

FOR HIS GLORY

Volume 10, Issue 12

December, 2007

I conclude by saying that whatever the other Bethlehem people might be, there was among them one notable being, and it was worth while to join the nation for the sake of union with him. Ruth found it all out by degrees. There was a near kinsman among those people and his name was Boaz. She went to glean in his field and, by-and-by, she was married to him. Ah, that was the reason why I cast in my lot with the people of God, for I said to myself, "There is One among them who, whatever faults *they* may have, is so fair and lovely that He more than makes up for all their imperfections! My Lord Jesus Christ, in the midst of His people, makes them all fair in His fairness and makes me feel that to be poor with the poorest and most illiterate of the Church of Christ, meeting in a village barn, is an unspeakable honor since He is among them!"—
CHS



GROWING IN DIVINE GRACE

By C. H. Spurgeon

Do not suppose, when you are depressed, that, therefore, you are not growing in Grace. Many of God's plants grow best in the dark and He often puts them in the dark to make them grow. When you are growing upwards, remember that there is such a thing as growing downward. You may have had, yesterday, a Divine manifestation that took you up to the top of the Delectable Mountains. You must not think you are big because you are up on high, for pigmies perched on Alps are still pigmies. And if you were ever so little, it would not make you any bigger if you were taken to the top of St. Paul's. If, on the other hand, you are deep down in a mine, do not imagine that you are any the smaller for that reason. I can tell you that you will often grow faster in the dungeon than on the top of a mountain, but it is not a pleasant place to be. When our depravity is revealed to us, when our desolation of spirit and our utter hopelessness



and powerlessness are uncovered and made manifest by God's Holy Spirit, we grow, I believe, even faster than we do when, on the wings of seraphs, we are privileged to mount on high! So, do not measure your growth in Grace by your *feelings*. Some of you make a kind of barometer of your feelings. Do not do so! If we are in Christ, we are

in Christ by faith, and not by feelings, and remember, whether your feelings are good or bad, you are no more or less a child of God. Your

faith, Sinner, unites you with the Lamb—not your feelings! Trust Him in darkness, trust Him in distress, lean on Him when you cannot see Him. And when there seems nothing to walk on, still walk, for the ground is firm beneath the foot of faith!

Just by way of warning, let me urge you not to think that you are growing in Grace *because you happen to be doing a little more for the church exter-*

(See *Divine Grace* on page 2)

"THE TIME WILL COME!"

By Charles H. Spurgeon

I am sure there is another bitterness that will always accompany a true [spiritual] sight of Christ and that is, *an intense horror at man's rejection of Him*. Have not you, Beloved, sometimes looked at your Lord and loved and adored Him, till, first, you have pitied men, and afterwards you have pitied Christ? With those who love Christ most, there comes to be, after a time, sympathy with Jesus rather than with men. I can understand how, even when the enemies of God shall be destroyed at the last and the smoke of their torment shall rise up forever and ever, the perfect ones in Heaven will sing, "Hallelujah."

Certain persons, who are on earth at the present time, if they had been at the Red Sea and seen old Pharaoh's army cast into the depths, would have mournfully said, "This is very, very grievous to us." But as for me, if I had been there, I would have joined with Moses and with Miriam and said, "Sing you to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously; the horse and His rider has He thrown into the sea." I confess that I have very small

(See *The Time Will Come!* on page 3)

Inside:

"I Do Not Serve the god of the Arminians" - C.H. Spurgeon	4
About the "Invitation" Or "Altar Call" - Henry Mahan	5
A Little Peek into Spurgeon's Procedure of Invitation to His Hearers	7
Have a Merry Christmas—But Remember Whose Name You Bear	10

DOES YOUR PREACHER PREACH OLD-FASHIONED GRACE?

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

There is an old-fashioned Grace that I am never ashamed to preach, though some, who call themselves evangelists, have folded it up and put it away in the back cupboard. They never mention this old-fashioned Grace which is called *repentance*.

Now, I learn from the Scriptures that repentance is just as necessary to salvation as faith is—and the faith that has not repentance going with it will have to be repented of one of these days. A dry-eyed faith is a faith that will save no man. Peter's message was, "Repent you, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."

And our Lord's own declaration was, "Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish." He began His public ministry by crying, "Repent and believe the Gospel," which means just this—that if any man is living in sin, it is no use his praying, or pretending to believe until he gives up that sin. If there is any passion that you are indulging, any lust that is your master—if you are carrying on a wicked business—if you are living in willful transgression of God's Law, Christ can save you from your sins, but even Christ cannot save you *in your sins*.

If you will have your sin, you must be lost—so stands God's decree. Christ must, by His Grace, separate you from your sin or else you will be separated from Him forever. I want this to be a very heart-searching word and, therefore, I say to any miserable man or miserable woman here—"You shall forget your misery if you give up your sin and trust in the sin-atonement Savior. Come, Friend, you shall not say that I am flattering you, for I tell you plainly that you must flee for your life from the dearest sin that now lays hold upon you."

"Oh" you say, "but how am I to do it?" Christ will help you. Trust Him to help you. But if you say, "I will trust Him to save me," and yet continue to live in sin, He will not save you. That is not the salvation that we preach! We proclaim salvation *from sin*, for that is the salvation which Jesus came to bring to us. You must, as Zophar said to Job, put

your iniquity far away—and you must not let wickedness dwell in your tabernacles—that is to say, in your tents, in your houses.

I know some men who will never get peace of conscience and rest of heart while they let their wives live as they do, and while they allow their children to live as they do. Some of you will not find mercy for yourselves while you neglect your children's highest welfare as you do. I know some men—I hope they are good men, but certainly they are not good *fathers*—they are so peaceful and gentle that they never like to utter a word of reproof. Their boys and girls may go where they like—I might almost say that they may go to the devil if they like—yet their father has not a word to say to them.

Do you call that proper conduct for a professedly Christian man? There are some parents who allow their children to do such things that God is grieved with them for their children's sakes—and they will never get peace of mind till they set their house in order. What? Is God coming to live where there is no family prayer, where there is no care for His name or His day, where there is no rebuke of open sin? It has filled me with unspeakable sorrow when I have heard of Christian parents whose boys swear and whose girls are allowed to go where, if they are not ruined, body and soul, it is little short of a miracle!

Oh, do see that you let not wickedness dwell in your tabernacles, you who are the people of God, and you who wish to be His, if you would have Zophar's words to Job fulfilled in your experience, "Then shall you lift up your face without spot; yes, you shall be steadfast, and shall not fear: because you shall forget your misery, and remember it as waters that pass away" (Job 11:15, 16).—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon*

Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2676, Volume 46—COMFORT FROM THE FUTURE—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

Pray For Grace To Be Holy

**PRAY FOR GRACE TO BE OBEDIENT
TO THE WORD OF GOD.**

DIVINE GRACE

(Continued from page 1)

nally. "Oh," we often say, "now I am progressing, am I not? I am busy in the Sunday school, laboring hard there! I am preaching! I am doing this, or that, or the other—now I am truly growing in Grace." Ah, it is a proper thing to be diligent in good works and to be abounding in acts of righteousness, but if you begin to say, "Now I am growing," because of this or because of that, you have made a great mistake! It often happens that when we are very full of public labors, we are very short in private devotions. I must confess that it has been so with me—and that is a very lamentable thing—for then I was not really growing at all. A man may have his hands ever so full before

the world and think he is doing much, but he may not be really growing in Grace, after all.

