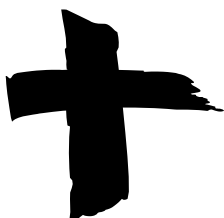


FOR HIS GLORY

Volume 11, Issue 1

January, 2008

An honest heart *seeks to please God* in all things and offend Him in none. That is why this honesty is termed “simplicity (the single eye) and godly sincerity” (2 Cor 1:12), for it desires and seeks the approbation of God above everything else. An honest heart refuses to accept the plaudits of men on anything for which conscience would condemn him. “God is a Spirit and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). He cannot be imposed upon by pious words or a sanctimonious demeanor. He must be approached with “a true heart” (Heb 10:22)—all dissimulation and pretense has to be set aside in our dealings with Him who “tries the heart and the reins” and whose eyes are “a flame of fire.” When the heart beats true toward God there is a deep desire to please Him, not in some things only, but in *all* things, so that without reserve it asks, “Lord, what will You have me to do?” (Acts 9:6). True, that desire is not fully realized in this life, but the genuineness of it is evidenced when we can truly say, “I hate *every* false way” (Psa 119:104).—AW Pink



SPURGEON ON THE BIBLE

By Charles H. Spurgeon

It is a wonderful thing, I have often thought, that any man should be able, day after day, and week after week, to attract thousands of people to hear him talk. I do not believe any man could do it with any other subject except the Gospel. I have the most intense respect for that great man and mighty orator, Mr. Gough, but, with all his ability, if he were to deliver a teetotal lecture twice every Sabbath, in any pulpit in England, he could not command a congregation for 21 years at a stretch! But the Christian minister, with only one subject—Christ crucified—may not only keep on for 21 years, but if he should live as long as Methuselah, he might still keep on preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified—and he would still find that the people of God would come to hear him and never crave for a fresh subject!

Let any great historian open, if he pleases, a lecture room and attempt to deliver two lectures upon history every week, and let him see whether he does not find the congregation which might, at first, gather around him, speedily diminished! We have had an instance, in London, of one who has delivered

an amusing lecture a thousand times, always to great multitudes, but then they were different persons every time. No one thought of going to hear him lecture upon the same subject the whole thousand times—it would have become a most intolerable penance even to have heard Albert Smith delivering his lecture upon Mont Blanc so often, however interesting it might have been once or twice.

It would certainly pall upon the mind if we heard it so many times—but the Christian minister may keep on, and on, and on with the same theme—Christ Jesus, Christ Jesus, the same Cross, the same crown of thorns, the same bleeding wounds—from the first time that he enters his pulpit to the last when he lays down his charge—and the people may always say, and he can always feel—that the Gospel has the dew of its youth upon it and is always fresh and new!

There are many other valuable books that have been written, but, as a rule, however valuable they may be, when you have read them half-a-dozen times, you may be quite satisfied that you need not read them anymore. Next to the

(See *The Bible* on page 2)

A “LETTER” TO PREACHERS

By C. H. Spurgeon

Dear Brothers, we who occupy the pulpit must take care that we never, for a moment, entertain the idea that the Gospel has become worn out. It still has the dew of its youth. There is a good deal of nonsense talked about a Gospel adapted to the times. People say that the way Whitefield preached and the way that John Berridge and Rowland Hill preached was all wrong. True, many sinners were converted under their ministry, but, you know, sinners were different, then, from the sinners of these days, who do not need the same sort of preaching. Some say that the devil himself is improved, but I find him worse if anything—improved the wrong way! They say that sinners are improved and do not need to be addressed with the same fiery, burning words as of old. They say that they do not need the same simple preaching of Christ. The 19th Century has become so learned that it has advanced beyond the simple knowledge of Christ crucified! It has become so erudite, that the simplicity of the Gospel is far behind it! It has marched on so far ahead that it has left the Cross miles in the rear!

Do not believe them for a moment, my dear Brothers—if you want

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The Bible

(Continued from page 1)

Bible, the book that I value most is John Bunyan's, "Pilgrim's Progress," and I imagine I may have read that through perhaps a hundred times.

It is a book of which I never seem to tire, but then the secret of that is that John Bunyan's, "Pilgrim's Progress," is the Bible in another shape. It is the same heavenly water taken out of this same well of the Gospel, yet you would tire even of that book at last. You would say, "I know all that this volume contains and I need something more. Here is the experience of the Christian pilgrim—I know it is true, and I delight in it, but I want to go somewhat further." The mind would crave for something else.

But read the Bible and, strange to say, the more you read it, the more satisfied you will be with it. When you begin to read the Bible, perhaps you need 50 other books in order that you may become a thorough Bible student, but your library will gradually diminish until, at last, the more you understand the Bible, the fewer books you will need, and you will come to say, "If I might have all my days over again, this should be the only book that I would study. And I would concentrate all my powers upon the understanding of this one volume."—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2724, Volume 57—THE DEW OF CHRIST'S YOUTH—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

WORSHIP

By Pastor Henry Mahan

Paul wrote in **Hebrews 10:25**, "Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together." It is the duty of all Believers to meet together for worship, praise, study and fellowship.

1). **BECAUSE OF GOD**, Who has appointed worship. Who approves of it. Who is glorified in it and Who should be worshipped.

2). **BECAUSE OF OURSELVES**. We need to "draw nigh to God," to "seek His face," to praise, pray and be refreshed and comforted—with other Believers.

3). **BECAUSE OF OTHERS**—our families, friends, and neighbors who may, by our example and encouragement, be brought to seek the Lord.

But worship is not only a duty and commandment, worship is a BLESSED PRIVILEGE. David wrote, "Blessed is the man whom You choose and cause to approach unto You, that he may dwell in Your courts." We are blessed to have the **DESIRE** to worship God and hear His Word. We are blessed to have the **FREEDOM** to go to the place of worship. We are blessed to have a **FAMILY OF BELIEVERS** with whom to meet and worship. We are blessed to have **ELDERS AND PREACHERS** called of God to preach to us and teach us the Word of God. We are blessed to have the **PHYSICAL STRENGTH** to go to the house of the Lord and worship. "Blessed INDEED is the man whom You choose and cause to approach unto You."



AFRAID TO DIE? DON'T BE— REMEMBER THE PROMISES!

By Charles H. Spurgeon

Probably you are in the dark because you are afraid to die. Says one, "I tried myself, the other night, by asking, 'Could you die without fear?'" That is a kind of test you need never put yourself to. Suppose Peter had been, for weeks, trying to see if he could walk on water? He could not have done it! But the instant that Christ bade him come to Him on the water, he could do it, but not previously.

John Bunyan, in his earlier days, imagined that being a child of God, perhaps he could work miracles, so he thought he would say to one of the puddles in the road, "Be dry." But he felt that he ought to pray first and, as he could not find any promise that he should be able to do that sort of thing, the miracle never came off. What is the good of your having the Grace to die with if you are not going to die yet? When you come to die, if you believe in Christ, you may die without the slightest fear!

