of Peace that groaned and died;  
Worthy to rise, and live, and reign,  
At His Almighty Father's side"?***

Will you deny, then, to Christ that which He is worthy to receive? He deserves the crowns of angels, and the songs of all the perfected! Will you not give Him the best you have, even your hearts? I appeal to the justice which I trust governs your judgment—should not Jesus Christ be the one object of your life?

Further, many of us here present have professed to be His disciples. We remember well the day when we were buried with Him in Baptism unto death. We voluntarily came forward and we took upon ourselves to be immersed in His name, copying His example and obeying His command. If that act meant anything, it meant this—that we professed ourselves to be dead henceforth to the world and risen with Christ. Now, by the profession then made, by the communion then enjoyed, I pray you, my dear Brothers and Sisters, whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the Master's name. Let not this appeal to your honor be forgotten.

Lastly, I need not thus plead with some of you, for your *hearts* are pleading with you. I know you love Him whose name is as ointment poured forth. I know how the tendrils of your heart have entwined themselves about His Cross. His Person fixes all your love. You are only happy when you are walking in communion with Him. He is the sun of your soul, without whom you cannot live. Well, then, do what love dictates—bring forth the alabaster box of ointment, break it, pour the sacred nard upon His head, and if any ask, "Why is this waste?" say that He is worthy of it—and that you love much because you have had much forgiven.

This day bring forth the best that is within your store, the spiced wine of your pomegranate, and set it before your Lord, while Jesus sups with you and you with Him. Again I say arouse yourselves to live at a more vigorous rate, and let the whole of the force and energy that dwells within you, and all that you can borrow from the seventh Heaven, be given up to Him who loved you and gave Himself for you. May my Master's blessing be with these words, to all who hear or read them, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Adapted from *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307

# ALL FOR JESUS!

## NO. 1205

**A SERMON DELIVERED OF LORD'S-DAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 29, 1874,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

***“You serve the Lord Christ.”  
Colossians 3:24.***

The Gospel does not merely supply us with directions for holy living but furnishes us with reasons for obedience and tells us where to find the power to obey. Hence in the commencement of this chapter, before the Apostle comes to any practical exhortation, he reminds us of our position and privileges. He bids us remember who and what we are as Believers in Christ, that we may act accordingly. We are risen with Christ and, therefore, our affection should not be set on earthly things. We are dead to the world and, therefore, we must not, cannot live in sin. Christ is our life and, therefore, we must walk after His example.

The Apostle knew right well that the conditions of Believers here below are various and, therefore, he laid down distinct precepts for each position. Some are masters and others servants. Some parents and others children—and in each case the requirements differ. But while he suited the exhortation to each one, he proposed a common motive for all. He reminded all Believers, whether wives or husbands, children or fathers, servants or masters, that there is another and a better life which rewards are worthy of our ambition, which service should engross all our strength. He bade them have respect to that higher life, for they had been representatively lifted up into the highest Heaven in the Person of Jesus Christ and with Him their hearts and desires should always be.

He bade them live the life of Heaven here below and order their footsteps, not in accordance with the fleeting things of time, but the enduring realities of eternity. He knew that in so doing, the inconveniences of the present would be forgotten in the glories of the future—and the trials of today would be more than counterbalanced by the joys of the hereafter. Our authorized translation is in the indicative and states the fact, “You serve the Lord Christ.” Is it the fact with each of you? To how many in this place can it be truly said, “You serve the Lord Christ”? I find it might also, and not incorrectly, be translated in the imperative. “Serve you the Lord Christ.” In this sense it may be directed to those who have no share in it as a statement of fact.

Let us take it in both senses. If we dare to hope that we serve the Lord Christ, let us listen to further exhortation and serve Him better, still. Let us thank God for the measure of service which He has worked in us, and let us earnestly ask Him to work in us still further to will and to do. But if any of you are not yet included in the sacred band who call Jesus, “Master and Lord,” then when you have trusted in His blood, come and yield your whole selves unto Him. If, indeed, you are redeemed from wrath

through Him, I charge you to not be disloyal to the obligations under which you are laid, but from this time forth make it your joy to “serve the Lord Christ.”

To me, my text is one of the most joyful sentences from which I have ever preached. “You serve the Lord Christ.” What an exaltation for a slave of Satan to become a servant of Christ! With what exultation do I hail permission to do *anything* for my Lord! To be blessed by Him, to be enriched with priceless gifts from His bounteous hand—this is lovingkindness! But to be allowed to render tokens of gratitude in return is sweetest of all! Truly, we may say of this condescension, “Your gentleness has made me great.” By receiving anything from us, the Lord has lifted us as beggars from the dunghill and set us among princes, even the princes of His people! It is a greater honor to *serve* Christ in the most menial capacity than to occupy the throne of the Caesars!

I speak of honor. I may also dilate upon the happiness of the service of Jesus! It is the purest of pleasures. We long to express our affection for Jesus by acts of zeal. Love pants for expression and is not obedience the tongue of Love? That love is counterfeit which does not declare itself in some practical form or other by deeds of kindness, or gifts, or sacrifices, or patient endurance, or hearty praise. Beloved, let us count it an unrivalled honor and an unsurpassed delight to do anything for Jesus! For this service let us be insatiably ambitious, resolved at all costs to show our loyalty to our Prince.

To serve us He laid aside His glorious array and girt about Him the garments of a servant! For us He took a basin and towel and stooped to wash His disciples’ feet! For us He became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross! Now, therefore, in our turn, by all the shame He bore, by all the labor He endured, by all the agonies He suffered, let us serve Him and Him, alone, forever!

In handling the subject of Christian service, I shall note three things—first, we serve the Lord Christ *in the common acts of life*. Secondly, we serve Him *in what are usually called religious acts*. And thirdly, we have learned to serve Him, and, I trust, we may do it more and more, *in special acts of direct homage to Himself*.

**I.** First, then, “you serve the Lord Christ,” IN THE COMMON ACTS OF LIFE. The fact that our text was addressed to the lowest rather than to the highest in worldly circumstances is very instructive. Paul has been visiting a family and he has spoken a word to the wife and a word to the husband. He has paid attention to the children and given a warning to the father. He has, also, a message for the master of the house—but he does not address to either master, mistress, or children, that choice saying which he reserves for *servants*—“You serve the Lord Christ.”

The Greek word, here, translated *servants*, may be rendered, “slaves,” though its meaning is not confined to slaves, yet it includes them—and there were many such in the Christian Church in Paul’s days—truly converted men and women who were still held in bondage according to the cruel Roman law. The Apostle goes into the kitchen, the cellar, the field, the winepress, the stable and he says to his Brothers and Sisters toiling

there—"You serve the Lord Christ." He whispers in the ear of the aged man who acts as porter at the door, whom he knows to be a devout Believer—and this is the secret which he whispers—"Fear not, Brother, for despite your bonds you serve the Lord Christ."

In those hard days, when Paul wrote from Rome to Colosse, many a slave crept out from Caesar's household by stealth to listen to his gracious words. And poor workpeople gathered around him and were converted—and as he felt deep sympathy with them, he did not merely admonish them to be honest, industrious, conscientious and obedient, as many a preacher would have done—but he went further and cheered them in the performance of their duties by assuring them that they served the Lord Jesus, and from Him they would receive a reward! He knew their sorrows and their provocations and, therefore, presented them with a rich consolation and a stimulus.

He exhorted them to act "as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not unto men." This he said to servants and to no other class in particular. He did not mean, thereby, that the wife, the husband, the master and the child might not and did not serve Christ, but he would have us infer that of those who did—whose lot was least distinguished—much more should those do whose responsibilities and opportunities are so much greater. If my poor servant should serve Jesus, how much more ought I to do it? If those with the least education and means are bound to serve Him, how much more should those who have 10 talents, lay out all for His Glory?