Do not think that this is an excuse for anybody who is not doing much, you Issachar-like people, like "a strong ass between two burdens," too lazy to lift either! I am not giving you a word of comfort. You are not growing, for you are doing *nothing*—and those who are doing something must not boast of their growth. It has more to do with private devotion than with public exercise. It has more to do with meditation than with explanation. It has more to do with contemplation and adoration than with public service. We must look more to the state of the *internal* matters, keeping

up private prayer and attending to the reading of the Scriptures. If we do not—however much we may seem to progress outwardly, we are not any richer—we are only beating out the little gold we had into a thinner plate, and spreading it over a wider surface. The more we do for Christ, the more He will do for us, but let us take heed that while we water other people's vineyards, our own is not neglected, and that the stones of the hedges are not cast down. May God grant you, Brothers and Sisters, to grow in Grace!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2700, Volume 46—GROWTH IN GRACE—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

The Time Will Come!

(Continued from page 1)

sympathy with Pharaoh, but I have the most intense sympathy with Jehovah and with His people—and I question whether the wonderful sympathy with lost sinners which some people profess to feel, is not sympathy with their *sin* as much as with themselves.

If we were perfectly holy, we would desire to do just what God does and we would wish God to do exactly what He is doing—and we would rejoice without question in all the will of God. One result of such a state of mind as that would be that we would cry with the Psalmist, “Horror has taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake Your Law.” I do not know that I ever felt a greater horror in my soul than when, in Rome, I stood at the foot of the Santa Scala—“the holy staircase,” as they call it—on which they pretend to show the marks where our Savior fainted on the stairs in Jerusalem. I saw poor deluded creatures go up and down those stairs upon their knees, repeating certain forms of prayer all the while. Ah, me, it did seem horrible and, worst of all, the priests have turned the Christ, Himself, into an idol! There is a little black picture of Him, at the top of the stairs, which is reputed to have been painted by Luke—and it is kissed and worshipped—and thus even our blessed Master is made to act the lackey to idolatry! I thought that if I could have borrowed a thunderbolt or two for a little while, I could have made a clean sweep here and there in Rome, but the time for that is not yet. That time *will come* and a very clean sweep there will be when the cry is heard, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen... And her smoke rose up forever and ever.”—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2683, Volume 46—THE BITTERNESS OF THE CROSS—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

JOHN 3:18

That's right—read
JOHN 3:18

WELL...HAVE YOU?

By A.W. Pink

Have you really and truly surrendered yourself to the Lordship of Christ? If you have not, no matter what you believe, or how orthodox the profession you make, you are yet in your sins and on your way to eternal perdition. Make no mistake on this point, we beseech you: as you value your soul, examine thoroughly the foundations of any hope of salvation which you may cherish. If you are living a life of *self*-pleasing, and are not in subjection to the commandments of Christ, then are you in open revolt against Him. There must be a complete break from the old life of worldliness and carnal gratification, and the entering into a new relationship with God in Christ, namely, a submitting to His holy will and the ordering of all your conduct thereby. You are either living for *self*, or striving to serve and please *God*—and in your heart you *know* which course you are following. Being religious on the Sabbath and irreligious the other six days will avail you nothing.—From *Studies in the Scriptures*, 1938

Approach, My Soul, The Throne Of Grace

HYMN #4

A hymn by Donald S. Fortner

Approach, my soul, the throne of grace
In every time of need;
There's mercy for the needy one,
Who Jesus' name shall plead.

Though I'm a weak and sinful wretch,
I will approach the throne
I'll lean upon Christ's mighty arm,
And plead His blood alone.

The blood! The precious blood of Christ!
Has opened up the way
By which I can draw near to God,
And to my Father pray.

Though Satan tempts my heart to sin,
I'll call upon my God;
And if I fall, He'll lift me up,
And cleanse me in the blood.

The way is open, God will hear
My groans and cries of grief;
Nothing can keep me from His throne,
But my own unbelief.

Oh, Lord, my unbelief remove,
And turn my heart by grace:
Compel me to approach Your throne,
And there spread out my case.

(Tune: *O For a Thousand Tongues*)
Common Meter 86.86.

From *Songs of Grace*, by Donald S. Fortner,
Grace Baptist Church of Danville,
2734 Old Stanford Road, Danville, KY, 40422-9438
Telephone 859-236-8235
E-mail don@donfortner.com

<http://www.sovereign-grace.com/gracechurch.htm>

“I DO NOT SERVE THE GOD OF THE ARMINIANS”

By Charles H. Spurgeon

“...He will always be mindful of His Covenant.”

Psalm 111:5.

God will not suffer one single promise of the Covenant to be unfulfilled, nor one single blessing of the Covenant to be kept back. Every iota, jot and tittle of the covenanted purpose of God shall be fulfilled—and everything which He has promised to His people in the Covenant, and which Christ has bought for His people through the Covenant—shall most infallibly be received by His people. As for the persons interested therein, not one of them shall be forgotten. If in the Covenant, they shall most assuredly be saved despite every attack of the devil, all their own wickedness, or any “accident,” so-called, of Providence, or whatever may happen! All who are in the Covenant must and shall be gathered in. The Arminian says there are some in the Covenant who tumble out of it—that God has chosen some men—that He justifies them, that He accepts them—and then turns them out of His family.

The Arminian holds the unnatural, cruel, barbarous idea that a man may be God’s child, and then God may disown him because he does not behave himself. The idea is revolting even to human sensibility! If our children sin, they are still our children—though chastened and punished—yet never do they cease to be numbered among our family. There are many of God’s children who have gone astray from Him and been chastened for it, but it were an idea too barbarous to suppose that God would disown His child for any sin he commits. He keeps fast His Covenant—He loves them, sinners though they may be. He keeps them from running riotously into sin, but when, sometimes, they go astray, as

the best of them will, still His loving heart towards them is unchangeably the same!

I do not serve the god of the Arminians at all! I have nothing to do with him and I do not bow down before the Baal they have set up! He is not my god, nor shall he ever be! I fear him not, nor tremble at his presence. A mutable god may be the god for the Arminian—he is not the god for me. My Jehovah changes not! The god that says today and denies tomorrow. That justifies today and condemns the next. The god that has children of his own one day and lets them be the children of the devil the next has no relation to my God in the least degree! He may be the relation of Ashtaroth or Baal, but Jehovah never was nor can be his name. Jehovah changes not! He knows no shadow of turning. If He has set His heart upon a man, He will love him to the end. If He has chosen him, He has not chosen him for any merit of his own—therefore He will never cast him away for any demerit of his own. If He has begotten him unto a lively hope, He will not suffer him to fall away and perish! That were a breaking of every promise and an abrogation of the Covenant! If one dear child of God might fall away, then might all. If one of those for whom the Savior died might be damned, then the Savior’s blood would be utterly void and vain. If one of those whom He has called according to His purpose might perish, then would His purpose be null and void!

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2681, Volume 46—*COVENANT BLESSINGS*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

And Who Is Your God?

By C. H. Spurgeon

At the present day I am afraid that nine people out of ten do not believe in the God who is revealed to us in the Bible. “What?” you say. It is so, I grieve to say it. I can point you to newspapers, to magazines, to periodicals and also to pulpits by the score in which there is a new god set up to be worshipped—not the God of the Old Testament—He is said to be too strict, too severe, too stern for our modern teachers. They do not believe in Him. The God of Abraham is dethroned by many, nowadays, and in His place they have a spineless god, like those of whom Moses spoke, “new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.”