You need to be a great deal more troubled about *living* than about dying—that is the far more serious thing of the two. Yet you need not be troubled about either living *or* dying when it is written, "Fear you not; for I am with you: be not dismayed; for I am your God: I will strengthen you; yes, I will help you; yes, I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness." "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

If I begin quoting the promises, I feel inclined to keep on, but you can find them for yourselves in the Word of God. You can feed upon them, live upon them, believe them and act upon them! And in that way "walk in the light of the Lord" from day to day, whatever happens to you.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2713, Volume 47—WALKING IN THE LIGHT OF THE LORD—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

"Christ heals with more ease than any other. Christ makes the devil to go out with a word (Mark 9:25). No, He can cure with a look—Christ's look melted Peter into repentance—it was a healing look. If Christ does but cast a look upon a soul, He can recover it. Therefore David prays to have a look from God, 'Look upon me, and be merciful unto me' (Psa 119:132)."—Thomas Watson
www.puritansermons.com/

**HAPPY HAPPY
NEW NEW
YEAR! YEAR!**
**HAPPY NEW YEAR!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
HAPPY HAPPY
NEW NEW
YEAR! YEAR!**

“LETTER”

(Continued from page 1)

to wake up the people of England, preach the old-fashioned Gospel! If you want to crowd your halls and gather thousands round you, it is the Truth of God as it is in Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever, that you must preach! As for the manner and style of your preaching, you may leave that to the occasion, but stick to your subject, the simple Gospel in all its freshness and glory. Pentecostal youth shall be seen in the Gospel again when it is preached in all its fullness and purity. I know why some preachers like to be obscure—it is because it gives a man a peculiar kind of popularity. I believe some people like to hear a man whom they cannot understand and some, when they hear a man they can just barely comprehend, are very flattered, because the minister seems to say to them, “Now, you know that you are all very clever people. I must, therefore, preach you a very clever sermon.” And then they feel pleased that the minister should have such a good opinion of them and should think them so clever.

But when you go to hear some plain blunt man, who just simply tells out the Gospel and who believes that to try to be eloquent when he is preaching would be just as stupid as to paint the rose or to whitewash the lily, then you say, “Well, now, he did not compliment me! Why, he talked to me and all of us as if we had been a common lot of clod-hoppers and crossing-sweepers. He told us just the simple story of the Cross and there is nothing flattering in that.” Yes! And, by the Grace of God, I trust that from our pulpits there will never be anything taught that is flattering to you! I hope each one of us will be able to say, with the Apostle Paul, “I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”

Be you assured that there will be more unction resting upon the enunciation of the simple Truths of the Gospel—there will be more freshness to the hearers—than there will be upon the most polished oratory garnished with almost seraphic eloquence and elaborated until it grows far beyond the comprehension of ordinary intellects!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2724, Volume 47—THE DEW OF CHRIST’S YOUTH—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

**PRAY DAILY FOR GOD’S ELECT IN PRISONS.
PRAY FOR THEIR SPOUSES AND CHILDREN.
PRAY FOR PASTOR POLLARD AND MT. ZION.**

**PRAY GOD WILL USE THIS PUBLICATION
FOR HIS HONOR AND GLORY.**

Jesus Christ loves all who trust Him. And we who trust Him, trust Him only by His Grace—our love to Him is His *gift* to us. Think about it. Pray about it. Marvel at His love!

Message to Backsliders

By C.H. Spurgeon

Backsliders, who feel your misery, I will come after you one moment. Poor Backslider, you were once a Christian. Do you hope you were? “No,” you say, “I believe I deceived myself and others. I was no child of God.” Well, if you did, let me tell you that if you will acknowledge that, God will forgive you. Suppose you did deceive the Church, you are not the first that did it. There are some members of this Church, I fear, who have done so and we have not found them out. I tell you your case is not hopeless. That is not the unpardonable sin. Some who have tried to deceive the very elect have yet been delivered. And my Master says He is able to save to the uttermost (and you have not gone beyond the uttermost) all who come unto Him.

Come, then, to His feet, cast yourself on His mercy. And though you did once enter His camp as a spy, He will not hang you for it, but will be glad to claim you anyhow, as a trophy of mercy. And if you were a child of God and can say honestly, “I know I did love Him and He loved me,” I tell you He loves you still. If you have gone ever so far astray, you are as much His child as ever. Though you have run away from your Father, come back, come back! He is your Father still. Think not He has unsheathed the sword to slay you. Say not, “He has cast me out of the family.” He has not. His heart yearns over you. My Father loves you! Come, then, to His feet and He will not even remind you of what you have done.

The prodigal was going to tell his father all his sins and ask him to make him one of his hired servants, but the father stopped his mouth. He let him say that he was not worthy to be called his son but he would not let him say, “make me as an hired servant.” Come back and your Father will receive you gladly. He will put His arms around you and kiss you with the kisses of His love! And He will say, “I have found this, My son that was lost. I have recovered this sheep that had gone astray.” My Father loved you without works, He justified you irrespective of them. You have no less merit now than you had then. Come and trust and believe in Him.—Adapted from *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*—Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 *Sermon #45—Conversion*

PRAY FOR GRACE TO BE BURDENED TO ATTEND ANY AND ALL PRAYER MEETINGS AT YOUR CHURCH OR UNIT. PRAY THAT YOUR PRAYERS MAY BRING HONOR TO OUR LORD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST!

PRAY FOR GRACE TO DO ALL YOU DO FOR THE HONOR AND GLORY OF OUR MASTER, JESUS CHRIST!

Letters to Mike Gendron Of Proclaiming the Gospel:

ptg@pro-gospel.org
www.pro-gospel.org

Linda, Internet, writes—Sixteen years ago I married a wonderful Catholic man. I thought he believed as I did but what an eye-opener when I began to read the Catholic catechism. As I delved deeper into the Scriptures and more fervently in prayer, I found they are wrong in their doctrines. Were it not for this challenge, I would have remained unaware and in danger of blending my faith with those who are in apostasy. I cannot tell you what a joy and lifeline your ministry has provided for me. I have read and devoured your articles, testimonies, and letters, until I think I have them memorized. It is such an encouragement to hear from those who God has called out of the RCC and into a true relationship with Him. I pray for the day when, by God's Grace, the veil is lifted from my husband's heart and he receives the free gift of salvation from Jesus, and walks in the true light of His Glory and Grace. Thank you so much for your love for the Catholic people and for your obedience to our Lord and Savior as you witness for Him. You are in my prayers.

Anonymous, Internet, writes—I suggest you make a study of Catholic writers and apologists to learn about our side instead of wallowing in your own ignorance. Unless you can spell your name, GOD, don't you dare to presume other Christians (like Catholics) are going to Hell. That is why many of the "Bible Christians" are leaving in droves to join the One True Church!

Brother Mike responds—I do not presume anything that God has revealed through His Word. Hell is the destiny of all people, including professing Christians who have never been born of God (Matt 7:21-23). Those who are joining the RCC are apostates who cannot discern Truth from error because they have not been indwelt with the Spirit of Truth (John 14:15-17). The master deceiver uses another Jesus to lead people away from the narrow gate which leads to life. Anyone who trusts in men, (Catholic writers and apologists), instead of Christ and His Word, is easy prey for the lies and snares of the devil. I pray you will receive the Word with humility which is able to save your soul (James 1:21).

L.M., Kent, WA, writes—I've called and your wonderful wife [Jane] has spent lots of time with me. My entire family is Catholic so I appreciate you both so much! You will just never know how many Catholics God has allowed me to tell what you have taught me or to give your publications to (maybe 250-300). I thank God so very much for you and all you do and I hope to do the same in my little section of the world. Please be encouraged by what you teach each one of us and how it spreads to places we may never know about. We hope to get you back to Seattle. With love and warmest thanks for all you have taught me.

S.M, Kish Catral, Kenya, writes—We wasted our time and years worshipping in Roman Catholicism without knowing the Truth. But now we thank our God that through your small tract which we received from a friend, we made a great change. When I think of what I am, where I was, my soul cries out, Hallelujah! I was nothing, I was a dirty, wretched sinner. But thanks be to God, through your wonderful teachings I have victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Just wanted to let you know your tracts have been a tower of great spiritual strength to revive our witnessing. We use your seven guidelines for witnessing to Catholics and have been blessed with many young people who have now been born again.