My Brothers and Sisters, you see that those to whom Paul spoke were not preachers, nor deacons, nor elders of the Church. Neither were they magistrates, or persons of influence—they were simple servants, engaged in domestic duties—but he says of them, "You serve the Lord Christ." Though what I have to say bears upon all present, I will keep to the line of thought which this fact naturally suggests. Those who are in low estate serve the Lord Christ by *a quiet acquiescence in the arrangement of Providence which has placed them where they are*. Everyone knows that while the human race exists in its present condition, somebody must serve. It is a paradox, but it is also a truth, that if there were no servants we should practically be all servants.

There are a thousand offices which, if each person were obliged to perform them for himself, would be exceedingly tedious and unpleasant. They are now done for us by persons to whom use renders them not at all irksome. As things are at present constituted, there will be poor and there will be rich, there will be servants and there will be masters. And when a man can say, "I have learned in whatever state I am therewith to be content, for I bow to the Providence of my heavenly Father," that man is, in his heart, serving the Lord Christ. To stand where the Lord places us and keep our position cheerfully, has in it the essence of obedience.

We serve the Lord, next, in service, or in any other form of life, *if we exercise the Graces of the Holy Spirit* in the discharge of our calling. The servant who is in all things trustworthy and neither wastes his employer's time nor goods—the servant who does not watch his master's steps so as

to loiter when he is out of sight, but conscientiously renders a fair day's work for his wage, treating his master as he would wish to be treated if their positions were exchanged—such an one, exhibiting truthfulness, gentleness, sobriety, honesty and industry, serves the Lord Christ as much in his labor as if he were an Evangelist or an Apostle!

He does not preach *vocally*, but his *life* is a powerful sermon. He is a standing evidence of the power of religion, an argument which logic cannot overthrow, nor the most cunning sophistry confute. Holy living preaches where the minister cannot enter—it preaches from the nursery to a worldly mother, from the shop to a graceless tradesman—from the workroom to a godless employer. Where the preachers' words are denied a hearing, your lives will, nevertheless, win attention. At the first the Gospel was very much spread in the noble families at Rome by means of their slaves. They noticed how different they were from other slaves and as they observed their conduct, they inquired what this new religion was which so much improved them.

Christians were *Christians* then! They made their Lord their first and last object. They surrendered their whole lives to His service and hence they were a power in all places. The poorest and meanest did not think themselves exempt from the sacred duty of spreading the faith! None, indeed, asked for a discharge in this war. Domestic servants became missionaries to the families in which they resided and acted as Apostles in houses where the Apostles could not enter! We serve Christ in such a position *by displaying the joy of the Lord in our service*. I lay great stress upon this point. Many a soul has been converted to our Lord Jesus by noticing the cheerfulness of poor Christians.

If a heathen master had a Christian slave, he noticed how contentedly he accepted his hard toil and hard fare. He saw his countenance beaming with delight and he even heard him sing for joy! He would naturally want to know the reason for that cheerfulness. Servants had a sorry lot with Roman masters and mistresses. I have seen some of the mere dog holes in which the slave who kept the door found sleeping quarters in the city of Pompeii—yet from such wretched abodes would rise the voice of Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs—and the children would wish to hear them and the mistresses, too. Thus would the Truth of God be spread!

The Christian would not join in the general jollity upon heathen festivals—he would be absent from the amphitheatre when all the rest of the family were eager to view the spectacle. He had a quiet cheerfulness and settled calm of mind which was all his own. And when trouble and distress were in the house he was the general comforter and friend. When he lay sick and scarcely anybody cared for him, he still did not lose heart. And when he was near to die, his joy came to a climax and he breathed out his soul with a song! Such a servant served the Lord most effectually. I hope there are many in this Church who, in these better days, are rendering equally valuable service in households where the name of Jesus is not revered.

We, too, should be doing the same in the circles in which we move. Our holy cheerfulness should be an invitation to our friends to come to Jesus.

We shall never bring men to believe in a Master whose servants are unhappy in His service! To toll a knell as an invitation to a wedding feast is most absurd! When we invite men to the banquet of Saving Grace let us do it with smiling faces. Beloved, let us mingle with the sternness of our integrity and the solemnity of our life purpose that cheerfulness and joy which are the most natural and the most attractive ornaments of the Christian character. The true way to serve the Lord in the common acts of life is to *perform them as unto Himself* and this can be done with everything which is lawful to do. God forbid we should maintain, as some do, a broad, unbending distinction between things secular and religious.

This wicked age must, indeed, have its holy places and its holy days. What is this but a confession that most of its buildings are unholy and its days unholy, too? Of Heaven it is written, "I saw no temple there," and we get nearest to the heavenly state when all superstitious notions about sacred places and sacred substances shall be swept away once and for all! To a man who lives unto God nothing is secular, everything is sacred! He puts on his workday garment and it is a vestment to him. He sits down to his meal and it is a sacrament. He goes forth to his labor and exercises the office of the priesthood. His breath is incense and his life a sacrifice. He sleeps on the bosom of God and lives and moves in the Divine Presence. To draw a hard and fast line and say, "This is sacred and this is secular," is, to my mind, diametrically opposed to the teaching of Christ and the spirit of the Gospel!

Paul has said, "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself." Peter saw a sheet let down from Heaven in which were all manner of beasts and four-footed creatures which he was bid to kill and eat. And when he refused because they were unclean, he was rebuked by a Voice from Heaven, saying, "What God has cleansed that call not you common." The Lord has cleansed your houses, my Brethren. He has cleansed your bed chambers, your tables, your shops. He has made the bells upon your horses holiness to the Lord. He has made the common pots and pans of your kitchens to be as the bowls before the altar if you know what you are and live according to your high calling.

You housemaids, you cooks, you nurses, you plowmen, you housewives, you traders, you sailors—your labor is holy if you serve the Lord Christ in it—if by living unto Him as you ought to live. The sacred has absorbed the secular! The overarching Temple of the Lord covers all your houses and your fields. My Brothers and Sisters, this ennobles life! The bondsman is henceforth free—he serves not man, but God. The galley slave tugs the oar for Jesus! The menial ministers to the Lord. This cheers the darkest shades, for now we no longer complain of the hardness of our lot, but rejoice in it because we bear all for Jesus—and the burden which we carry is His Cross which He, Himself, places on our shoulders! This ensures us a reward for all we do.

If in our service we receive but little thanks from man and, if, after a life of toil, find ourselves but scantily furnished for old age, we will not complain, for our recompense is sure, our reward is in the hands of One who never forgets His servants! There is no unrewarded toil in the service of

the Lord Christ, even a cup of cold water He remembers. He who serves Christ shall have it said of him at last, "Well done, good and faithful servant," and in the fullness of His Master's joy, into which He shall enter, He shall forget that for a while he lived unremunerated among the sons of men! Let this stimulate your zeal, my Brethren! If you serve the Lord Christ, serve Him well! If you had work to do for her Majesty the Queen, you would try to do your best. If she honored you with her commands you would cheerfully obey them—how much more should you be aroused to diligence by the call of the Infinite Majesty of Him who bled for you!

Perform your daily work with a heartiness which nothing else could beget in you. Serve the Lord with gladness and do all for love of His name. This I thought most important to bring forward, and though I cannot speak upon it as I would, yet I do earnestly urge all of you to remember that piety shines best around the domestic hearth—and that true religion is always best esteemed by unconverted men when they see it in connection with the common duties of life. They do not care how beautifully you pray at Prayer Meetings.