They shudder at the very mention of the God of the Puritans! If Jonathan Edwards were to rise from the dead, they would not listen to him for a minute—they would say that they had quite a new god since his day—but, Brothers and Sisters, I believe in the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob! This God is my God—yes, the God that drowned Pharaoh and his host at the Red Sea and moved His people to sing “Hallelujah” as He did it! The God that caused the earth to open and swallow up Korah, Dathan and Abiram and all their company—a terrible God is the God whom I adore—He is the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, full of mercy, compassion and Grace, tender and gentle, yet just and dreadful in His holiness and terrible out of His holy places.

This is the God whom we worship and he who comes to Him in Christ, and trusts in Him, will take Him to be his Instructor—and so shall he learn aright all that he needs to know. But woe unto the men of this day who have made unto themselves a calf of their own devising

which has no power to bless or to save them! “Your God” says Ruth to Naomi—not another god—not Chemosh or Moloch, but Jehovah—“shall be my God.” And so she took Him to be her Instructor, as we, also, must do.

Then, let us take Him to be *our entire trust and stay*. O my beloved Friends, the happiest thing in life is to trust God—first to trust Him with your soul through Jesus Christ the Savior—and then to trust Him *with everything and in everything*. I am speaking what I know. The life of sense is death, but the life of faith is life, indeed! Trust God about temporary things—no, I do not know any division between temporary things and spiritual things—trust God about *everything!* About your daily livelihood, about your health, about your wife, about your children—live a life of faith in God and you will truly live and all things will be right about you.

It is because we get to *partly* trusting God and partly trusting *ourselves* that we are often so unhappy. But when, by simple faith, you just cast yourselves on God, then you find the highest joy and bliss that is possible on earth—and a whole series of wonders is spread out before you! Your life becomes like a miracle, or a succession of miracles, God hearing your prayers and answering you out of Heaven, delivering you in the time of trial, supplying your every need and leading you always onward by a matchless way which you know not, which every moment shall cause you greater astonishment and delight as you see the unfolding of the Character of God. Oh, that each one of you would say, “This God shall be my God. I will trust Him. By His Grace I will trust Him *now*.”

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2680, Volume 46—*RUTH DECIDING FOR GOD*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

REFLECTIONS

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

IMPERFECTIONS OF MISSIONARY DAVID BRAINERD

Another imperfection in Mr. Brainerd, which may be observed in the following account of his life, *was his being excessive in his labors; not taking due care to proportion his fatigues to his strength.* Indeed the case was very often such, by the seeming calls of Providence, as made it extremely difficult for him to avoid doing more than his strength would well admit of—yes, his circumstances and the business of his mission among the Indians were that such great fatigues and hardships were altogether inevitable.

However, he was finally convinced that he had erred in this matter, and that he ought to have taken more thorough care, and been more resolute to withstand temptations to such degrees of labor as injured his health. Accordingly, he warned his brother, who succeeded him in his mission, to be careful to avoid this error.

Besides the imperfection already mentioned, it is readily allowed that there were some imperfections which ran through his whole life, and were mixed with all his religious affections and exercises; some mixture of what was natural with that which was spiritual; as it evermore is in the best saints in the world. Doubtless, natural temper had some influence in the religious exercises and experiences of Mr. Brainerd, as there most apparently was in the exercise of devout David, and the Apostles Peter, John, and Paul. There was undoubtedly very often some influence of his natural disposition to dejection, in his religious mourning; some mixture of melancholy with truly godly sorrow and real Christian humility; some mixture of the natural fire of youth with his holy zeal for God; and some influence of natural principles mixed with Divine Grace in various other respects, as it always was and always will be with saints while on this side Heaven.

Perhaps none were more sensible of Mr. Brainerd's imperfections than he, himself—or could distinguish more accurately than he, between what was natural and what was spiritual.

—About Missionary David Brainerd (1718-1747) as written by Jonathan Edwards in *The Life and Diary of David Brainerd*, Published by Baker House, Grand Rapids, MI 2005

About the “Invitation” Or “Altar Call”

By Henry Mahan
Ashland, KY

The “invitation” or “altar call” at the end of a service has become such an accepted tradition in today’s religion that those who do not sing an “invitation hymn” and invite people to the front of the church to “get saved” are branded with all sorts of names and charges. It never seems to trouble religious people that this “altar call” is nowhere to be found in God’s Word; that the great majority of those who “come forward” usually “go back” into indifference and worldliness; that coming to Christ is not a physical move at all but a *heart commitment* to the Redeemer; that the Scriptures present BAPTISM as our public confession of Christ—not “shaking the preacher’s hand.” Remember that the Gospel is a COMMAND to repent, believe and follow the Lord in Baptism, not a mere invitation! The King of kings does not *invite* His subjects to obey and believe Him—He *commands* them!

I preach to you the Word of the living God! In the preaching of His Word, the holiness, justice and righteousness of God are declared. The Truths of God of our fall, sinfulness and inability is clearly set forth, as is the Divine Grace and mercy of God in the Lord Jesus Christ. Are you a sinner? Confess that fact before God, not before me! Do you need mercy? Tell God you need mercy, not me! Do you believe the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Redeemer and righteousness and sin-offering for one such as you? Then settle that issue before the Throne of Grace, not at the front of the church! Has God spoken peace to your heart in Christ? Do you now rest in Him alone as your Lord and Savior, your High Priest and Mediator? Is the old man crucified and buried with Christ, and are you risen in Him a new creature? Then ask the pastor to assist you in Believer’s Baptism so that you may declare publicly what God has done for you personally!

“Henry T. Mahan was born in Birmingham, Alabama, August 1926. He began pastoring at the young age of 21 and has wide experience in the pastoral ministry, having pastored Thirteenth Street Baptist Church, Ashland, Kentucky, for over 50 years. He now travels widely as a conference speaker and evangelist. What draws the positive reaction from people all over the world to Henry Mahan’s preaching is not primarily the man, but the message. It is not the preacher so much as the One preached. Listeners know that each one of his sermons will honor their precious Savior and lift up the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Pastor Mahan believes in the Sovereign Free Grace of God. He sees all of God’s plan and purpose directed toward one end of glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ in the salvation of sinners. His sermons are God-honoring, Christ-exalting, and places the Savior at the forefront of our attention, and the worth of Christ’s blood and righteousness on the lips of every saved sinner. If you love the God-honoring preaching of God’s Sovereign Grace, you will not be disappointed in the preaching of Henry T. Mahan!”—Henry T. Mahan Tape Ministry— <http://www.sovereign-grace.com/mahantapeministry/hmahantapeidx.htm>

NOTABLE QUOTES OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“Do you ask, ‘To whom shall I confess my sins?’ Shall you come to me with your confession? Oh no, no, no! I could not stand that! There is an old proverb about a thing being ‘as filthy as a priest’s ear.’ I cannot imagine anything dirtier than that, and I have no wish to be a partaker in the filthiness. Go to God and confess your sin to Him—pour out your heart’s sad story in the ear of Him against whom you have offended! Say with David, ‘Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight.’”—1900, Sermon #2705

“It was truly said, ‘You cannot see God’s face and live.’ But I have been inclined to say, ‘Then let me see God’s face, and die.’ John Welsh said, when God was flooding his soul with a sense of His wondrous love, ‘Stop, Lord, stop! I am but an earthen vessel and You will break me.’ If I had been there and I could have borne no more, I would have said, ‘Do not stop, Lord! Break the poor earthen vessel, smash it to pieces, but let Your love be revealed in me!’ Oh, that I might even die of this pleasurable pain of knowing too much of God, too much of the ineffable delight of fellowship with Him! Let us be very venturesome, Beloved, and pray, ‘Show Your marvelous loving kindness.’”—1900, Sermon #2702

“Self-complacency may be a very pleasant feeling to cherish, but he who walks near to God is a stranger to it.”—1900, Sermon #2696