E.S., Menifee, CA, writes—Your web site is awesome! I am forever amazed how Catholics can be shown major doctrinal differences and still remain enslaved to Rome. After reading Romans 9:14-29, I realize only God can harmonize this in perfect justice. That's why God will forever get my praise! He pulled me away from Rome and her death, to His Glory and Truth that I love more than anything else! I believe your web site is used for that same purpose, leading the lost to salvation. Thank you Jesus!

Nancy, Internet, writes—We know Christians by their fruits. Your fruits promote division and confusion, two things of which God is not the author, therefore your ministry cannot be of God. The Catholic Church seeks to bring Christians together, not by condemning those who disagree with our beliefs, not by luring members of other denominations away from their churches, not by saying "we" are right, and "they" are wrong, but with love and understanding, focusing on what we have in common. May God guide you to the path of true Christian love, void of superiority.

Brother Mike replies—Have you not read that Jesus came to divide (Luke 12:51)? By His Word He separates unbelievers from Believers (John 7:43; 10:19), even to the extent of turning family members against one another (Matt 10:35). You will remain separated from Christ until you believe His Word (John 12:48).

Tim S., Internet, writes—Please clear up some confusion I am having. Knowing Catholic doctrine from my experiences, it is my understanding that we are all saved by Divine Grace. It is just a question of how that Grace is acquired. The Reformation view is that the saving Grace is acquired by faith. The Catholic view is that salvific grace is obtained through faith and works. My belief is that the issue of being saved by Grace is not an issue. I would appreciate any clarification you can give.

Brother Mike answers—Grace is the unmerited and undeserved favor of God and the only means by which God saves sinners. God's Grace is necessary for salvation because it is impossible for those who are spiritually dead to do anything to gain acceptance or to appease the wrath of our Holy God. Paul explains that saving Grace is all of God and not based on anything man does. "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ. For by Grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, that no one should boast" (Eph 2:4-5, 8-9). Anyone who attempts to merit and work for saving Grace has nullified Grace—the only way of salvation. "But if it is by Grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise Grace is no longer Grace" (Rom 11:6). After sinners have been justified by Divine Grace they become new creatures in Christ created for good works, which God prepared beforehand (Eph 2:10). These works are done in love, appreciation and gratitude, and not to merit anything from God. Any works done before a sinner has been justified are filthy rags unto God (Isa 64:6).

ASK OUR LORD TO USE PROCLAIMING THE
GOSPEL TO BRING MANY OUT OF BONDAGE TO
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

PRAY FOR GRACE TO BE HOLY.



Gems gleaned by Jim Robinette
<http://www.actionuganda.net/>

***“Abraham was the father of Isaac...and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus.”
 Matthew 1:2-16.***

Some of the names in the genealogy were in the direct line of royal succession and some come into it indirectly, causing the commentators to pause and wonder how they came into the lineage at all. We are soon puzzled by Divine Providences—things seldom fall into easy, straight lines—life is a complication, a problem, a difficulty. Occasionally we catch a clue and think we can unwind the whole, but then we come into a hard knot. You do not know what your relations are to the great lines of history. You may be startled, someday, to find how much you have done. Do not say that you are not upon great lines of history, that you are not tributaries to the great river that seems to carve for itself an infinite channel through the earth and pours its noble waters into a great sea. All creeks trickle into the rivers. There is royalty of mind as well as royalty of descent. The question to consider is whether we are living up to the potential of our endowment and responsibility and, having answered that question in the affirmative, all the rest will be settled by the Supreme Power.

Note from these genealogical records that the most illustrious lines often dip into strange places and seem to become lost in great moral swamps, so much so that it appears to be impossible they can ever be found again and reunited. There are many bad men and women in this list who have broken all the commandments of God. And yet the grand purpose moves on. It is not in the power of men’s hands to break the thread of the Divine purpose and scheme. The Savior comes, notwithstanding, at times, the whole history seems to be depraved and utterly lost. Sometimes we find ourselves where it seems to be impossible that God can ever find us. Yet the life is redeemed with great cost to God, for He pays blood for blood, but His redeemed ones are not given over to the power of the destroyer.—Joseph Parker (1830-1902) from, In His Presence. Compiled and Edited by Lance Wubbels. Printed by Emerald Books, Lynnwood, WA, 1998.

WELL, WHICH IS IT?

By Charles H. Spurgeon

Someone was asking, the other day, how it was that the church, nowadays, was not so separate from the world as it used to be, and one who heard the question suggested that, possibly, the world had grown better. But someone more truly said that, probably, the church had grown worse. There are two ways of our coming together—the world may rise to our proper height, or we may descend to the world’s level.

Well, now, I am quite certain that candor requires us to say that, in some respects, the condition of society is much better than it was. There are some of the grosser vices which were common enough 50 years ago, which are now held in general reprobation. To a very considerable extent, Christianity has leavened society. Men are not, as a rule, so coarsely vicious as they were in the days of our grandfathers, yet after making all the abatement I possibly can on that score, I cannot help feeling that the difference between the church and the world has been mainly changed by the church coming down from what it used to be!

I wish we were as liable to be called fanatics as the first Methodists were simply because men judged us to be as earnest as they were. I would be glad if we were as worthy to be called Puritans as were the men of the days of Dr. John Owen and Oliver Cromwell. For my part, I think that, nowadays, we are not Puritan enough, or precise enough and, without any hesitation, we may make the assertion, which we are sure God’s Word will support, that whatever improvements there may be in the world, there must always be a marked distinction between the children of God and the seed of the serpent!

There can never be a time in which death and life will be exactly alike, nor a season in which darkness will be the same thing as light. We must still, to the end of the chapter, be either born of God, born from above, or else continue to lie under the power of Satan. We must either be dead in trespasses and sins or else be quickened by Divine Grace. We must either have passed from nature’s darkness into God’s marvelous light, or else we are still abiding in that darkness!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2719, Volume 47—TRUE LEARNING—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

PRAY FOR GRACE TO PRAY

Are you so greatly backslidden that your very breath dishonors our Lord?
 Remember Jesus Christ
 has risen from
 the dead
 and is alive!
 He will restore you.
 Trust Him.

PRAY FOR GRACE TO BE PURE.

PRAY FOR OUR TROOPS
 IN IRAQ AND
 AFGHANISTAN.

Let me tell each of you who may be reading this that I truly love Jesus Christ. But for His Grace I could not say it, or write it, or *think* it. I have loved Him for such a short time, just 19 years—He has loved me for *eternity*—before the world was created Jesus Christ loved *me*. How I pray that every person who may be reading this has been loved from before “the foundation of the world” by my Master!—EOD

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH AND REPENTANCE

Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.
(Acts 20:21).

Paul, when giving his farewell words to the faithful elders of Ephesus, reminded them of his ministry when he first came among them. He said, “*serving the Lord with humility of mind, keeping back nothing that was profitable, preaching to the Jew and to the Gentile repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (Acts 20:20-21).

Consider for a moment how important **faith** in the Lord Jesus Christ and **repentance** toward God is. Our Lord said, “*except that you repent you shall perish*” (Mark 13:1-5). Again He said, “*without faith it is impossible to please God*” (Heb 11:6). What does the Scripture teach us about faith and repentance? Here are **seven** things to remember.

1). Both faith and repentance are sovereign gifts of God given to the sinner (Acts 5:29-31; 11:18; Eph 2:8-9).

2). Both faith and repentance are the commands of God (Acts 17:3-29-31; 1 John 3:23).

3). Both faith and repentance acknowledge, bow, believe and submit to the true Lord Jesus Christ, the true and living God and His Gospel (2 Tim 2:25; Titus 1:1).