They have very little respect for the excellent addresses you deliver in the Sunday school. But to *live* godly, soberly, righteously—to make other people happy, to be gentle in temper, to be yielding and forgiving, to be strictly upright and honest in your dealings with your fellow men—this is what the world will read and recognize! And when they see these things in you, the Gospel will be commended to them and they will be the more likely to listen to the Truth of God as it is in Jesus.

**II.** Secondly, Brethren, we ought to serve the Lord Christ in what we more commonly, but incorrectly, call RELIGIOUS ACTIONS. Every professor of religion should have something to do for Jesus Christ. Though the discipline of our Church does not turn out of it everyone who is an idler, I almost wish it did. I am afraid such a rule would diminish our numbers, but it would materially quicken our energy! Drones in the hive are of very little use as to making honey. They are at the bottom of all the quarrels, but they cannot really benefit the community. God save us from being drones! Let every man and woman who is really redeemed by the blood of Jesus have something to do and *do* it.

I wish I could go round the whole of this company, this morning, and say, "Brother, do you serve the Lord Christ? Sister, do you the same?" But I will ask Conscience to be my deputy and leave your own hearts to answer the question. Brother, Sister, do you *really* serve Christ, or does it amount to this—you enjoy hearing, you enjoy singing, and so on, but you do nothing for Jesus? Bestir yourself, dear Brother—put out your talent to interest! Your Lord has said, "Occupy till I come." Take heed lest He come and find your talent buried in the earth—your Lord's money and your napkin rotting in the soil. Let each one be serving Christ always according to his ability.

But supposing that we are serving Christ, as we think? It is well to raise a further question—are we with our whole soul serving *Christ*. For mark you, it is very easy to make a mistake here! We may be working in a legal spirit and so not serving Christ. No doubt many attend to the out-

ward matters of religion that they may win merit, or that they may prepare themselves for the receipt of the Divine blessing. I do not wonder at the zeal and earnestness which some people show—if they hope to get to Heaven by their works they ought to be zealous, indeed! The legal spirit has a measure of power in it—the lash drives the slave on—the fear of punishment impels man to toil.

But from such bondage you are free—“you are not under the Law, but under Grace.” Do, therefore, nothing with the hope of deserving well at the Lord’s hands, for this would be serving *self*. You are saved—serve, then, your *Savior* out of gratitude! Work, not to obtain life, but because you have life already and delight to exercise that life to the honor of Him who gave it!

Some, I fear, do not serve Christ in what they do, for they go about it as a part of the general routine of their existence. It is the proper thing to go to a place of worship, therefore they go. It is generally expected of persons in their station to teach in the Sunday school and they do so accordingly. They reckon that they ought to give a guinea if they see the name of a friend down on the list, therefore they do it. I am afraid that a great deal which is put down as *work for Christ* is a kind of sleep-walking, done without thought, or heart, or desire to glorify God! May the Holy Spirit awaken us out of such mere mechanical acts and bring us to be in heart and soul the Lord’s willing, ardent workers.

Some, I fear, render service in a party spirit. They serve and they think it is Christ they are serving—but in fact it is their own denomination or little Church. They would be almost vexed to hear of God’s being honored among any other sort of Christians! They hope there will be a revival, but they would like it to be pretty nearly confined to the walls of their own Chapel. They serve a *clique*, not Christ. Their sympathies never go beyond the particular section of the Church to which they belong and they are rather moved by emulation to see their own opinions dominant than by zeal for the Glory of God. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, break those bonds if they hold you! We ought to be zealous for the whole Truth of God! We ought to labor to increase the number of those Christians who hold the Gospel in its purity—but still—never let our jealousy for pure religion degenerate into bigotry! Let us love the whole Church more than a part, and Christ best of all!

In more instances, still, the self-spirit comes in to usurp the place of Jesus. I wonder how large a proportion of our zeal, if it were analyzed, could be accounted for by the desire of prominence, the ambition to be thought useful and the wish to shine among our fellow men? I cannot set up a furnace here and put my own zeal or yours into the crucible just now, but again I ask your conscience to be my deputy to analyze, honestly, the motive which sways you and to tell you plainly how far you are serving *self* and how far you are serving *Christ*. We are not always serving Jesus, I fear, when we think we are most doing so, for our main object may be to please our fellow creatures.

Our parents wish us to be active in the Church and, therefore, we do it. Our friends would not be pleased if we were idle and, therefore, we make

ourselves active. From our position we are expected to be engaged in some department of Christian service and, therefore, we enter upon it. Brothers and Sisters, we must rise above this! What we do—whether we teach in the school, or visit the sick, or distribute tracts, or preach the Gospel—we must do as unto the Lord, alone. And the master motive which should, indeed, crush out every other, must be this—“we serve the Lord Christ.” Brethren, let others take what they will for their motto, I charge you by the Holy Spirit—write this upon your banners—“We serve the Lord Christ.”

If any request you to serve this literary group or that political faction, or to give your whole attention to some great moral reform, let your answer be, “We serve the Lord Christ.” Aid in anything that is good—whatever things are lovely and of good report, and are for the benefit of mankind, you are bound to consider—but still your main lifework, your true business which must absorb your energies and eat you up, is this—“We serve the Lord Christ.” They beckon us from this point, crying, “Come over and help us.” They call to us from the other corner, “Come and work with us,” but our answer must be, “We are an independent brigade. We are already committed to the noblest cause—we are sworn to a Captain who has no rival! We are not able to promise ourselves to any of you, though in which you do good we are your allies. Jesus we serve and none else. God forbid that we should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” May God help us to do this always!

**III.** Now I am coming to the last part of my discourse, which, to me, is the most interesting, and I trust it may be so to you. We serve the Lord Christ IN SPECIAL ACTS DONE TO HIMSELF. I cannot tell how *you* feel, but I often wish I could do something for my Lord, Himself, personally. I frequently meet with kind souls to whom God has blessed my ministry. They express their thankfulness to God and their love to me by aiding the various works committed to my charge, for which I am deeply grateful to them. But now and then a friend says, “I will cheerfully subscribe to your work, but I desire, also, to show my personal thanks to yourself. What can I do *for you?*”

Now, towards those whom we esteem, this is a natural feeling. And in spiritual things there is a similar desire towards our Divine Benefactor. Our hearts long to offer something to Jesus, distinctly to Jesus, Himself. He has gone from us, or we would delight to minister to Him of our substance, to make Him a feast, to furnish Him a chamber, or to wash His feet. How gladly would we lend Him our coat, our animal, our guest chamber or anything we possess! We would watch His every need and endeavor to forestall it if He were here. But He has gone. Are we, therefore, denied the privilege of rendering personal service to Him? I think not.

Let it be our pleasant task, now, to consider what we can do directly and distinctly *for Him*. First, we can *adore our Lord*. We can bow at His feet and worship Him as our Lord and our God. We shall do well to exercise our hearts in frequent acts of devotion to the Son of God. I do not mean offering prayers and petitions, excellent as these are, but holy contemplation, meditation, admiration, thanksgiving and worship of Jesus.

Far be it from us to neglect the adoration of any one Person of the adorable Trinity in Unity—that were a grievous sin—but to worship Jesus does not involve forgetfulness of the Father or of the Holy Spirit.