“No church can be healthy without the constant infusion of fresh blood. Unless there are new converts, you cannot see the church built up. Young converts are quick in inventing new ways of usefulness and they venture to do things which some consider ‘imprudent.’ Oh, how I love that word, ‘imprudent,’ in such a connection! I like ‘imprudent’ young people. The more ‘imprudent’ they are, in the cause of God in the judgment of stolid, cold-hearted professors, the more I rejoice in them! Imprudence which believes in God and dares to do exploits in His strength, is far preferable to that prudence which has no faith and is, therefore, a poor, dead, useless thing.”—1900, Sermon #2692

“O my God, let me die when I can no longer be the means of saving souls! If I can be kept out of Heaven a thousand years, if you will give me souls as my wages, let me still speak for You! But if there are no more sinners to be converted—no more to be brought in by my ministry—then let me depart and be ‘with Christ, which is far better.’”—1900, Sermon #2695

“The Gospel is priceless in value, but it is to be had ‘without money and without price.’ The salvation of God can never be purchased. I am amazed that anyone should ever cherish the idea of a man buying a place for himself in Heaven. Why, the very streets are paved with exceedingly rich and rare gold, and a rich man’s whole fortune would not buy a single paving stone in those golden streets! There is nothing that you can ever bring to God as the purchase-money for salvation! He is infinitely rich—what does He need of yours? If you are righteous, what do you want from Him? The impossibility of salvation by human merit or good works ought to be clear to every thinking man. If we do all that God bids us do, we are doing no more than we ought to do—and even then we are unprofitable servants!”—1900, Sermon #2685

“It was a great joy to me when my sons were born, but it was an infinitely surpassing joy as, one after the other, they told me that they had sought and found the Savior! To pray with them, to point them yet more fully to Christ, to hear the story of their spiritual troubles and to help them out of their spiritual difficulties was an intense satisfaction to my soul.”—1900, Sermon #2680

“How many times a day do you praise Him [God]? 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.”—1900, Sermon #2679

“When God prepared the worm to destroy Jonah’s gourd, the *result of its work was very sad*. It left the poor man without that which had made him exceedingly glad and he was as angry and distressed as before when he had been rejoicing! I want you, dear Friends, to pause here to learn this lesson. It is *God who sends your trials*—do not get into your head the notion that your sickness or anything else that grieves you is from the devil. He may have a finger in it, but he is, himself, always under the supremacy of God. When Job is vexed and plagued by Satan, the arch-enemy cannot touch him anywhere till God gives permission. God always stands at the back of all that happens. Therefore, do not begin kicking at the secondary agent. You know that if you strike a dog with a stick, he bites at the stick—if he were a sensible dog, he would try to bite you! If you quarrel with anything that happens, your quarrel is virtually with God Himself. It is no use to quarrel with the Lord’s agent, for it is God, after all, who sends you the affliction—and ‘He does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.’ Say, as old Eli did, when he heard the evil tidings concerning his household, ‘It is the Lord: let Him do what seems good to Him.’ Let it be with you as it was with Aaron when, as he could not speak joyfully, he did not speak at all—‘Aaron held his peace.’ It is sometimes a great thing to not be able to say anything. Silence is golden when it is the silence of a complete submission to the will of the Lord. God prepares the worm, therefore, be not angry with the poor worm, but just let the gourd go. It was God who made it to grow and He had a perfect right to take it away when He pleased.”—1897, Sermon #2504

“I have come even to love my own necessities, for they seem to be like pedestals whereon the image of Christ may stand! If I did not need Christ, how could He be my life? If I did not need food to sustain that life, how could He be the bread of life to me? The greater my necessities, the deeper is my sense of His fullness! The more I become dependent upon Him for everything, the more I see of His all-sufficiency.”—1900, Sermon #2706

“It is wonderfully condescending on God’s part to listen to us. Many of our complaints are only rubbish, yet He hears them patiently.”—1900, Sermon #2696

“No one by faith plunges into the crystal Fountain of perfect cleansing without first lamenting the filthiness which needs to be removed!”—1900, Sermon #2696

A LITTLE PEEK INTO SPURGEON'S PROCEDURE OF INVITATION TO HIS HEARERS

"The children which you shall have, after you have lost the other, shall say again in your ears, The place is too small for me: give me a place that I may dwell. Then you will say in your heart, Who has begotten these for me, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and wandering to and fro? And who has brought these up? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?"

Isaiah 49:20, 21.

Yesterday, [Wednesday, August 17, 1881] I had a joyous day—all the bells of my heart rang! While many of you have been away at the seaside, I thought there was a little difference in the numbers coming to hear. And when I sat to see inquirers, there did not seem to be quite as many as usual coming forward and I was troubled about it. But yesterday I had so many sheaves that the cart was loaded with them and my helpers came to me, every now and then, and said, "What a joyful day!" I do not know whether all the friends whom I saw yesterday are here, but they delighted my soul with the stories they told me of what the Grace of God had done for them. I bless God and take courage as I see another great slice cut out of the kingdom of Satan and transferred to the Kingdom of Christ!

Quite a number of people who had never known the Lord, or anything about Him—outsiders altogether—had dropped in here and heard the Word—and found Christ! And they kept coming, hour after hour, till I was weary with the blessed task of speaking to them, one by one, about their souls. And as I went home I kept saying to myself, "How has all this come about?" because I have often felt so dull and heavy when I have been preaching. "Who has begotten these for me?"

And, dear Friends, if God blesses you in your Sunday school classes, you also will say, "However has this come about? What could I have said that could have brought my scholars to Christ?" If the Lord shall bless you much, my dear Brother, in your preaching, you will more and more marvel that He should ever use such a poor tool as you are. I do not mean that you are a worse tool than I am, for I feel that I am a still poorer instrument than you are, but I often wonder that God uses me as He does, and I think you will also marvel that He uses you.

When the Church has grown feeble, when she has seemed to have no hope that God should bless her, but He then comes and visits her, and a multitude of converts is suddenly brought forth, she may well say, "Who has begotten these for me, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and wandering to and fro?" Take comfort then, Beloved, from the fact that whatever the decreases in the Church may be, we may also expect increase—and in their number, the converts will surprise us—and in their being converted at all, we shall greatly marvel!

But what Zion wondered at next was, *how they had been nurtured*, for she says, "Who has brought these up?" They were not merely born, but they had been brought up! And we also meet with persons who come forward to tell us that they are converted to Christ—and they are by no means fools. No, and when we begin to question them concerning the things of God, they answer us sensibly and intelligently. They do not need us to lead them like little children and to put the words into their mouth, for they know what to say—yet some of them have only been converted about a month and they have not been used to hearing the Gospel—but since they have heard it, they seem to have sucked it in like Gideon's fleece drank in the dew!

Many doctors of divinity make a dreadful muddle of their theology, but these dear converts are as clear as possible upon what they believe. They have it all at their fingertips and they can tell what

"Covenant" means, and what "substitution" means, and what "regeneration" means.

We say, "Who has brought these up?" It seems so amazing to us! Has it not often been so to you also, dear Friends? Yet, all the while we have been forgetting the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and we have said, "Why, my poor teaching could not have taught them all this." No, nor *has* it taught them all this. There is a higher Teacher than the best of ministers, there is a better Teacher than the most earnest and the most advanced of Christians—and He still fulfils that gracious promise, "All your children shall be taught of the Lord."