4). Both faith and repentance are not isolated experiences of the Believer, but rather a life-long state of being that is both powerful, permanent and perpetual (John 5:24; Heb 12:2; 1 Peter 2:4).

5). Both faith and repentance are not the ground or cause of our salvation but rather the fruit of life in Christ Jesus (Gal 5:22; 1 John 5:1).

6). Both faith and repentance come together at the same time—not apart from each other. Where you find a broken and repentant heart you find a believing heart. Read these testimonies from the word (Psa 51: 1-10; Rom 7:18-24; Phil 3:7-9).

7). As repentance grows, so does faith. As faith grows so does repentance. The deeper our conviction of sin, the greater our esteem of Christ, who put away our sin (Heb 9:26). The deeper our faith grows in Christ, as we see more of His beauty (Song 5:26), the more we see the repulsiveness of our own depravity (Isa 6:5; Job 42:5-6; 1 Tim 1:15).

One preacher of the past said, “*When we have grown too big for repentance, we have also grown too proud for faith.*” “*When faith is tempted to climb to presumption, repentance brings us back to sit at the Master’s feet as little children.*”

Now, do you have real and true repentance that leads to genuine faith? Do you have real faith that leads to true and valid repentance (2 Cor 13:5)?

Gleaned from the Web-Site of Zebulon Baptist Church
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**PRAY FOR GRACE
TO BE OBEDIENT TO OUR LORD**

Little Means Much— Laboring Like the Ant



By C. H. Spurgeon

Zealously, in dependence upon God, do the little you can do. Do it well and keep on doing it. You and I are not called upon to regulate the world nor to stay the raging sea of human sin. Let us not attempt to wield the divine scepter—it befits us not. Naturally, you would like to set all people right and make all preachers orthodox. But, my Brother, the task is beyond you. Be careful to be right yourself in your own life and be resolute to bear your complete, honest, obedient testimony to all truth you know—and there leave the business, for you are not responsible beyond your possibilities.

No one of us is much more than an ant on its little hill. Now, if a tiny ant were to indulge in serious reflections upon the state of London and forget to assist in the labors of the insect commonwealth, it would be a foolish creature. But if it will let those great matters alone and go on doing its ant-work—as an ant it will fill its little sphere and answer the purposes of its Maker.

A mother teaching her little ones and doing all she can to bring them up in the fear of God. A humble village pastor with his score or two of people around him. A teacher with her dozen children, or a quiet Christian woman in her domestic circle bearing her godly testimony. A young man speaking for Jesus to other young men—there is nothing very ambitious about the sphere of any of these, but they are wise in the sight of the Lord. Leave the reins in the hand of the Maker of the universe and then do what He has given you to do, in His fear, by His Spirit—and more will come of it than you dare to hope!

We are like coral insects building, each one, his minute portion of a structure far down in the depths of obscurity. We cannot, as yet, war with those vaunted ironclads which sweep the ocean and hurl destruction upon cities. And yet—who knows? We may build and build until we pile up a reef upon which the proudest navies may be wrecked! By the steady, simple, honest, Christian building up of holiness and truth, defying no one, attacking no one, we may nevertheless create a situation which will be eminently perilous to the boastful craft of falsehood and skepticism. A holy, earnest Gospel church is a grand wrecker of superstition and infidelity.

The life of God in man, patience in suffering, perseverance in well-doing, faithfulness to truth, prayer in the Holy Spirit, supreme zeal for the Divine Glory and unstaggering faith in the unseen God—these are our battle-axe and weapons of war! And, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, we shall win the battle ere the day comes to its close. Till then, O Lord, when our heart is overwhelmed, lead us to the Rock which is higher than we are!—C. H. Spurgeon, *The Sword and the Trowel*, March, 1878 —<http://www.bulletininserts.org/>

HOW CAN YOU SERVE CHRIST?...READ ON...

By Charles H. Spurgeon

*“Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the Glory of the LORD is risen upon you.”
Isaiah 60:1.*

There are some dear people whom I must encourage to be a little more bold. We have some friends, here and there, to whom I could hint, only very gently, that they are quite forward enough, but there are many good people who always keep in the background. They might do so much for Christ if only they had a little courage! Do, dear Friends, break through the ice this year! If you have felt that you ought to do something for your Lord, and yet have never begun to do it, begin at once!

Do you ask, “What is the best way to try to serve Christ?” Well, I think the best way is to *do* it! “But how should I begin?” Well, I would begin by *beginning*! “When shall I begin?” Begin *now*! This very hour. “But in what way?” In the first way that comes to hand—“whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might,” for our text says, “Arise, shine.” If you have the light, emit it, distribute it, scatter it somehow or other!

Have pluck—that is a plain English word, but I do not know how to put my meaning better. Have pluck enough to come out and be a Christian—do not always be like a rat behind the wall, but come out and acknowledge yourself on Jesus’ Christ’s side and promote the everlasting Gospel wherever you have the opportunity!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2617, Volume 45—*Shining Christians*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

**Jesus Christ is the ONLY way to God the Father!
Not Moses. Not Mary.
Not Mohammed.
Not a future Messiah.
Jesus Christ is the ONLY way.
(John 14:6).**

**“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
(John 3:18 NKJV)**

**ASK THE HOLY SPIRIT TO GIVE YOU
A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING
OF HIS HOLY WORD.**

ANOTHER YEAR

HYMN #9

A hymn by Donald S. Fortner

Our heav’nly Father, God of love,
Your kindness and Your grace we prove;
Our praise accept and bless us here,
As we conclude another year.

We praise You for Your providence,
You’ve been our Shield and our Defense:
And by Your constant, gracious care
We’ve been preserved another year.

By Your Spirit and Your pow’r
We’ve enjoyed the heav’nly show’r:
Christ Jesus did Himself appear
Among His saints another year.

We here resign our souls, our all,
Be pleased to take and use us all,
And grant that in Your love and fear
We may begin another year.

Let us Your Grace experience still,
To walk according to Your will,
To live by faith in love sincere,
As we begin another year.

Lord, hold us in the living way,
And when You call us in death’s day,
We’ll gladly part with all that’s here,
Nor wish on earth another year.

(Tune: *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day*)
Long Meter 88.88.

From *Songs of Grace*, by Donald S. Fortner,
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PRAY THIS PUBLICATION WILL HONOR OUR MASTER.

Study of Ephesians

ENDEAVORING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT (2)

Last month we ended kind of abruptly talking about how the popular ecumenical movement of today advocates a man-made unity of replacing our doctrine for love for each other. But again we must ask what this unity is that the *Holy Spirit* brings. It is a unity of truth. Who is it that gave us the Bible? We read in 2 Peter 1:21—“for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit gave us the Bible! This is God’s truth! What right do we have to set it aside?

Scripture never tells us to do evil that good may come. Furthermore, it is a complete fallacy to say that setting aside doctrine is the “loving” thing to do. It is never the loving thing to do to allow someone to continue on in some false teaching or some sin that may ruin his soul! To present to the world a Christianity which has been truncated of all doctrinal content will not only do no one any good, it will create an atmosphere in which the Truth of God is buried and which leads souls straight to Hell.

We have been considering the first few verses of Ephesians 4 and have seen in verse 3 that we are to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Now let us go on to consider how we are to go about maintaining the unity which the Holy Spirit has given to us. Verse 2 tells us, “with all lowliness and gentleness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love.”

Do you see what is mentioned first? Humility. We are endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit “with all lowliness and gentleness.” Why is this first? Paul knows that pride is the great sin in all of us. And it is pride that is the mother of divisiveness.