Fix your eyes on the Person of Jesus. View His work on earth. Contemplate His holy life and expiatory death. Meditate upon His great love, His dying love, His living love. Follow Him from the tomb to Olivet, and from the mountain's brow to Heaven's gate and the right hand of the Father. Pay your homage before His Throne, blessing, praising and adoring Him. We ought not to be satisfied without special acts of personal thanksgiving in which we exercise our love and reverence for Him who is altogether lovely in our eyes. True, we may be doing nothing for our fellow men while thus occupied, but Jesus is dearer to us than the whole race of men—and it is only His due that we render Him when we bow adoringly at His ever-blessed feet.

Then, Brethren, when you have adored Him in secret, you should do the like in public by speaking well of Him and extolling Him before others—not so much for their good as for Christ's Glory. I must confess I enjoy a sermon, best, in which I have to speak most of my Beloved. If I have to set Him forth rather than to exhort you, I feel best pleased. There are other things to be done besides, but this is the sweetest task. I love to spend all my preaching time in making Jesus lovely in man's eyes, in lifting Him up on a gloriously high Throne in the esteem of those who listen to me. Brothers and Sisters, do this, yourselves, in your common talk! Make a point of turning the conversation round till it bears on Him. Frequently begin a conversation about Jesus and let men know that you glorify Him! In such special acts of devotion to His Person, I pray you abound.

Next, we should *pray for Him*. Do you understand that? Some do not. The Psalmist says, "Prayer also shall be made *for Him* continually." It is very delightful to pray for sinners and pray for Believers—but there should be special prayer for Jesus Christ—for the extension of His kingdom. That He may see of the travail of His soul and that His Second Advent may speedily arrive. We should pray for the conversion of those who deny His Deity and those who fall into deadly errors as to His substitutionary sacrifice. We should make earnest supplication for the quickening of the love of Jesus in the hearts of the faithful and for the turning of the disobedient to the knowledge of the Truth of God. Such prayers should be very frequent with us for His sake and with an eye to His Glory. We pray for this and that, but surely Jesus ought to have a larger measure of our supplications!

Brethren, next to this there should be much *communion with Him*. I think I hear someone say, "Is that *serving* Him? I call it *enjoying* Him!" Yes, I know it is, and you may take it in which way you will, for He says, "If any man serve Me, let Him follow Me, and where I am there shall also My servant be." So that you will be sure to be with Him if you serve Him. To be near Him is one of the great essentials of true service. Remember His dying request, "This do you in remembrance of Me." And what was that? Why, it was to observe the Lord's Supper, which is the outward and

visible sign of communing with Him! If He attaches so much importance to the outward sign, how much more does He value the inner reality of fellowship with Himself?

The fact is that the head which leans upon His bosom is thereby consecrated to His love and is rendering Him service. The cheek on which He imprints the kisses of His month is doing Him its best homage while it receives His best favors. Walk not at a distance from Jesus or you will grieve Him! Abide in Him and you will bring forth fruit to Him. Let no day pass without a word with Jesus. You are His spouse—can you live without a loving word from your Husband? You are of His flesh and of His bones—let unbroken communion be the very habit of your being! Brethren, the Lord's Supper is worship rendered to Jesus and is mainly an act which begins and ends upon Him—you commemorate His death, you set forth His flesh and blood. Your union and communion with Christ are not so much meant to benefit others, as to spend itself upon Him. Therefore attend to it for His sake. Let your eyes be fixed upon only Him. Whatever others may think of your raptures and delights in Jesus—however much they may call them emotional and unpractical—remain content with having done it unto Him.

Bear with me while I mention other ways in which you may serve Jesus personally. You may do so by *sitting at His feet and learning of Him*, studying the Word and pleading for the Holy Spirit to give you light into its meaning. Martha prepared a feast for Him and our Lord did not blame her. But He gave Mary the preference who sat at His feet. One in the crowd said concerning Christ, "Blessed is the womb that bore You and the paps that gave You suck." To administer to His childhood seemed the highest of earthly favors. But Jesus said, "Yes, rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it." Get that blessing! Hear it from His own lips! Study His Word—make much of every syllable. Try to get at the essential spirit and do not tarry in the killing letter—and you will then be personally serving Him, for as a Teacher He is pleased when we are His attentive pupils. This is a sweet way of pleasing the Lord Christ.

Then, Brothers and Sisters, remember, if you would serve Christ personally, you must *obey Him*. "Oh," you say, "I did not think that would be a very choice way of *servicing* Him." Listen! "If you love Me, keep My commandments." He has chosen *obedience* as the special pledge and token of our love! You have said, "I wish I could build a Chapel, or support a minister or a missionary out of my own purse." I wish you could, but still, Jesus has not selected *that* as *the* love token. He has said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Complete, prayerful, habitual *obedience* to Christ is the most choice pledge of affection which we can present to our Lord. May Infinite Mercy help us to present it!

We may do to Christ personal service, next, by being willing to *bear reproach* for His sake. When you are willing to take upon yourself the defense of a man's character. To throw yourself so completely into him that the reproaches of them that reproach him fall upon you—you have rendered to that man no mean proof of love. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, if, when they laugh at you for Christ's sake, you clap your hands for very

glee to be counted worthy to be ridiculed for Him! If you take, joyfully, the spoiling of your goods, or the slandering of your character! If you know the meaning of this word, “Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for so persecuted they the Prophets that were before you”—then have you rendered personal service to Him whom you love! And then you may sit down and be thankful for having been allowed to drink of His cup and to be baptized with His Baptism.

Further, you can show personal kindness to Christ by *caring for His Church*. The Lord had forgiven Peter and Peter, no doubt, wished to do something to prove his love. His Lord somewhat vexed him by three times putting to him the question, “Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me?” And when the disciple had protested his love, the Master said to him, “Feed My sheep,” and, “Feed My lambs.” Go, then, and teach the little children and instruct those of riper years. What He has taught you, teach to others, and you will be doing service to Him. He bids you consider it so, for to you who love Him, He says, “Feed My sheep.”

If you cannot serve with your tongue, there remains another mode of pleasing Jesus. Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and relieve distress of every kind. “But that is not doing service for *Him*.” I have the best authority for saying that it is, for, “Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, I was hungry and you gave Me meat, I was thirsty and you gave Me drink. Sick and in prison, and you visited Me. Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, My brethren, you have done it unto Me.”

Actual gifts to the poor and helps afforded to those who need them are grateful love tokens to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is not here, but His poor saints are. Any saint is an image of Christ, but a *poor* saint is the express image of Christ! There is a something more about him than about the rich, in which he is even, in detail and circumstances, more like his Lord. Do, then, to your Lord’s own members what you would have done to Him if He, Himself, were here. Still, I think that every now and then, for Jesus, there ought to be a *little special wastefulness of love*. The woman with her alabaster box of very precious ointment would, no doubt, gladly have joined with the holy ones of substance who ministered to Him. I have no doubt she would very gladly have poured water on His feet when He came into the house weary, or she would have waited at the table when He ate.

But all this would not have sufficed her ardent love. She wanted to perform an extraordinary act which would be all for Him—she looked at that precious box—she must break *that*, for she would give Him something which she could not afford to do every day—in fact, which she never did *attempt* to give but once in her life! Brothers and Sisters, think of something special you can do for Jesus. Let it cost you something and if it pinches you, so much the better! It will be sweet to bear a pinch for Jesus! Think of something that you could not justify in prudence if you had to sit down and talk it over. Do it for Him, not to talk about to others, afterwards, nor for others to brazen abroad. But do it for Him—and then if they do publish it you need not be angry, for Jesus said, “Where ever this

Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman has done, be told for a memorial of her.”