A further cause of wonder was *the sudden appearance of this great increase*. Zion inquires, "These, where had they been?" Ah, that is just what I thought and said last night—and that is why I took this text, for it kept coming to my mind, "These, where had they been?" Some of them I had seen here forever so long, but others of them I had never seen at all, except on two or three Thursday nights lately I noticed them and, perhaps, at one or two Prayer Meetings. And I began to think that there was something good coming to pass with them, or else they would not have come. So I kept saying to myself, as I went home, "These, where had they been?"

A month ago, I could not have found them. "These, where had they been?" They have sprung up and come forward all of a sudden through the blessed working of the Spirit of God! "These, where had they been?" Shall I tell you where they had been? Some of them had been in godly families, with fathers and mothers praying for them. No wonder that they came to close in with Christ. Some of them had been in the Sunday school, in classes where Brothers and Sisters love their children and never rest till they bring them to decision for Christ. It is not so very amazing that they should, by-and-by, come forward.

"These, where had they been?" Well, they had been under the influence of Christian wives, Christian children, sometimes Christian brothers and sisters—and so, at last, the gracious influence took effect upon them, by the power of God's Spirit, and out they came! Thank God that there are great numbers still under those sacred influences, for they are sure to come in due time, and say, "We are on the Lord's side."

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2692, Volume 46—CHURCH INCREASE—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

True prayer is the approach to God of a sinful creature, conscious of deep needs, pouring out his heart before Him, applying to One who is all powerful and infinitely merciful.—A.W.Pink

PRAY FOR MT. ZION AND CHAPEL LIBRARY

Study of Ephesians**ENDEAVORING TO KEEP
THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT**

As we began to study this fourth chapter of Ephesians, we saw that the Apostle Paul is moving from the primarily doctrinal portion of this letter to the primarily practical section. And it is only by putting our knowledge of the Word of God into practice that we can walk worthy of the calling with which we as Christians are called. It is a very great privilege to be a Christian. Yet, with that privilege comes responsibility. As children of God we represent the King of kings and Lord of lords in this life. We must seek to honor our King by living in a manner which brings glory to Him and which will attract others to Him.

Now, what do you suppose will be the very first specific thing the Apostle mentions in regard to this matter of putting into practice what we have learned? In verse 3, the very first issue which the Apostle discusses in regard to walking worthy of the calling with which we are called is that we “endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Let us consider together, in the first place, why this would rise to the top of the list. Keeping the unity of the Spirit is mentioned first because it is at the heart of God’s eternal plan. We studied this back in Ephesians 1:10—“that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are on earth in Him.” Throughout Scripture we are told about sin and its effects upon the Creation. Sin, in a sense, has disrupted everything and destroyed the perfect harmony that God built into the universe when He first created. Sin is the great destroyer of unity. Sin divides families, nations, and even churches. But God has a plan to overrule all of it. And how He has done that was set before us in chapter 2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is God’s great plan for the restoration of harmony and unity. Through the Gospel, God has made a way for those who once were at enmity to become one. He has torn down the wall which once divided Jews from the rest of the nations of the world and is now making a new community of those purchased by the blood of Christ.

And one day, when God begins to roll up the existing universe and causes the elements to melt with fervent heat, there will come forth from His hands new heavens and a new earth wherein only righteousness dwells. At that time all the chains which hold the world in darkness will be broken and give way to everlasting day. Then, all will be in perfect unity under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ. This, then, is God’s great purpose for the eternal state of His people and of the new creation. It must therefore be our great concern as well.

Another reason why this issue of unity is critical and must come first is because it is the unity which God Himself produces. Notice that in verse 3 we are told that the way to walk worthy of the calling with which we are called is by “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit.” The Apostle does NOT say endeavor to ESTABLISH or to CREATE the unity of the Spirit. He says endeavor to KEEP the unity of the Spirit. In other words, we are commanded to maintain something which the Holy Spirit produces. *We cannot produce it.* Our part is to seek to maintain the unity which God the Holy Spirit alone can produce.

Now, if there ever was an issue that is being talked about, it is this matter of unity in the church. It is the great outcry of so many today. You cannot fail to find in major newspapers frequent articles in the religion sec-

tion speaking of new ways to bring about unity and talk of denominations setting aside their differences and merging together. The Ecumenical Movement, as it has come to be called, is talked about everywhere. And one might think, in light of our passage, that all of this is a very good thing. For after all, the Apostle says our great endeavor must be to keep the unity of the Spirit.

But if you take a closer look at the message of so much of what those in the Ecumenical Movement are saying, you will soon discover that they have missed the most basic and, indeed, the most important aspect of the unity which we are commanded to endeavor to maintain. When you look at the way that is suggested for bringing this unity about, you see that it is a man-produced unity! So often their appeal goes like this—“Unity is our great goal. Therefore, let us set aside our doctrinal differences and stop our arguing and all come together in the name of love.” There are many in the Ecumenical Movement who would go so far as to say the Protestant Reformation was a great mistake. For until that time, they say, all the church was unified under Roman Catholicism. But now the church remains split and divided because a few overly-dogmatic fanatics made too much of doctrine. And on a much smaller scale, let some church or some pastor write an article calling his evangelical brothers back to Scripture’s teaching on a certain issue—and we will not be surprised if he is labeled as schismatic and divisive!

But what is the true nature of the unity which we are instructed to endeavor to keep? It is a unity that is the result of the work of the third member of the Trinity. The unity spoken of here is not brought about by finding the lowest common denominator of that which we can agree upon. It is a living unity produced by the Holy Spirit. It is the result of something that is not external at all, but something that is internal. It is the result of the principle of new life which the Holy Spirit sovereignly plants in the soul of each member of the body of Christ. This is a unity which only a miracle of God can produce. It is the result of God the Holy Spirit coming to a person who was lost and dead in trespasses and sins and suddenly giving him new spiritual life so that he believes on the Lord Jesus and becomes a part of the body of Christ.

This, again, is the exact opposite of what is being encouraged in so many of the appeals for unity today. They say, “Let us come together and work together, and then we will feel our unity.” But Scripture says that the unity starts on the inside and comes first. And once those of like precious faith who have been the objects of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit come together, their unity works itself out in external ways.

Lord willing, next time we shall continue our line of thought and also consider how to go about maintaining the unity which the Holy Spirit has given to us.—PF

PRAY FOR THE SAINTS IN NORTH DAKOTA

DEAR PREACHER, IS THAT “HOLY DEW” PRESENT AFTER YOU PREACH?

By Charles H. Spurgeon

A man who receives the Gospel distinctly from Christ will speak *the Truth in Christ's spirit*. Did you ever hear a man preach the Gospel in a passion? You wonder at my question, yet such a thing has happened. But if you are present on such an occasion, you feel sure that the man did not get his message—or, at any rate, he did not get his manner—from his Master. The other day I saw a man offer a bit of bread to a poor, lean, half-starved dog. The animal did not seem to care for bread, so he turned away and, then, directly, the man was so angry with the creature because he would not have the bread that he threw a stone at it. There is a certain kind of preaching that is just like that—the minister seems to say, “You dogs of sinners, there is the Gospel for you—will you have it? If you do not, I will throw a stone at you!” Well now, neither dogs nor men admire that sort of treatment and, certainly, the Lord Jesus Christ never intended us to deliver His message in that kind of fashion!

There are some, I believe, who preach the Doctrines of Grace very much as a dog of mine acts with his rug. When I go home tonight, he will bring it out and drag it up to my feet just because he wants me to try and take it away from him, that he may growl over it. So have I seen some people preach the Doctrine of Election and other Truths of God like it—as if they wanted some Arminian to try to run away with them, or have a fight over them! Now that is *not* the way which Christ teaches us to preach! He never bids us proclaim the Gospel in such a way that we seem to want to make an Irish fight over it. No, no, no—go direct to Christ for the Truth of God and you will preach it strongly, honestly, openly, positively—and you will always preach it with love.