The word, “lowliness,” refers especially to humility of mind. It is described by Paul in Philippians 2:3, “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” In other words, it all starts with what we are like on the *inside*. Throughout Scripture this humility is set forth as one of the chief Christian virtues. The Lord Jesus described it in the Beatitudes as being “poor in spirit.” It is the very opposite of the whole modern trend which encourages people to believe in themselves, thinking they can do anything they want to do on their own. The new age teaching carries this to the point of telling people that they can become God. This is not the lowliness we are to seek.

The other word coupled with lowliness is “gentleness.” This refers to an inner mildness and always accompanies true humility. Some have mistakenly thought that meekness and gentleness include weakness. But this is not the case. Meekness and gentleness can and often do co-exist in a person with great strength. Perhaps the main idea connected with gentleness is that of submission to the will of God. It includes the ability to suffer wrong without retaliation and to commit one’s self to God.

Of course the supreme example of lowliness and gentleness is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He says in Matthew 11:28-30—“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

When Believers have these qualities of lowliness and gentleness, nearly every source of division will be headed off before it has a chance to develop.

A person with lowliness and gentleness is always ready to believe that he could be wrong. He does not place complete confidence in himself or assume that he is always right. Lowliness and gentleness lead one to delight in seeing another church blessed and prospering as much as seeing it in his own church. That God is being glorified, Christ being lifted up, and souls being brought to the Lord are what the humble soul craves. Lowliness and gentleness also contribute to the unity of the Spirit among the brethren in that they keep one from the hypersensitivity that cannot stand to be wronged or slighted in any way. True humility can receive a wrong without retaliation and continue to love and cover a multitude of sins. The humble person can control his tongue and not feel it necessary to lash out or to spread gossip in trying to get back at the one who has wronged him. The humble one forgives because he knows that he has been forgiven so much by God.

This leads us to next set of virtues that help us to keep the unity of the Spirit. We might summarize them under the heading of “patience.” We are to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit, says our verse, “with long-suffering” and by “bearing with one another in love.”

We don’t use the word “long-suffering” very much in modern English, but it is a good word to convey the idea of patience. It involves putting up with much and not losing one’s control or giving way to angry passions. It means that we are not to give in to the desire of the flesh to chew our Brother out or to say something hurtful to him.

God is described over and over again in Scripture as being long-suffering. If God were not long-suffering toward us, not one of us would be here today. He could have sent us to Hell straight from our mother’s womb. Just consider how constantly we do things to offend and provoke Him, and yet He loves us with a patient, unbroken love.

The other phrase used here has nearly the same meaning. We are to “bear with one another.” This is part of the high calling of the Christian. When brethren do not do things the way we would like them to, we are not to try to put them down but to try to understand them. And if we think that we can give them a loving rebuke which will truly help them, let us do that.

Of course, the key is to do all of this out of a motivation of love. Paul says “bearing with one another IN LOVE.” If we are rooted and grounded in love and are considering the great love with which we are loved by the Lord, and if we truly love our brethren, we will be patient with them. This is the very essence of love as Paul describes it in 1 Corinthians 13:7-8—Love “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.”

And finally, at the end of verse 3 we are told that all of this is to be done “in the bond of peace.” When we humbly and patiently and lovingly seek to keep the unity that the Spirit has given to us in Christ, then we will be like the peacemakers whom Jesus describes in the Beatitudes. We will give more attention to what we ourselves are like rather than try to straighten everyone else out. When we are truly humble, patient, and loving, then we will be a peace-making people. And in this way we will serve to keep the unity of the Spirit.—PF

NOTABLE QUOTES OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“This is how we live spiritually—we breathe in the air by prayer, and we breathe it out by praise! This is the holy respiration of a Christian’s life! Prayer and praise must be mingled in a divinely wise proportion and then they make a sweet incense, acceptable to God. I hope we can say that we have never finished praying but that we feel we must begin singing, and that we have never finished singing but that we must begin praying! What a blessed interchange this makes for the whole of life!”—1895, Sermon #2396

“I say, again, that detailed obedience is the surest evidence that the Lord has forgiven your sin. For instance, ‘He who believes and is baptized shall be saved.’ Do not omit *any part of that precept*. And if Christ bids you come to His Table and thus remember Him, do not live in neglect of that command. At the same time, remember to live soberly, righteously, honestly, godly in this present evil age, for if you do not, if there is not a detailed obedience, there may be a fear that, after all, the Lord has never said to you, ‘Your sins are forgiven you.’”—1893, Sermon #2337

“God bless you, dear Hearers! We shall never, all of us, meet again on earth—that is not possible among these thousands from all quarters of the globe—but may the sincere penitent prayer of all the unsaved among us be so heard that we may all meet in Heaven! Amen and Amen.”—1895, Sermon #2433

“Our gifts are not to be measured by the amount we contribute, but by the surplus kept in our own hands. The two mites of the widow were, in Christ’s eyes, worth more than all the other money cast into the treasury, for, ‘she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.’”—1891, Sermon #2234

“Hear the Gospel, only mind that what you hear is the Gospel. You can hear some very smart sermons and very clever sermons and, as a rule, I may say that the cleverer they are, the worse they are! Where you see so much of the man, you will see very little of his Master.”—1893, Sermon #2327

“Do not be satisfied, any of you, with half a conversion! I am afraid that there are a great many who have not much more than half a conversion. I know a man—I hope he is converted, but I wish that the Lord would convert his temper. He prays very nicely, but you should see him when he is red in the face with anger at his wife! I know a man—I hope he is a Christian, it is not for me to judge—but I wish that the Lord would convert his pocket. It needs a button taken off, for it is very difficult to get it open! It is very easy to put something in, but hard to get anything out for any good purpose.”—1893, Sermon #2315

“Think not of the sinner, or of the greatness of his sin, but think of the greatness of the Savior!”—1895, Sermon #2434

“If you get condemnation out of the Gospel, you put the condemnation into it yourselves! It is not the Gospel, but your rejection of it, that will condemn you.”—1893, Sermon #2300

“Some people imagine that if they read so many chapters of the Bible every day, it will be much to their profit—but it is not so if the reading is a mere mechanical exercise. It will be far better to read a tenth as much and weigh it, and let it take possession of brain and heart.”—1891, Sermon #2184

“Never let us fall into the false notion that if we magnify Christ, we are depreciating the Father. If any lips have ever spoken concerning the Christ of God so as to depreciate the God of Christ, let those lips be covered with shame!”—1894, Sermon #2382

“You all have by you a large treasure of Divine knowledge, in that you have the Bible in your hands. Therefore be not contented in possessing but little of this treasure. God has spoken much to you in the Scripture. Labor to understand as much of what He says as you can. God has made you all reasonable creatures—therefore, let not the noble faculty of reason or understanding lie neglected. Content not yourselves with having so much knowledge as is thrown your way and as you receive in some sense unavoidably by the frequent inculcation of Divine Truth in the preaching of the Word, of which you are obliged to be hearers, or as you accidentally gain in conversation. Rather let it be very much your business to search for it, and that with the same diligence and labor with which men are apt to dig in mines for silver and gold.”—**Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)**

“Whatever is good for God’s children they shall have it; for all is theirs to help them towards Heaven. Therefore, if poverty is good, they shall have it. If disgrace or crosses are good, they shall have them, for all is ours to promote our greatest prosperity.”—**Richard Sibbes (1577-1635)**

“Neither place, parts, no, nor Divine Graces will exempt a man from falling. O Believers, what need is there to be watchful and humble!”—**James Durham (1622-1658)**

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SYMPATHY WITH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Some of us have known what it is to hold communion with Christ in sympathy when we have *suffered just like Christ*. Did you ever find a friend fail you—a friend of whom you expected far better things, at whose table you had often sat, who had walked to the House of God with you—and with whom you had held sweet converse? Did you not find him, all of a sudden, unaccountably lifting up his heel against you and doing all he could to bring despite and injury to you? Did you not press your hand to your burning brow and say, “Ah! Christ had His Judas and now I can hold communion with Christ because my friend has deserted me, too. And I can sympathize with Christ in the desertion of men?”