Be not ostentatious, but do not be in such a great worry to hide your work for Jesus, for the knowledge of it may do other people good and lead them to imitate the deed. Still, do it unto Jesus, only. I cannot suggest what you shall do. And it would be indelicate for me to attempt to do so. Who would think of suggesting to a wife what she should give to her husband as a special private love token? Oh, no! These things are too choice for others to meddle with. They are secrets between the Lord and His elect, suggestions of personal love which cannot come from without. Do you enquire, “What shall I do for Jesus to praise Him?” Bring forth the choicest that you have and offer it when your heart is best attuned and ready for the giving of it.

My whole soul thirsts to be doing this often, for I owe all I have and all I am to Jesus, my Lord! Here stands a man before you who has not one single thing in all the world but what he has received from his Lord! He has not a penny but what is lent him! He is clothed by charity and fed by mercy! He is a pauper by nature and yet wealthier than a millionaire because he lives as a gentleman commoner upon the daily bounty of God in Christ Jesus! Here stands before you an unworthy servant of the best of masters! He is a poor relation of the most generous of householders! He is happy to be in such a case!

Are there other men and women here who owe all to my Lord? If they do, let it be said of them, “You serve the Lord Christ.” So let it be said of them while they live and till they die! What better can they desire? For myself, I am resolved, by Divine Grace, more fully to yield my whole body, soul and spirit to Him whose I am, whom I serve. Grace be with you. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Colossians 3, 4:1-6.  
HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—179, 710, 784.**

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# A SERMON FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER NO. 354

A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, JANUARY 6, 1861,  
BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT EXETER HALL, STRAND.

**“Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”  
Colossians 4:2.**

THOSE of you who constantly listen to my voice are aware that on the first Sabbath of the year I always receive of a venerable Clergyman—a veteran warrior in the Lord’s hosts—a verse of Scripture which I accept as my New Year’s text and which after being printed becomes the motto of my congregation for the following year. It is somewhat singular that my venerable friend should have sent me in the envelope about a month ago this text. He knew nothing of the proposition for a week of prayer. I do not know that it had been even determined upon at that date—certainly neither to his knowledge nor to mine—and I could not but help thinking when I opened my envelope and saw what was to be my text, that he had been directly and specially guided of God, that my text might be in keeping with the engagements of the week. “Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”

How greatly do I rejoice that the Churches are aroused to prayer. My honored and venerable Brother will this morning stand up in his village Church, lift up holy hands and bid his people join in the common supplication and I feel but too happy as his younger Brother in Christ—as but a babe compared to so experienced a pastor—to follow his example in stirring you up that you, too, as a great host may join with the general company of the faithful and besiege the Throne of Grace till you carry the gates of Heaven by storm and obtain the mercy which both you and the world so much require.

Without further preface, let me observe that there are three exhortations in the text connected with prayer. The first is *continue*. The second is *watch*. And the third is *give thanks*. “Continuance” sits like Moses on the top of the hill, while Watching and Thanksgiving, like Aaron and Hur, hold up its hands.

**I.** And first, in regard to prayer, the Apostle says “CONTINUE.” Be you not, O you intercessors with God for men—be you not as those whose goodness is as the morning cloud and as the early dew. Do not begin to pray and then suddenly cease your supplications. That will prove an ignorance as to the value of the mercy which you seek and a want of earnestness as to your obtaining it. How many there are who, under a powerful sermon or during a trying Providence, have bent their knees suddenly in hasty prayer! They have risen from their knees and they have forgotten what manner of men they were.

Take away the whip from them and they have ceased to run. Remove from them the tempest and they have ceased to fly before it. They have ceased to pray when God has ceased to smite. O Church of God, imitate

not these heathen men and publicans. Wake not yourself up to a sudden fit of prayer and then return again to your sloth. Stir not yourself a moment from your bed to throw your heavy head back again upon your pillow but continue in supplication—cease not to pray. There is a great distinction between the prayer of the real convert and the merely convicted sinner. The merely convicted sinner, termed by the Law, calls but once. The awakened heart, renewed of the Holy Spirit, never ceases to cry until the mercy comes.

A few days ago, by the seaside, on the coast of the Isle of Wight, a woman thought she heard, in the midst of the howling tempest, the voice of a man. She listened. It was repeated. She strained her ear again and she caught, amid the crack of the blast and the thundering of the winds, another cry for help. She ran at once to the lifeguards who launched their boat and some three poor mariners who were clinging to a mast were saved. Had that cry been but once and not again, either she might have doubted as to whether she had heard it at all, or else she would have drawn the melancholy conclusion that they had been swept into the watery waste and that help would have come too late.

So when a man prays but once, either we may think that he cries not at all, or else that his desires are swallowed up in the wild waste of his sins and he himself is sucked down into the vortex of destruction. If the Church of God shall offer prayer this week and then shall cease to be in earnest, we shall think her never to have meant her prayers. If she shall but now and then start up and make her supplications we shall write her down a hypocrite intent for a moment upon keening appearances, but afterwards relapsing into her lukewarm Laodicean condition. The exhortation of my text, I think, stands in contrast, then, to the transient prayer which is often offered by ungodly men. *Continue* in prayer. Do not pray once and have done with it, but continue in it.

I think further that the exhortation to continue may be put in opposition to the common dealings of many with God who pray and pause and pray and pause—are earnest and then cool, earnest and colder still. There is a sharp frost—a rapid thaw and then a frost again. Their spiritual state is as variable as our own weather. A shower, sunshine, mist, shower, sunshine again. They are everything by turns and nothing long. There are too many Churches which are just of this character. See them one week, you would believe they would carry all before them and convert the town or village in which they are located.

See them next week and they are “As sound asleep as a church,” which is a common Proverb, a church being too often the sleepest thing in all the world. Sometimes they ran and they did run well—what did hinder them? But they stopped, they paused. They looked about them and after a while they ran again—but they moved not swiftly enough to be able to make up the time lost when they were standing still.

Now I am afraid our Churches have for a considerable period been just in this state—have been sometimes hot and sometimes cold. Look at our revivals everywhere—the American revival, it is a great wave and then dry sand. Look at the Irish revival. I fear that in the end it will come to the same amount. Almost everywhere there have been great stirrings. As if a

holy fire had fallen and was about to burn up all the stubble, all men stand in wonder at it, but it ceases and a few ashes remain. The fact is, the Church is not healthy, she has intermittent fits of health. She has starts of energy, she has paroxysms of agony. But she does not agonize for souls—she is not always earnest, she is not always busy. Well did Paul need to say to this age as to his own, “*Continue* in prayer.” Not one week, but every week. Not for a season, but at all seasons. Be you always crying out unto the Lord your God.

In the black country of England, you who have traveled will have observed fires which never in your recollection have been quenched. I believe there are some which have been kept burning for more than fifty years, both night and day, every day in the year. They are never allowed to go out, because, we are informed, the manufacturers would find it amazingly expensive again to get the furnace to its needed red heat. Indeed, the blast furnace, I suppose would all but ruin the proprietor if it were allowed to go out once every week. He would probably never get it up to its right heat until the time came for letting the fire out again.

Now, as with these tremendous furnaces which must burn every day or else they will be useless—they must be kept burning or else it will be hard to get them up to the proper heat—so ought it to be in all the Churches of God. They should be as flaming fires both night and day, caldron after caldron of the coal of earnestness should be put to the furnace. All the fuel of earnestness which can be gathered from the hearts of men should be cast upon the burning pile. The heavens should be always red with the glorious illumination and then—then might you expect to see the Church prospering in her Divine business and hard hearts melted before the fire of the Spirit.