That is the plan I recommend to you—the system of getting the Gospel fresh from the mouth of Jesus—and then delivering it, as far as we can, in Jesus Christ's tones and in Jesus Christ's spirit. I can assure you, my dear Friends, that we shall never know how Jesus preached till we hear Him speak in our hearts and then endeavor to imitate the tone of that speech which our inward ears have heard. Oh, to preach Christ in a Christly way—to tell of mercy in the spirit of mercy and to preach Divine Grace in a truly gracious way!

Here is the time to say that if you go to Christ for all the Truth of God you preach and if you proclaim it in His way, then you will preach it with what is called “unction.” Do you know what unction is? I do, but I cannot tell you. I can tell when a man has *not* any unction, and I can tell when he has, but I do not know exactly how to define and describe it, except by saying that it is a special anointing from the Spirit of God. There is an old Romish tale of a monk who had been the means of converting great numbers of persons, but, on a certain occasion, he was detained in his journey and could not reach the congregation in time to conduct the service. The devil thought it was a fine opportunity for him to speak to the people, so, putting on the robe of the monk, he went into the pulpit and preached. According to the story, he preached about Hell—a subject with which he was well acquainted—and the hearers listened very attentively. Before he finished his discourse, the holy man appeared and made the devil disclose himself in his proper form. “Get out of here,” he said to Satan, “but why did you dare preach the Truth of God as you were doing when I came in?” “Oh,” replied Satan, “I did not mind preaching the Truth, for there was no unction in it, so I knew that it could not do any hurt to my cause.” It is a curious legend, but there was a great truth at the bottom of it—where there is no unction, it does not matter what we preach, or how we preach it!

One of my friends behind me sometimes says to me, after the service, “I believe that God has been blessing the people, for there has been plenty of dew about.” That is what we need—that holy dew which the Spirit of God so graciously bestows! You may preach to one congregation, but it is all in vain, for there is no dew about. But, at another time, it is sweet preaching and blessed hearing because there is plenty of dew about. And the way to get that dew is by coming straight out of the Master's Presence, with the Master's message ringing in your own ears, to proclaim it as nearly as possible as He has told it to you.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2674, Volume 46—*LEARNING IN PRIVATE WHAT TO PREACH IN PUBLIC*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

SOVEREIGN GRACE OR FREEWILL

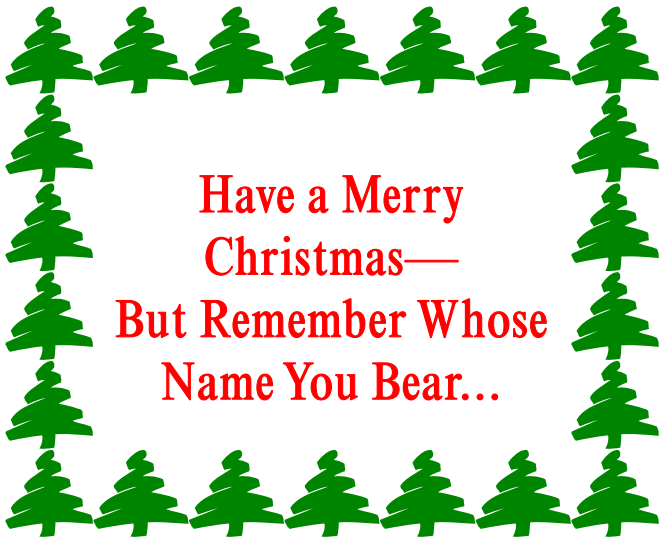
By Rolph Barnard (1904-1969)

It is impossible to preach:

- 1). That man is both totally depraved and partially depraved.
- 2). That election is both conditional and unconditional.
- 3). That regenerating grace is both irresistible and resistible.
- 4). That redemption is both limited and unlimited.
- 5). That perseverance is both certain and uncertain.

Nor can there be a modification of one by the other—it is impossible to blend the two. History records such efforts in the past, but despite the efforts, **Sovereign Grace** and **Free-Willism** will not mix, nor can they walk together in peace, nor can those holding either system force the other to their view.

Gleaned from the Web-Site of Zebulon Baptist Church
Tom Harding, Pastor, 6088 Zebulon Highway, Pikeville, KY 41501
(606) 631-9053 E-Mail: taharding@bellsouth.net
Web-Site: <http://www.sovereign-grace.com/zebulon.htm>



**Have a Merry
Christmas—
But Remember Whose
Name You Bear...**

by Charles H Spurgeon

**“So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, ‘It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.’ Thus Job did regularly.”
(Job 1:5 NKJV).**

What the Patriarch did early in the morning, after the family festivities, it would be well for the Believer to do for himself before he rests tonight. Amid the cheerfulness of household gatherings it is easy to slide into sinfulness and to forget the Name we bear as Christians. It ought not to be so, but it is—that our days of feasting are very seldom days of sanctified enjoyment. Too often and too easily, these holidays degenerate into unholy festivity.

Come, Christian, in what have you sinned today? Have you been forgetful of your high calling? Have you been as others in idle words and loose speech? Then confess the sin, and fly to the Sacrifice. The Sacrifice sanctifies! The precious Blood of the Lamb slain removes the guilt and purges away the defilement of our sins of ignorance and carelessness! This is the best ending of Christmas holidays—to wash anew in the Cleansing Fountain!

Christian, come to this Sacrifice continually—if it is so good during this time of the year, it is good every day. To live at the Altar is the privilege of the royal priesthood—to us, sin, great as it may be, is nevertheless no cause for despair—we may draw near yet again to the sin-atoning Victim—and our conscience is purged from dead works—

Gladly I close this festive day,
Grasping the altar’s hallowed horn;
My slips and faults washed away,
The Lamb has all my trespasses borne.

**DO YOU KNOW CHRIST
BY SEEING HIM IN
HIS WORD?**

A Lesson Learned

By C. H. Spurgeon

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 to him 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 rook 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 for the 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 or Sister 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 to especially press it home upon you, dear Friends, members of this Church of more than 5,000 souls. What can we do unless we 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!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2679, Volume 46—*CHRIST’S INDWELLING WORD*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

O Lord Jesus, I have tried to preach YOU this morning, but I cannot look with Your eyes. You must look on erring ones Yourself. Look, Savior! Look, Sinner! “There is life in a look AT the crucified One,” because there is life in a look FROM the crucified One. May Jesus look and, by His Grace, may the sinner look, too! Amen.—CHS

Pray for grace to be holy

Letters to Mike Gendron of Proclaiming the Gospel:

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

P. D., Ontario, Canada. Writes—I came back into true faith in Christ a little over one year ago when I was still living in Ireland. Your ministry was very helpful to me in getting back into the right stream again. We have recently been attending a Calvary Chapel in Oakville, Ontario, where the pastor was formerly a Roman Catholic and he has a desire to reach out to those ensnared by Catholicism. Praise The Lord! I guess The Lord has me where He wants me most. I enjoyed reading your article on *Global Religion* and you really hit it on the head as far as understanding why Protestants become Roman Catholic. Reading the “early church fathers” was partially true for me, but another thing which drew me was reading Scott Hahn’s, *Rome Sweet Home*, then *Surprised by Truth*. Needless to say, I was drawn by the lure of deception (without realizing it, of course) away from The Word and into the teachings and traditions of men. Never again! Thanks again for your continuance in the work which you and your beloved wife do. I know in eternity it will reap much results.