Did you never have a false report spread about you? Possibly, somebody said you were “a drunk and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.” Or, perhaps, someone said that on such-and-such a night you committed such-and-such an act. Or, if they could not stain your character by charging you with immorality, they said that you were insane! And did not your spirit, at first, beat high with passion as you thought that you would answer the calumny? But, in a moment, you put your hand to your heart, as you said, “Ah! He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth. He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.” And did you not sit down and say, “Now I can hold fellowship with Christ in my reproaches. Now I can bear a part in the brunt of the battle. Now I can feel as He did, when He, too, was oppressed by wicked men?”

Some of you, also, have been exceedingly poor. Here and there, one could say, “I have not a place where to lay my head,” and looking down on your ragged garments, you may have thought, “Ah, now I know how Jesus felt when He said, ‘Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head.’ And so,” you thought, “I am holding the fellowship of sympathy with Him in His poverty.”

There was a time, too, *when you prayed and received no answer*—your agonized spirit went backward and forward many times while you cried to God, but no reply came. In the intensity of your importunity, you could almost have “sweat, as it were, great drops of blood,” *as Jesus did!* Yet God did not answer you. Rising from your knees, you only rose to fall down upon them, again, and, at last, you clasped your hands in agony and said, “O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me! Nevertheless not as I will, but as You will.” And you started up, for you thought you heard your Lord say those words in tones of deeper woe and greater agony than you had ever dreamed of! And you said, “Ah! I, in my humble measure, have held fellowship with Him whose bloody sweat has made Him always memorable, and whose agony in Gethsemane helped to make Him my Savior.”

And, perhaps, too, you have known what it is, at times, to lose the sight of the Countenance of God. You have said, “Oh, that I knew where I might find Him! That I might come, even, to His seat!” Your heart melted with agony because God seemed to frown on you. Your prayers were rejected. You had no light of His Countenance. You had no peace, no light, no love, no joy, no God—and you cried, “My God! My God! Why have You forsaken me?” And then you remem-

bered that Christ said those words, too, and that you were holding communion of *sympathy* with Him, for you were feeling just as He felt—you had entered into a part of His agony, you had drunk some drops of the awful cup which He drained to its dregs, you had dived a little into the sea without a bottom, into which Christ plunged—you had the fellowship of sympathy, for you suffered with Him.

That is the most wonderful fellowship in the world, the fellowship of fellow-suffering. Those two holy martyrs who were burned at Oxford have this link forever between them because they were burned in the same fire. Oh, what sweet fellowship they had because they were to die together! Nothing makes us love Christ like feeling the same whip on our shoulder which Christ had on His, to be pierced with the same nails, to be spit upon by the same mouths and to suffer, though in a very humble degree, the same kind of sufferings which Christ Himself endured! O wondrous Grace, that we should be allowed to share in our body the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Some of us are not called to suffer so much as to serve. And we, too, have our *communion with Christ in labor*. See the Sunday school teacher who takes the little children on his knee as he teaches them. Though some laugh, he seems to say, as did his Lord, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.” There is the same spirit in the servant as there was in his Master—and he is holding communion with Christ in labor. See the faithful evangelist. He is in an open field and he is preaching to the people with hands uplifted and with an earnestness that makes him eloquent. Look! He has concluded. He feels a sweet stillness in his soul. He knows not the reason of it but it is because he has been having communion with Christ and has felt, in a measure, as Christ did. When we have wept over your poor dying souls. When, on our bended knees we have asked God for your salvation. When we have groaned and cried to bring you near to God. When, with most impassioned supplication we have wrestled for your souls—then, Beloved, we think we have had some communion with Christ, for —

*“Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervor of His prayer.”*

He, too, wept over Jerusalem and said, “If you had known, even you, at least in this, your day, the things which belong unto your peace but now they are hid from your eyes.” Laboring Christians have sympathy with Christ and when they work with might and main, with good intentions, with earnest desires, with cries and tears, they can *say*, “O Lord, we have entered into fellowship with You!”

So too, we have fellowship with Christ, a heavenly *fellowship of desire*, when we neither suffer nor work with Him, but yet sympathize with Him. Perhaps you are not often sick, but you often feel a fellowship of compassionate pity and love. You are not persecuted—you almost wish you were. Perhaps you have very little talent and you cannot labor for Christ, but you have sometimes said, as you have trodden the way to this Chapel, “What would I not give to see sinners saved? Oh, I think I would be willing to die if I might but have my son and my daughter converted to God.” Do you know that, just at that moment, you were holding communion with Christ, for you felt just as Christ did, who loved us with a love so pure and so perfect, that He gave up His body to death that He might redeem us from Hell? You have, perhaps, also said to Jesus, sometimes, “I

(See The Fellowship on page 11)

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SYMPATHY WITH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

(Continued from page 10)

have but little that I can give to You but—

*'Had I ten thousand hearts, dear Lord,
I'd give them all to Thee!*

*Had I ten thousand tongues, they all
Should join the harmony.'"*

Ah, you had fellowship with Christ, then, for you desired to do all that you could for the extension of His Kingdom!

I will show how we hold *fellowship with Christ in our designs*. You see two men in a court of justice. One man stands there to be tried—there is every probability that he will be condemned. There is a person in court who is about to plead—he is a barrister, but, besides that, he is a friend of the prisoner. The man is being tried for his life. Do you see the awful agony on his face? But up rises his advocate and you notice that, as he pleads, he turns his eyes towards the prisoner at the bar. And when he *sees* the tears start from the poor man's eyes, out comes an eloquent period! There is a sigh just heaved by the culprit—look how the counselor waxes hot. The prisoner begins to weep excessively and hides his face. Do you notice how the advocate gets more fiery and more zealous as he proceeds, and how much more pathetic his speech becomes, and how earnestly he pleads as his tongue is set at liberty? Why is that? Because he is in fellowship with the poor man! He feels for him! He is not *talking to him*—that would only be the fellowship of conversation—he is *feeling* with him and their hearts are near akin. Even supposing they have not seen each other before, if they feel for one another, they are nearer akin than blood-relationship could make them!

Beloved, when you see a minister pleading with souls as if he were pleading for himself. When you hear him contending for Jesus Christ's Divinity as much as if he were contending for his own honor, that minister is holding communion with Christ! And when you see a saint speaking to a poor sinner of the Redeemer's death and pointing to His wounds, why, every drop of Calvary's blood seems to make the man speak more eloquently and every groan he thinks he hears makes him urge his plea in more desperate earnestness with men! This, Beloved, is sympathy with Christ, fellowship with Him—and that I call a higher grade of communion than the fellowship of conversation. I hope some of you have arrived at it. If you have, you will be more useful than those who only understand the fellowship of conversation. God grant to us all the fellowship of fellow-feeling, the fellowship of *sympathy with Christ!*—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2572, Volume 44—*Fellowship with Christ*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

“Christ is the most bountiful Physician. Other patients enrich their physicians, but here the Physician does enrich the patient. Christ elevates all His patients. He does not only cure them, but He crowns them (Rev 2:10). Christ does not only raise them from the bed, but to the Throne—He gives the sick man not only health but also Heaven.”—**Thomas Watson (c1620-1686)**

The Work of the Spirit – Part 3

(From A.W. Pink's *Studies in the Scriptures*—February, 1934).