Continue, then, in prayer. Never let your fire go out. But why? Why should the Church always be in prayer? Understand we do not mean by this that men ought to leave their business, forsake their shops and neglect their household, to be always supplicating. There were some fanatics in the early Church who gave up everything that they might be always praying. We know what the Apostle would have said to them for did he not say, “If any man will not work, neither let him eat?” “There are some lazy people who like praying better than working—let them learn that the Lord accepts not this at their hands. Did not the Master, even when He was on earth, after He had preached a sermon in Simon Peter’s boat—did He not as soon as ever He was done, say to Peter, “Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught”? He did this to show that work, hard work, the hardest of work is quite in keeping with the hearing and the preaching of the Word and that no man has any right to forsake his calling to which God has appointed him in His Providence, under pretense of seeking the Lord.

Never stain one duty with the blood of another. It is quite possible that you may continue in your labor and yet continue in prayer. You may not always be in the exercise but you may always be in the spirit of prayer. If there shall not always be iron in the furnace to melt, yet let there always be the fire to melt it. If not always shooting the arrow up to Heaven, yet always keep the bow well stringed, so shall you always be archers, though

not always shooting. So shall you always be men of prayer, though not always in the exercise of praying.

1. But why should the Church—to come to the question—why should the Church continue in prayer? For several reasons and the first is, *God will answer her*. It is not possible that God should refuse to hear prayer. It is possible for Him to bid the sun stand still and the moon to stay her monthly march. It is possible for Him to bid the waves freeze in the sea—possible for Him to quench the light of the stars in eternal darkness—but it is not possible for Him to refuse to hear prayer which is based upon His promise and offered in faith. He can reverse nature, but He cannot reverse His own nature and He must do this before He can forbear to hear and answer prayer.

The prayers of God's Church are God's intentions—you will not misunderstand me—what God writes in the book of His decree, which no eye can see, *that* He in process of time writes in the book of Christian hearts where all can see and read. The book of the believer's desire, if those desires are inspired of the Holy Spirit is just an exact copy of the book of the Divine decree. And if the Church is determined today to lift up her heart in prayer for the conversion of men, it is because God determined from before all worlds that men should be converted. Your feeble prayer today, Brothers and Sisters, can fly to Heaven and awake the echoes of the slumbering decrees of God.

Every time you speak to God, your voice resounds beyond the limits of time. The decrees of God speak to your prayer and cry, "All hail! Brother, all hail! you, too, are a decree!" Prayer is a decree escaped out of the prison of obscurity and come to life and liberty among men. Pray, Brothers and Sisters, pray, for when God inspires you, your prayer is as potent as the decrees of God. As His decrees bind the universe with spells and make the suns obedient to Him—as every letter of His decree is as a nail, pinning together the pillars of the universe, so are your prayers. They are the pivots on which earth rests. They are the wheels on which Providence revolves. Your prayers are like God's decrees struggling to be born and to become incarnate like their Lord.

God will, God *must* answer the prayers of His Church. Methinks I can see in vision in the clouds God's register. His file on which He puts the prayers of his Church. One after another they have been deposited, He has cast none of them away and consumed none of them in the fire, but He has put them on His file and smiled as the heap accumulated. And when it shall reach a certain mark which He has set and appointed in His good pleasure and the last number of the prayers shall be completed and the blood of Christ shall have bedewed the whole, then will the Eternal speak and it *shall* be done—He shall command and it *shall* stand fast.

"Let there be light," says He and there shall be light at once. "Let the kingdom come." And the kingdom shall come. He that lets shall be put out of the way, he that hinders shall be cast down and trod as the mire of the streets. Up, Church of God, in all the glory of your prayer, put on your vestments and begin to plead through Jesus Christ your Great High Priest. Enter you within the veil today, for God hears you and He will surely answer you.

**2.** There is a second reason why the Church should continue in prayer, namely, that by her prayers *the world will most certainly be blessed*. The other evening in visiting the sick, I saw at the distance, down a long street the bright light of a fire. In a moment or so the flames seemed to yield, but again it sprang up and lit the heavens. Again it became dim and dimmer still. As we walked along, we said, "They have got the fire under control. The engines have been at work, how soon it is out!"

I compare this to the Church's work upon the world. The world is as it were wrapped in flames of the fire of sin and the Church of God must quench those flames. Whenever we meet together and are more earnest in prayer, angels might well see in the distance the flames dimmed and the fire giving way. Whenever we cease our exertions and become languid in our efforts, the flame gets the upper hand of us and once more spirits from the far-off world can see the fiery mantle surrounding our globe.

Hand up your buckets, Sirs! Every man to the pumps! Now strip to it everyone of you, work while you have life and strength. Now each man to his knee, for it is on our knees that we overcome. Each man to his station and to his work and let us continue to pass from hand to hand the quenching water till every spark shall be put out and there shall be a new Heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness. To stop while but one part of the fabric is on fire would be to condemn the whole. To pause until the last spark shall be extinct, would be to give up the world to the devouring element. Continue, then, in prayer, till the world is wholly saved and Christ is universal King.

**3.** Thirdly, continue in prayer, because *souls shall be saved as the result of your entreaties*. Can you stand on the beach a moment—you can scarcely see, but yet you may discern by the lights of lanterns sundry brave men launching the lifeboat. It is out—they have taken their seats. Helmsman and rowers, all strong hearts, determined to save their fellows or to perish. They have gotten far away now into the midst of the billows and we have lost sight of them. But in spirit we will take our stand in the midst of the boat. What a sea rolled in just then! If she were not built for such weather, she would surely have been upset.

See that tremendous wave and how the boat leaps like a sea bird over its crest. See now again—it has plunged into a dreary furrow and the wind, like some great plow, turns up the water on either side as though it were clods of mold. Surely the boat will find her grave and be buried in the sheet of foam—but no! She comes out of it and the dripping men draw a long breath. But the mariners are discouraged, they have strained themselves bending to yonder oars and they would turn back, for there is small hope of living in such a sea and it is hardly possible that they will ever reach the wreck.

But the brave captain cries out, "Now, my bold lads, for God's sake, send her on! A few more pulls of the oar and we shall be alongside. The poor fellows will be able to hold on a minute or two longer. Now pull as for dear life." See how the boat leaps, see how she springs as though she were a living thing, a messenger of mercy intent to save. Again, he says "Once more, once again and we will do it"—no, she has been dashed aside from the ship for a moment, that sea all but stove her in, but the helmsman

turns her round and the captain cries, "Now, my boys, once more!" And every man pulls with lusty sinews and the poor shipwrecked ones are saved.

Yes, it is just so with us now. Long have Christ's ministers, long have Christ's Church pulled with the Gospel lifeboat—let us pull again. Every prayer is a fresh stroke of the oar and all of you are oarsmen. Yes, you feeble women confined to your beds, shut up in your chambers—you who can do nothing else but pray—you are all oarsmen in this great boat. Pull yet once more and this week let us drive the boat ahead and it may be it will be the last tremendous struggle that shall be required, for sinners shall be saved and the multitude of the redeemed shall be accomplished. Not we, but *grace* shall do the work, yet is it ours to be workers for God.

**4.** But continue in prayer once more, because prayer is *a great weapon of attack against the error and wickedness of the world*. I see before me the strong bastions of the castle of Sin. I mark the host of men who have surrounded it. They have brought the battering ram, they have dashed it many times against the gate. It has fallen with tremendous force against it and you would have supposed that the timbers would be split asunder the first time. But they are staunch and strong. He who made them was a cunning architect. He who depends upon them for his protection is one who knew how to make the gate exceeding massive—is one who knew the struggle full well which he would have to endure—Prince of Darkness as he is.