S.K., Watertown, WI, writes— Thanks so much for your wonderful DVDs, *The Bible Driven Church* and the *Death of Discernment*. We have a new pastor who seems to be bringing in the influence of the emerging church. It so amazes us how the full-time ministry staff and our entire elder board can be so clueless to all the threats pounding at the doors of our church. We’ve met with the pastor and the elders, but they don’t seem to understand the dangerous trends. However, they’ve agreed to review you DVDs. We could never be doing this without the blessings of the Lord and your authoritative research and presentation. Their decision will be a directive to us as to whether it is time to search for a new church.

J.H., Cadillac, MI, writes—I thank God for everyone associated with this ministry. Growing up Catholic left me very self-righteous. I thought I was OK with God because I had been baptized and brought up in the church. I have many family members still in this false church and it breaks my heart. I’m thankful for your ministry that has so many good resources to reach out to Catholics. Keep unashamedly proclaiming the true Gospel and the false teachings of Rome! God Bless you! Standing with you in contending for the Gospel.

R.R., Internet, writes—What faith would be closer to the truth? One that has been in existence since the time of Christ or one that sprung up in defiance only a few hundred years ago? Should a person believe in a faith that has survived the test of time over 2000 years, or one that keeps reinventing itself because of the limitations of it’s flawed doctrine? Should one believe in a faith that has had an unbroken line of Church leaders since the time of Christ, leaders that were actually instructed by Christ, or a faith that is blindly led by no one in particular, that is causing divisions and new branches of faith? St. Peter’s Basilica and the Vatican are built where Peter was killed and buried. What more proof does anyone need? I would no longer risk my eternal soul on being too embarrassed to admit I was wrong. There is nothing in the Catechism of the Catholic Church that contradicts anything in the scriptures. That is why I, who was raised a Baptist, converted to Mormonism, eventually found the truth in the one true Church. It was always there, since the time of Christ!

Brother Mike responds—You are believing the claims and assertions of the Roman Catholic Church which stand in direct opposition to Scripture and the verifiable *facts of history*. The Roman Catholic

Church was NOT the only representation of Christianity on earth prior to the Reformation. Martin Luther said, “We are not the first to declare the papacy to be the kingdom of Antichrist, since for many years before us so many and such great men, whose number is large and whose memory is eternal, have undertaken to express the same thing so clearly and plainly.” (Plass, *What Luther Says*, Vol. 1, 36). One thousand years before the Reformation there were the Waldenses, Vaudois, Albigenses and other remnants of true Christians who refused to bow their knees to the papacy or believe its false gospel. Millions of true Believers have always existed and have often been brutally persecuted, tortured and murdered by Vatican forces. During the Inquisition, which began in the 12th Century and continued for over 600 years, Catholic popes declared war on the saints. Each pope attempted to create tortures that would inflict more excruciating pain than their predecessors. Christians who refused to convert to Catholicism screamed with pain as Vatican loyalists fulfilled a prophecy of Jesus—“Whoever kills you will think that he offers God service” (John 16:2). I wonder how many Catholics today would be utterly ashamed to be called “Catholic” if they knew of the horrific, inhumane tortures that were inflicted upon Christians? Red hot pincers were used to tear off flesh and tear out fingernails. Thumbscrews were used to crush fingers and toes, acid was poured on victims, eyes were gouged out by irons, alcohol was poured on the heads of victims and set on fire, water was poured down the victims’ throat with a knotted cloth and the cloth was then jerked out tearing up the victims bowels. There were other terrifying tortures so nauseating and repulsive that I cannot bear to write them. Does this brutality conform to the Words of Jesus Christ, “Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword” (Matt 26:52)? May God grant you repentance leading to a knowledge of the Truth of God.

Anonymous, Internet, writes—Where do you people get your nerve advocating anti-catholic bigotry? If it wasn’t for the Catholic church you wouldn’t even have the Bible to read. Yes I am a Catholic and it is the true church established by Jesus—not the hundreds of different Protestant sects that evolved out of disunity with their own competing doctrines. Look at the reading of the early church fathers and you will see how they are in conformity with Christ’s teaching and the doctrines of the Catholic church. Read the Gospel and new testament further and you will see many passages that support catholic beliefs, such as the Eucharist and prayers for the dead in the book of Maccabees. If the early Christians didn’t believe prayers were needed for the dead, why are there paintings in the catacombs showing prayers are offered for them? Do you really believe people are either so worthy of Heaven or Hell’s punishment that there is no middle ground such as purgatory? We do not worship Mary but we ask her to intercede for us. Don’t you think Christ would want us to honor His mother? You wouldn’t dare be so blatant against other religions such as the Jews who have renounced Christ for over 2000 years. You wouldn’t say anything against radical Muslims. You would be afraid they would come after you and have your head on a platter, you jerks.

Pray for God’s Elect in Prisons

“The Lord Is My Shepherd”—Psalm 23

1: The Identity of This Shepherd

By Daniel E. Parks

Pastor, Redeemer Baptist Church
2801 Cleveland Boulevard, Louisville, KY 40206

The present Psalm is in the middle of a trilogy. Psalm 22 presents Christ as the Suffering Savior, forsaken by God when He died for His people. Psalm 23 presents Christ as the Supplying Shepherd, meeting all the needs of His people. Psalm 24 presents Christ as the Supreme Sovereign, ruling over His people.

Let us here learn a most valuable lesson—None can truly claim, “The LORD is my Shepherd,” but those who acknowledge Christ as both their Savior and their King.

Men universally recognize this Shepherd-Psalm as a most beautiful piece of literature. But how few of them truly know the Shepherd of this Psalm enough to faithfully confess, “The Lord Jesus Christ is my Shepherd”!

What kind of Shepherd is Jesus Christ?

I. Christ is the Divine Shepherd (Psa 23:1). We may read this text as “Jesus Christ is my Shepherd” because Christ is Jehovah! The Son of God is co-equal and co-eternal with Jehovah the Father because He is eternally “in the form of God” and “equal with God” (Phil 2:6). He therefore declares “that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him” (John 5:23). If Jehovah is your Shepherd, Christ is your Shepherd.

The deity of Christ the Shepherd is also declared by Paul the Apostle when he informs us that the flock of Jehovah, “the church of God,” was “purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). It was Jehovah the Son, not Jehovah the Father, who shed His blood for the purchase of God’s sheep.

II. Christ is the Israelites’ Shepherd (Psa 80:1). Asaph the Psalmist identifies Christ as such when he prays, “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock” (cp. 78:71). The Father identified Christ as such when He declared Christ would be born in order to “shepherd My people Israel” (Matt 2:6), and that “He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the LORD” (Micah 5:2, 4). And Christ declared, “I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt 15:24).

This Israel is the “Israel of God,” comprised of all who have forsaken boasting in their flesh and now boast in Christ their Shepherd alone and walk according to His rule (Gal 6:14-16). Those who do not believe are not His sheep (John 10:26). The Shepherd of Israel has forsaken the self-righteous “sheep” who see no need of repentance in order to seek and find His true sheep and bring them into His fold (Luke 15:1-7). He will forever sanctify Israel, His flock, from all others when at the Final Judgment, “He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats” (Matt 25:32ff). The Shepherd of Israel will then usher His sheep into eternal Glory, while consigning all others to the eternal torment they deserve. On which hand of the Shepherd of Israel will you be found on that day?

This Shepherd of Israel is an abomination to those in false religions (Gen 46:34; cp. Rev 11:8).