In our last article [August, 2007] we dwelt upon some of the general and inferior operations which the Holy Spirit performs upon the non-elect, who are never brought unto a saving knowledge of the Truth of God. On this occasion we shall consider His special and saving work in the people of God, dwelling mainly upon the absolute necessity for the same. It should make it easier for the Christian reader to perceive the absoluteness of this necessity when we say that the whole work of the Spirit within the elect is to plant in the heart a hatred for and loathing of *sin* as sin, and a love for and longing after *holiness* as holiness. This is something which no human power can bring about. It is something which the most faithful preaching, as such, cannot produce. It is something which the mere circulating and reading of the Scripture does not impart. It is a miracle of Divine Grace, a Divine wonder which none but God can or does perform!

Of course if men are only partly depraved (which is *really* the belief, today, of the vast majority of preachers and their hearers, never having been experimentally taught by God *their own* depravity), if deep down in their hearts all men really loved God, if they are so good-natured as to be easily persuaded to become Christians, then there is no need for the Holy Spirit to put forth His Almighty power and do for them what they are altogether incapable of doing for themselves! And again, if “being saved” consists merely in believing I am a lost sinner and on my way to Hell, and by simply believing that God loves me, that Christ died for me, and that He will save me, now, on the one condition that I “accept Him as my personal Savior” and “rest upon His finished work,” then no supernatural operations of the Holy Spirit are required to induce and enable me to fulfill *that* condition—self-interest moves me to and a decision of my will is all that is required.

But if, on the other hand, all men *hate* God, (John 15:23, 25), and have minds which are “enmity against Him” (Rom 8:7), so that “there is *none* that seeks after God” (Rom 3:11), preferring and determining to follow their own inclinations and pleasures. If instead of being disposed unto that which is good, “the heart of the sons of men is *fully* set in them to do evil” (Eccl 8:11), and if when the overtures of God's mercy are made known to them and they are freely invited to avail themselves of the same, they “*all* with one consent began to make excuses” (Luke 14:18)—then it is very evident that the invincible power and transforming operations of the Spirit are indispensably required if the heart of a sinner is thoroughly changed so that rebellion gives place to submission and hatred to love. This is why Christ said, “No man can come to Me, *except* the Father (by the Spirit) which has sent Me *draw* him” (John 6:44).

Again, if the Lord Jesus Christ came here to uphold and enforce the high claims of God rather than to lower or set them aside. If He declared that “strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and few there are that find it” (Matt 7:14), rather than pointing to a smooth and broad road which anyone would find it easy to tread. If the salvation which He has provided is a deliverance from sin and self-pleasing, from worldliness and indulging the lusts of the flesh and the bestowing of a nature which desires and determines to live for *God's* glory and please Him in *all* the details of our present lives—then it is clear beyond dispute that none but the Spirit of God can impart a *genuine* desire for *such* a salvation. And if instead of “accepting Christ” and “resting upon His finished work” being the sole conditions of salvation, He demands that

(See *The Work of the Spirit* on page 13)

“The Lord Is My Shepherd”—Psalm 23

2: The Description of This Sheep

By Daniel E. Parks

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In the preceding message we set forth “The Identity of This Shepherd.” In this message we will set forth “The Description of This Sheep.” Who is it that is qualified to say, “The LORD is *my* Shepherd”? What is a description of such a sheep?

In general, Christ’s sheep share a characteristic with physical sheep—They need a shepherd! Unlike goats, sheep cannot fend for themselves. They often go astray and become lost (Psa 119:176; Isa 53:6), and in such instances must be sought and found (Ezek 34:6; Luke 15:4). They depend on a shepherd to “go out before them and go in before them...lead them out and bring them in” (Num 27:17), and to ascertain that they are provided pasturage (Ezek 34:2, 13f) and “still waters” (Psa 23:2). We repeatedly read in Holy Scriptures the lament for “sheep which have no shepherd” (e.g., Num 27:17). “They are in trouble because there is no shepherd” (Zech 10:2). “So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered” (Ezek 34:5). “Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered” (Zech 13:7; Matt 26:31; Mark 14:27).

In particular, Christ’s sheep are characterized in ways distinguishing them from the “sheep” of other religions—who in reality are “goats” (as in Matt 25:31-32ff; Ezek 34:17). Christ the Shepherd in John 10:1-30 describes in considerable detail the identity of those whom He calls “My sheep” (e.g., vv14, 26, 27). Indeed, whereas in Psalm 23 the sheep say, “Here is a description of my *Shepherd*,” in John 10 the Shepherd says, “Here is a description of My *sheep*.”

I. Christ’s sheep are His property—“My sheep”

1. by creation—“It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture” (Psa 100:3): Indeed, they are His sheep by a *double* creation: He *first* made them *men*, *then* He made them *Christians*—a “new creation” (2 Cor 5:17). They therefore confess that “we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus” (Eph 2:10).

2. by donation (v 29)—“My Father...has given them to Me.” God the Father gave His sheep to Christ when He, before the foundation of the world, chose them in Christ unto salvation, and predestined them to be His own, and accepted them in their Shepherd (Eph 1:4-6; 2 Thess 2:13f).

3. by redemption (v 11)—“The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” He did so in order to redeem those who had been given to Him. They therefore sing to Him, “For You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood” (Rev 5:9).

4. by restoration—“All we like sheep have gone astray” (Isa 53:6) in our fall in Adam. But our Shepherd has declared He will restore us to Himself, both in our conversion and subsequently (Ezek 34:6-16)—“My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth...I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day...I will seek what was

lost and bring back what was driven away.”

II. Christ’s sheep are known personally by Him (v 3)—“He calls His own sheep by name”—as He did when He saved Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:4).

III. Christ’s sheep “know His voice” (v 4)—Having once heard His voice they afterward instantly recognize it—even if He does not identify Himself when calling (see Acts 12:13f). They furthermore ably distinguish Christ’s voice from “the voice of strangers” whom “they do not know” (v 5).

IV. Christ’s sheep “follow Him” (v 4)—Not only do Christ’s sheep *know* His voice, but they also *heed* it. He calls—they respond. He teaches—they believe. He commands—they obey. He warns—they comply. He leads; they follow. And they do so...

1. unhesitatingly—It is with all Christ’s sheep as it was with the first disciples He called to “Follow Me”—“They immediately left their nets and followed Him...and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him” (Matt 4:19-22). But goats contrarily will find a multitude of excuses for not following Him (Luke 9:59-62; 14:16-20).

2. anywhere and everywhere—“These are the ones who follow [Christ] wherever He goes” (Rev 14:4).

V. Christ’s sheep will not succumb to a false shepherd (v 5)—“Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” Many of Christ’s sheep, especially the lambs, confess to not being very knowledgeable of His doctrine. But they learn how to obey the command—“do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1-6). When Christ’s sheep hear any doctrine they know to be contrary to Him, they flee from it.

But some will now object, “We know of many Christ’s sheep who have been led away from Him by false preachers!” Not true! “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us” (1 John 2:19). Goats will not abide with sheep for long.

VI. Christ’s sheep find in Him their only Savior (v 9)—“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.” Christ is the only entry into His fold, and it is entered through faith alone in Him. The Shepherd saves His sheep when they believe in Him (Acts 16:31); He then adds them to His fold (Acts 2:47). But He warns, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way [not by faith alone, but by works], the same is a thief and a robber” (v 1).

VII. Christ’s sheep intimately know Him (v 14)—“I am the Good Shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.” We previously noted Christ’s intimate knowledge of His sheep. We here note their intimate knowledge of Him. They know Him not in some mere general or historical way—as do even demons (James 2:19). Rather, they know Him savingly and experientially—through “the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (Phil

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THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

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3:10).

VIII. Christ's sheep will live forever (v 28)—“And I give them eternal life.” Christ does so because, as He prays to His Father, this is a reason why He was sent into the world (John 17:2f)—“You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” Christ gives eternal life to His sheep by giving to them...