If he knew of his defeat, yet well he knew how to guard against it if it were possible. But I see this ponderous battering ram as it has been hurled with giant force again and again upon the gate and has as often seemed to recoil before the massive bars. Many of the saints of God are ready to say, "Let us withdraw the instrument. Let us take away the besieging armament, we shall never be able to storm this castle, we shall never effect an entrance." Oh, be not craven, Sirs, be not craven. The last time the battering-ram thundered in its course, I saw the timbers shake. The very gate did reel and the posts did rock to and fro—see now they have moved the earth around their sockets.

Hell is howling from within because it knows how soon its end must come. Now, Christian warriors, use your battering rams once more, for the gates begin to shake and the walls are tottering. They will reel, they will fall before long—one more blow and yet another and another and another and as Israel went up over the walls of Jericho of old, so shall we soon go up over the fallen ruins of the walls of the castle of Sin and Satan. The Church does not know how near her victory is—we do not believe how much God is doing—but let the Holy Spirit for once give us a little more faith and in confidence that we are nearing the victory—we shall continue in prayer. Turn not back when we have all but overcome, continue still, even till the end shall be and the voice shall be heard, "Hallelujah, it is done. The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

**II.** The second exhortation is WATCH. Watch, *for you will soon be drowsy if you watch not*. Joshua fought the Amalekites and I never read that his hand was weary, though the battle occupied a very long day. Moses

was on the mountain in prayer and his hands grew heavy because prayer is such spiritual work and we are so un-spiritual that the tendency of prayer upon our nature will be to make us drowsy unless we watch. It is ill-praying, when we are drowsy. It is ill for a Church that is not half-awake to be in supplication. All eyes must be opened. The judgment, the imagination, the hope, the memory—all must be in full vigor, or else we can scarcely hope that prayer shall be successful.

I think I see the Church as I fear she is now. There she is upon her knees, with hands clasped. She mutters a few words. Her head droops, for she is weary. Again she pleads and yet again her head is well nigh fallen on her bosom. She is a sleeping Church in prayer. Am I too severe in this picture? I believe it is true. I think there are some members of the Church thoroughly awake, but they are few. There are multitudes of professors who do not feel the value of souls. There are many who will meet in the room of this lower hall and meet in our own chapels also, to pray who are nevertheless not awake, not awake to the world's necessities, not awake to Christ's glory, not awake to the power of the Gospel—nor awake to their own responsibilities, so that they will pray—but pray and sleep. Here, then, we see the value of the exhortation of the Apostle—"Continue in prayer and *watch in the same.*"

But watch for another reason—because *as soon as ever you begin to pray there will be enemies who will commence the attack.* The Church never was earnest yet without sooner or later discovering that the devil was in earnest, too. The devil has had an easy time of it up till the last six or seven years for the Church has been going on her old-fashioned way doing nothing at all. There was very little abuse of ministers—ministers were getting to be very respectable men and very little abuse of any section of Christians—they were all getting to be very easy and loveable sort of people.

But as sure as the Church, or any section of the Church, shall be right-down in earnest, they will be abused. Never think you are good for anything till the world finds fault with you. Never reckon that you have got a success unless many begin to cry you down. I always think that an article against you, if you have sought with an honest conscience to discharge your duty in the sight of God, is one of the highest compliments the press can pay you. Consider it as such. Never expect that the world will be friends with the Church.

Indeed the world will be friendly enough with the Church if the Church will not do her duty. If there were a sentinel set to guard a post against surprise, if you knew him to be a very great friend of those who meant to make the attack, I think you would suspect very soon that he was in collusion with the enemy. No, Sirs, they who fight Christ's battles, must be men who think as well of the world as the world thinks of them—that is to say, who have no love to the world's esteem and the world no love to them. Martin Luther used to say, "The world gives me a very bad character, but there is no love lost between us, I can give to it as bad a character as ever it gives to me." The world says "quack, pretender, fanatic!" Be it so—be it so, O world, you have no power to honor Christ's ministers, except by upbraiding them. There is no power in the wicked to honor Christ's minister,

except they are either trembling before him, or else laughing at him. Either way we will gratefully accept the honor and write it down as being a proof of our success.

But watch, O Church of Christ, watch! A struggle awaits you as sure as ever you are earnest in prayer. In riding along the south coast of England you may have noticed the old Martello towers in constant succession very near to each other. They are the result of an old scheme of protecting our coast from our ancient enemies. It was supposed that as soon as ever a French ship was seen in the distance the beacon would be fired at the Martello tower and then, across old England, wherever her sons dwelt, there would flash the fiery signal news that the enemy was at hand and every man would seize the weapon that was next to him to dash the invader from the shore.

Now we need that the Church of Christ should be guarded with Martello towers of sacred watchers who shall day and night look out for the attack of the enemy. For the enemy will come. If he comes not when we are prayerless he will surely come when we are prayerful. He will show the cloven hoof as soon as ever we show the bended knee. If our motto is "Prayer," his watchword will be "Fierce attack." Watch, then, while you continue in prayer.

But yet again—watch while you pray *for propitious events which may help you in the answer to your prayer*. I have known sea captains, when they have got their ships loaded with coal and they have wished to come up to London with their cargo have been unable to get down the Tyne and out to sea. If they could have got to sea, they could make their passage. And I have once or twice known a wary captain, being well upon the watch, manage to sail out of the river just while there was a little change of the wind and when his fellows have awakened in the morning, they have missed him from his berth and he has stolen a march upon them. He watched and they did not and having lost the wind, they have had to lie in port till he has emptied out his cargo and returned.

Now, the Church should watch while she prays to see if she cannot fulfill her own prayers, look out for opportunities of doing good and see if she cannot steal a march upon her enemies. While she has one eye to Heaven for help, she must have the other eye on earth to look out for opportunities of doing good. God does not always send the Spirit to blow with the same force. We cannot make the wind blow, but we can spread the sails. So, if we cannot command the Spirit of God, when the Spirit of God does come, we can observe His coming and avail ourselves of the glorious opportunity. Watch, then, while you pray.

Watch, too, *for fresh arguments in prayer*. Heaven's gate is not to be stormed by one weapon but by many. Spare no arrows, Christian. Watch and see that none of the arms in your armory are rusty. Besiege the Throne of God with a hundred hands and look at the promise with a hundred eyes. You have a great work on hand for you have to move the arm that moves the world. Watch, then, for every means of moving that arm. See to it that you ply every Promise. Use every argument. Wrestle with all your might.

When you are wrestling with an antagonist, you must keep your eye on him. You must look to see what he means to do next, of where you can get the next grip at him. See where you can get a hold, or plant your foot, so that you can throw him down. So wrestle with the Angel of Mercy. Watch while you pray. You cannot wrestle with your eyes shut, nor can you prevail with God unless your own soul is in a watchful state. O Spirit of God, arouse the Church and help her to watch while she prays.

But one other remark—*watch for the answers to your prayers*. When you post a letter to a friend, requesting a favor, you watch for an answer. When you pray to God for a favor you do not expect Him to hear you, some of you. If the Lord were to hear some of your prayers, you would be surprised. I do believe that if God should send to you what you have asked for, you would be quite astonished. Sometimes when I have met with a special answer to prayer and have told it, some have said—“is it not wonderful!” Not at all, it would be wonderful if it were not so. God says—“Ask and you shall receive.” If I should ask and not receive, it would be wonderful. “Seek and you shall find.”

If you seek and do not find, it is not only wonderful, but I think it is contradictory to God’s Word. The Church has but to ask and she shall receive. She has but to knock and the door of mercy shall be opened. But we do not believe this. We fritter away God’s Promises and clip the edge of them and then we go to God in prayer and we think that prayer is a very holy exercise—but we do not think that God really hears us. Too many professors believe it is their duty to pray but really they are not so enthusiastic as to think that God actually listens and sends them what they ask for.