III. Christ is the “David” Shepherd (Ezek 34:23). Jehovah prophesied of His flock, “I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—My servant David. He shall feed them and be their

shepherd.” When David was a young man, the Lord said to him, “You shall shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel” (2 Sam 5:2). David was in this regard a type of Christ the Shepherd-King par excellence. As surely as John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, was the prophesied Elijah the Prophet to all the discerning (Mal 4:5f with Matt 11:11-14; 17:10-13), so is Christ the prophesied David the shepherd. Jehovah says of such discerners, “David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd...and My servant David shall be their prince forever” (Ezek 37:24).

IV. Christ is the ideal Shepherd (John 10:11, 14). Christ sets forth this Truth of God by declaring, “I am the *good* shepherd.” The Greek word here translated “good” (*kalos*) is not used of something that is good *comparatively*, as when we compare things that are “good, better, best.” Rather, it is used of that which is good *intrinsically*, as when we speak of that which is the *ideal*.

The distinguishing characteristic of Christ as the ideal Shepherd is this—“The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” This is in contrast to three other sorts of persons—thieves, hirelings and false shepherds. As for the first—“The *thief* does not come except to steal [or proselytize], and to kill [or martyr], and to destroy [for personal gain]. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (v 10). As for the second—“But a *hireling*, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees. And the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep” (vv 12f; cp. “the worthless shepherd” of Zech 11:17; contrast Christ in Psa 23; also Num 27:15-17; Isa 40:11; Ezek 34:12; Micah 7:14). As for the third—*false shepherds* require their sheep to die for them (as with Muslim suicide-terrorists, and followers of Jim Jones-types).

V. Christ is the only Shepherd. (John 10:16). While Christ tended His flock during the days of His Incarnation, He looked down through the ages and then declared, “And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring...and there will be one flock and one shepherd.” He thereby teaches us that all the people of God throughout all the ages comprise but one flock (which is the Church of God), and that He is their only Shepherd. Christ has therefore been confessed as the Shepherd of the Church by Patriarchs (Gen 49:24), Psalmists (Psa 23; 28:9; 78:71; 80:1; Eccl 12:1), Prophets (Isa 40:1; Jer 31:10; Ezek 34:12; Micah 7:14; Zech 13:7), and Apostles (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4).

VI. Christ is the eternal Shepherd This Truth results from the preceding point. While false religions follow a succession of shepherds who one by one die and must be replaced (as do Romanists), or follow a shepherd now occupying a grave (as do Muslims), Christ the Shepherd has no successor and always lives to care for His flock. Furthermore, He says of His sheep, “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:28).

VII. Christ is the Great Shepherd (Heb 13:20). More precisely,

(See *My Shepherd* on page 13)

My Shepherd

(Continued from page 12)

He is “our Lord Jesus... *that* great Shepherd of the sheep”—not merely a great shepherd. The Greek word translated “great” (*me-gas*) is predicated of rank—as in “our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

Jesus Christ is “that great Shepherd of the sheep” for three reasons set forth in the context. First, because of what God has done for Him—“the God of peace...brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead”—thereby exalting Him over all things (Phil 2:9-11). Second, because of what God is doing through Him—“may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ.” Third, because of what God will require be given to Him—“to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

VIII. Christ is the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4). As we have already observed, Christ has but “one flock” (John 10:16), “the Church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). And Christ is its only Shepherd, the “Shepherd and Overseer of your souls” (1 Peter 2:25). But Christ has placed many *under*-shepherds in His Church (Eph 4:11-16)—the Greek word for *shepherds* being translated “pastors” in v 11). Each of these is exhorted to “Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:2f). They who faithfully do so are promised that “when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away” (v 4).

IX. Christ is the Lamb-Shepherd (Rev 7:17)—“for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters.” Here is set forth both the Divine and the Human natures in the one Person of Jesus Christ. His *Divinity* is set forth in His identity as the “Shepherd,” reminding us that “Jehovah is my Shepherd” (Psa 23:1). His *Humanity* is set forth in His identity as the “Lamb,” by which designation He is identified with the rest of His flock. As *Shepherd*, He provides for all the needs of His flock. As *Lamb*, He knows experientially what those needs are. He has partaken of their flesh and blood in His Incarnation, thereby experiencing all their needs and enduring all their temptations (Heb 2:14-18).

(To be continued)

WORSHIP GOD WITH REVERENCE AND FEAR

“Though God has taken His redeemed into intimate nearness to Himself, yet He requires that they always retain a due apprehension of the majesty of His Person, the holiness of His Nature, the severity of His justice, and the ardent jealousy of His *worship*.”—
A.W. Pink

SPURGEON SPEAKS CANDIDLY ON ROMAN CATHOLICISM

“The Roman Catholic will tell you, when he converses with you, that he is quite content with his religion, but I cannot believe it. There may be times when he is so imposed upon as to believe that in his church there is Infallible salvation and that, by attention to ceremonies as absurd and wicked as those of idolaters, he shall obtain the favor of the Lord his God. But there are hours when Romanists, especially in this country, must tremble for the stability of their religion! There are times when they must be a little shaken!

Surely there is enough of moral dignity and conscience in most men to teach them that a rotten rag cannot have any saving virtue about it! Surely the man who has kissed the hand of the Pope must feel everything within him that is noble recoil from the act! There ought to be enough humanity in man to rise above that groveling system which has sought to bring human nature lower than the dregs of the brute creation!

I cannot suppose that a man who has a soul—a soul whose high aspirations are among the best proofs of its immortality—can be content with that poor piece of outside show which we call Popery! No, in that case, also, man “feeds on ashes.” He is not satisfied with his religion, although he may pretend to be.”—1900, Sermon #2686

**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).**

**PRAY FOR GRACE
TO BE USED
BY OUR LORD**

For HIS Glory
Prison Ministry
Emmett and Ann O'Donnell
P.O. Box 291301
Kerrville, TX 78029-1301

58c
Postage
USA



Pray for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In This Issue...

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

You are told by one person that such-and-such a system of theology is based upon the most sound principles of reason. You are told by another that the old doctrines which you have believed are not consistent with these advanced times.

You will now and then be met by smart young gentlemen who will tell you that to be what is called a Calvinist is to be a long way behind this progressive age, "for you know," they say, "that intellectual preachers are rising up, and that it would be well if you would become a little more intellectual in the matter of preaching and hearing."

When such a remark as that is made to any one of you, I beseech you to give this answer, "I know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. If you can tell me more about Christ than I know, I will thank you. If you can instruct me as to how I may become more like Christ, how I may live nearer in fellowship with Him, how my faith in Him may become stronger and my belief in His holy Gospel may become more firm, then I will thank you.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED

*"For I determined not to know anything among you
except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."
1 Corinthians 2:2.*

By Charles H. Spurgeon

But if you have nothing to tell me except some intellectual lore which you have with great pains accumulated, I will tell you that although it may be a very good thing for you to preach, and for others who are intellectual to hear, I do not belong to your class, nor do I wish to belong to it—I belong to that sect spoken against everywhere, who after the way that men call heresy worship the Lord God of their fathers—believing all things that are written in the Law and in the Prophets.

I belong to a race of people who believe that it is not the pride of intellect, nor the pomp of knowledge that can ever teach men spiritual things. I belong to those who think that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God has ordained strength, and I do not

believe that out of your mouth God has ordained any strength at all.

I belong to the men who like to sit, with Mary, at the feet of Jesus, and to receive just what Christ said, as Christ said it, and because Christ said it. I want no truth but what He says is the Truth of God, and no other ground for believing it but that He says it, and no better proof that it is true than that I feel and know it to be true as applied to my own heart."

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2673, Volume 46—*CHRIST CRUCIFIED*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

REMEMBER
THE
CESSPOOL
FROM
WHICH
GOD
RESCUED
YOU?