1. **Himself**—“the true God and eternal life” (1 John 5:20).

2. **His own righteousness**—“resulting in justification of life” so that “grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom 5:19-21).

3. **“the Divine nature”** (2 Peter 1:4)—so that “he cannot sin” (1 John 3:9) and thereby incur “the wages of sin...death” (Rom 6:23).

4. **“the Holy Spirit of promise**, who is the guarantee of our inheritance”, and by whom “you were sealed” (Eph 1:13f).

IX. Christ's sheep “shall never perish” (v 28)—(See also John 3:14-16.) Some may ask, “Why is it necessary to add this statement to the previous “I give them eternal life”? Because some false shepherds, being deniers of Christ the True Shepherd, say, “One may have eternal life today, but suffer eternal death tomorrow!” Yes, we realize their terms are self-contradictory. But when men contradict Christ the Truth, they become contradictions in and of themselves, and in everything they say and do. Christ's sheep never perish—neither before nor after He has found them!

X. Christ's sheep are eternally secure (vv 28-30)—“neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are One.” Christ's people are “the sheep of His hand” (Psa 95:17). And He assures them, “See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands” (Isa 49:16). Therefore absolutely nothing is able to snatch them therefrom (Rom 8:35-39). If you find no such eternal security in *yourshepherd*, let me introduce you to *mine!*

When Christ declared these truths, “Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him” (v 31). They did so because goats will not receive these truths (v 26)—“But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep.” But these truths gladden the hearts of all who confess “The LORD is my Shepherd.”

(To be continued)

“Christ is the most bountiful Physician. Other patients enrich their physicians, but here the Physician does enrich the patient. Christ elevates all His patients. He does not only cure them, but He crowns them (Rev. 2:10). Christ does not only raise them from the bed, but to the Throne—He gives the sick man not only health but also Heaven.”—**Thomas Watson (c1620-1686)**

The Work of the Spirit

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the sinner throw down the weapons of his defiance, abandon every idol, unreservedly surrender himself and his life—and receive Him as his only Lord and Master, then nothing but a miracle of Grace can enable any captive of Satan's to meet *such* requirements!

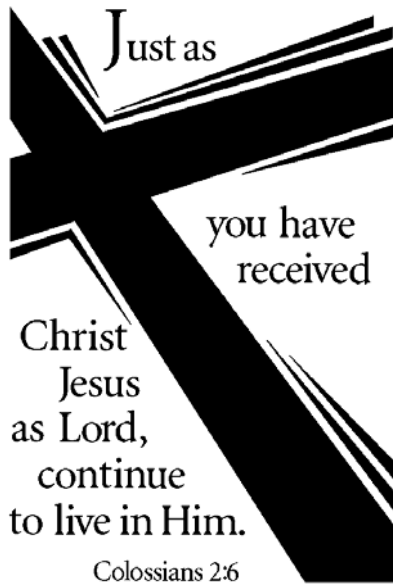
Against what has been said above it may be objected that no such hatred of God as we have affirmed exists in the hearts of the great majority of our fellow creatures—that while there may be a few degenerates who have sold themselves to the Devil and are thoroughly hardened in sin—yet the remainder of mankind are friendly disposed to God, as is evident by the countless millions who have some form or other of religion. To such an objector we reply, The fact is, dear Friend, that those to whom you refer are almost entirely ignorant of *the God of Scripture*—they have heard that He loves everybody, is benevolently inclined toward all His creatures and is so easy-going that in return for their religious performances will wink at their sins. Of course they have no hatred for such a “god” as this! But tell them something of the Character of the true God—that *He hates* “all workers of iniquity” (Psa 5:5), that He is inexorably just and ineffably holy, that He is an uncontrollable Sovereign, who “has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will, He hardens” (Rom 9:18), and their enmity against *Him* will soon be manifested—an enmity which none but the Holy Spirit can overcome!

It may be objected again that so far from the gloomy picture which we have sketched above being accurate, the great majority of people *do* desire to be saved, and may more or less endeavor after their salvation. This is readily granted. There is in every human heart a desire for deliverance from misery and a longing after happiness and security, and those who come under the sound of God's Word are *naturally* disposed to be delivered from the wrath to come and wish to be assured that Heaven will be their eternal dwelling place—who *wants* to endure the everlasting burnings? But that desire and disposition is quite compatible and consistent with the greatest love to sin and most entire opposition of heart to that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord (Heb 12:14). But what the objector here refers to is a vastly different thing from desiring Heaven upon *God's* terms, and being willing to tread the *only* path which leads there!

All around us are those willing to receive Christ as their Savior, who are altogether unwilling to surrender to Him as their Lord. They would like His peace, but they refuse His “yoke,” without which *His* peace cannot be found (Matt 11:29). They admire His promises, but have no heart for His precepts. They will rest upon His priestly work, but will not be subject to His kingly scepter. They will believe in a “Christ” who is suited to their own corrupt tastes or sentimental dreams, but they despise and reject the Christ of God. Like the multitudes of old, they want His loaves and fishes, but for His heart-searching, flesh-withering, sin-condemning teaching, they have no appetite. They approve of Him as the Healer of their bodies, but as the Healer of their depraved souls they desire Him not. And nothing but the miracle-working power of the Holy Spirit can change this bias and bent in any soul.

PRAY FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN PRISON. PRAY THE LORD MIGHT USE THEM AS INSTRUMENTS TO BRING MANY OF HIS ELECT TO CHRIST.

For HIS Glory
Prison Ministry
Emmett and Ann O'Donnell
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Kerrville, TX 78029-1301



Pray for grace to be holy.

In This Issue...

...and, Lord willing, *every* issue, our *only* purpose is to honor Jesus Christ.

WHEN A CHRISTIAN COMES TO DIE

By Charles H. Spurgeon

One of the evidences of the truth of the Gospel which, perhaps, strikes onlookers more than any other, is the serenity with which the Presence of Christ endows His people when they come to die. Their end is often very peaceful and very beautiful. There died, last week, not far from here, a young man whose brother, as he watched him, saw tokens of such wonderful happiness in him that he said to him, "Brother, what can I do to be as happy as you are?" The dying man's answer was, "It is all in Number 1,500. It is all in Number 1,500."

You know that sermon of mine about the bronze serpent? [Volume 25, #1500—"*LIFTING UP THE BRONZE SERPENT*"—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.] The young man said to his brother, "It is all in Number 1,500. It is Jesus only, Jesus only. Look to Jesus, look and live. It is all there." His brother said that he could not tell exactly when he passed away, so sweet was the serenity that the Presence of the Master gave him.

I could take you to the Stockwell Orphanage, to the bedside of a little boy who may be in Heaven by now, but when I saw him on Monday, he said to me, "I shall soon die, Mr. Spurgeon. And when I think I am going, as I sometimes do at night, I clap my hands at the thought that I shall so soon be with Jesus." Poor little fellow, he could hardly lift those thin hands of his, yet he clapped them with delight at the thought that he should so soon be with Jesus!

It would have done you good if you could have seen him, and so it would if you could have seen our dear Sister, Mrs. White, the wife of our beloved elder, when she knew that she had a cancer which would soon take her Home. The look of her face is with me now. I sat by her bedside and it was more than a sermon to me—it made me feel willing to die at any time when I saw the calm serenity with which that suffering saint looked forward to her departure. She did not regard death as a thing to be spoken of as a dreadful and terrible matter, but she calmly spoke of being with Christ, which was far better than being with the dearest friends on earth!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2709, Volume 47—CHRIST'S PAST AND PRESENT WITNESSES—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>