A man who should say that he knew that God heard his prayers is in some quarters looked upon as an enthusiast. And what is that but a proof that we do not believe this precious Book? For let the most unprejudiced man be a judge. If this Book does not teach that, “Whatsoever we ask in prayer, believing we shall receive,” then it does not teach anything at all. And if it is not true that prayer is a power which prevails with God, then shut this Book. It is not worthy of any confidence, for it does plainly say that which you say it does not mean.

The fact is, my Brothers and Sisters, the answers to our prayers are always on the way while we are asking. Sometimes they come while we are yet speaking. Sometimes they delay because we have not prayed as we should. God keeps the mercy back at times and puts it out at compound interest because He means to pay it to us interest and all—whereas if we had it at once, we should miss the interest, which sometimes doubles and trebles the principal! We are never losers by His delays, but always gainers. We ought never to say, even though Providence should tell so, that God forgets or is unmindful—we never ought to believe that God has been deaf to our cries, or refused to answer our petitions.

A true believer pleading Christ’s name and sacrifice and asking in faith, must and shall receive that which he asks of God. Now, during the next week, the Churches will meet together to ask for God’s blessing and if that blessing were to come, we should read the *Missionary Herald* and it would begin, “There has been a most surprising awakening throughout all the

Churches in such-and-such a country.” That word “surprising,” ought to be struck out. We should say, “God has been as good as His Word. We asked Him to bless the world and He has done it. And if He does not do it, it will be because we have not asked aright, for as sure as ever we had asked aright, God would have heard us.”

I believe this to be as true as a mathematical proposition. If twice two is four, then it is just as true that God hears prayer. I would not look upon it as being a mere notion, a thought, a very fine imagining, or a pretty idea. It is a fact, Sirs. It is a fact. It is a fact which I could prove in my own experience by a hundred instances if this were the time and place to tell them. But I am sure that the people of God universally could prove that God does hear prayer. As certainly as ever when you write to a friend you get your answer—more surely and certainly still if you are pleading the name of Christ God will hear you.

But oh, open your eyes and look for the blessing! Do watch for it. Be not so simple as to sow the seed and never look for the harvest. Do not be planting and never looking for fruit. Give up your prayers, or else expect them to be successful. When we were little children we had a little plot of ground for a garden and we put our seeds into it. I well recollect how the day after I had put in my seed I went and scraped the soil away to see if it was not growing, as I expected it would have been after a day or so at the very longest and I thought the time amazingly long before the seed would be able to make its appearance above the ground.

“That is childish,” you would say. I know it is, but I wish you were childish, too, with regard to your prayers—that you would—when you have put them in the ground, go and see if they have sprung up. And if not at once—be childish in refusing to wait till the appointed time comes—always go back and see if they have begun to sprout. If you believe in prayer at all, expect God to hear you. If you do not expect, you will not have it. God will not hear you unless you believe He will hear you. But if you believe He will, He will be as good as your faith. He will never allow you to think better of Him than He is. He will come up to the mark of your thoughts and according to your faith so shall it be done unto you.

**III.** I have a third point, but my time is almost gone, therefore let me dwell on it very briefly. The third point is, GIVE THANKS.

Prayer should be mingled with praise. I have heard that in New England after the Puritans had settled there a long while, they used to have very often a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer, till they had so many days of fasting, humiliation and prayer, at last a good senator proposed that they should change it for once and have a day of thanksgiving. It is of little use to be always fasting. We ought sometimes to give thanks for mercies received.

Now, during this week, there are to be days of prayer. Take care that they are days of praise, too. Why should we go to God as mournful beings, who plead piteously with a hard Master who loves not to give? When you give a penny to a beggar in the street, you like to see him smile at you—do you not? Is he a crossing-sweeper and you have given him a trifle, he looks extremely grateful and happy and you think within yourself, “What

a small expense has made that man happy! I think I will buy another pennyworth of joy the next time I pass by.”

So you give him all the more because of his thankfulness to you. Now, go not before God with a rueful face, you people of God, as though He had never heard you before and you were about to try a great experiment on One who was exceedingly deaf and did not like to give you mercies. God is as pleased to give you His blessing as ever you are to receive it. It is as much to *His* honor as it is to *your* comfort. He takes more pleasure in your prayers than you do in His answers. Come therefore, boldly. Come with thankfulness in your heart and upon your lips and join the hymn of praise with the cry of prayer.

Be thankful for what God has done. Look at the past year. I commend it to your consideration when you meet for prayer. Has there been for the last twenty years such a year as the last? If any man had said seven years ago there would be preaching in St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, we should never have believed him. But it is has been and it is to be again. If any friends had said that nearly all the theatres in London would be filled on the Sabbath-Day, “Oh,” you would have said, “it is ridiculous, it is an absurd notion.” But it is done, Sirs, it is done.

If any had said to you seven years ago there would have been a congregation of many thousands who, without any drawback in numbers, would always assemble every Sabbath-Day to listen to one minister, you would have said, “Ridiculous! There is no precedent for it. It is impossible. It is not at all possible that the Spirit of God can incline a people's heart so long to listen to *one man*.” It is done, Sirs, by God's grace it is done. And what are we to do but to give God thanks for it? When we come before Him to ask Him for fresh mercies, let us not be so foolish as to forget the past. “Sing unto Him, sing unto Him, sing Psalms unto Him. Come into His presence with thanksgivings and show yourself glad in Him with Psalms—for the Lord is God and a great King above all gods.” So thank Him for the past and pray to Him for the future. Thank Him, too, for the power to pray. Thank Him for the privilege of taking the Church's wants before Him.

And do better still—thank Him for the mercy which is to come. Great God, I thank You for Sinim, the land of China, which shall come unto You. I praise You for India, which shall receive You. I praise You for Ethiopia, which shall stretch out her arms unto You. Great God, today we bless You for what You will do. Your promise is, in the estimation of our faith, as good as the performance itself. We extol and glorify You. For Your right hand, O Lord! Your right hand, O Lord, has dashed in pieces the enemy. You have broken the bow and cut the spear in sunder. You have burned the chariot in the fire. Your right hand, O Lord, has gotten You the victory. Oh come let us sing unto the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously. Let us laud and extol Him, for He is King forever and ever!

Say unto Zion, “Your God reigns.” Behold, He comes. He comes to judge the world in righteousness and the people with equity. Rejoice before Him, O you hills, clap your hands, O you cedars! Let the sea roar and the fullness thereof. The world and all that dwell therein! Praise Him, you heavens. And you Heaven of heavens. You spirits that stand before His

Throne, for He is God and beside Him there is no God. The whole earth praises You, O God and all Your creatures bless You forever and ever!

Thus with the censor of prayer and praise let us be this week like priests of God. And You great High Priest, take our sacrifice and offer it before Your Father's face.

I close my sermon. O that some here present may lay the subject of prayer to heart this week! Get alone, dear Friends, get alone this week! Pray for your children this week and groan with God over your ungodly sons and daughters! Pray for your neighbors this week! Put God to the test! See if He does not open the windows of Heaven upon you. Be much in prayer and you shall be much blessed.

And O poor Sinner! You who have never prayed before—the year of God's redeemed is come. This is the acceptable day of the Lord. If you seek Him, He will be found of you. “Seek you the Lord while He may be found. Call you upon Him while He is near.” Cry to Him now! Say—

***“O Sovereign Grace, my heart subdue!”***

Trust Jesus with your soul and unworthy though you are, your prayer shall be heard and you shall be able to join with the company of the faithful in praying for others as well as for yourself. God bless you all, for Jesus' sake! Amen.

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