

FOR HIS GLORY

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The gospel is its own sufficient witness. Somebody wrote a book and wished to present it to old George the Third. Farmer George asked, "What's the book about, sir?" "Sire, it is an apology for the Bible." "What?" said George, "What? Apology for the Bible? Apology for the Bible? Never heard of such a thing! Don't want your book, sir! Apology for the Bible, indeed!" Quite right, King George! Surely we do not need any apologies for the gospel—it is its own witness. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Jesus Christ suffered, bled and died, bearing human sin in Himself, and whoever believes in Him shall be immediately forgiven, immediately renewed in his heart by the Holy Spirit and made a new creature in Christ! Why, this is evidently a divine message! "Look and live." Such a gospel never was invented by men, for no man likes it well enough to invent it, nor even to accept it after it is invented till God renews his heart! Let it sound forth that Jesus, mighty to save, invites



DOES GOD HONOR MEN?

By Charles H. Spurgeon

*"Those who honor Me
I will honor."
1 Samuel 2:30*

Does God honor men? He promises to do so! Compared with the honor which the Lord is able to give, there is no honor which is worth naming in the same day. When God honors a man, the glory is his glory, indeed. One of the French kings gave to a conquering general some £600 a year, or thereabouts, for a wonderful deed of prowess, but the soldier told the king that he would have preferred the gold cross. I do not think I should have had such preference for a bauble, but honor is a precious commodity. To get honor from God is very different from getting it from a king. It was said of Alexander that of two nobles who had served him well, he gave to one 10,000 talents and to the other a kiss—and he that had the money envied him who received the kiss! One kiss from the mouth of God would outweigh kingdoms! Honor from God—favor from God—this is a high reward which cannot be weighed against 10,000 worlds and all

the glory thereof! "Those who honor Me I will honor."

Suppose that a man is a preacher and *in his preaching* he seeks to glorify God only, and sets forth the finished work of Jesus and cries, earnestly, "Behold the Lamb of God," God will honor him. He shall not labor in vain, or spend his strength for nothing.

Suppose another man is living *in the midst of his family*, praying for the conversion of his children, setting them a holy example, chiding them for their faults and encouraging them in all good things? Shall he be without a blessing? No! "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Some of us know the blessing of honoring God in our families. Where there is family prayer, where God is set before the young as the chief end of their being, God will surely honor such parents by giving them a believing household.

The man who honors God shall be honored *in his own heart* by peace of conscience; (See "Those Who..." on page 2)

HOW MAN MAY HONOR GOD

By Charles H. Spurgeon

*"...and those who despise Me shall
be lightly esteemed."
1 Samuel 2:30*

We honor God in our daily life *when we confess Him*. It is comparatively a small matter to confess Christ before the church, though I have known some of you rather frightened of doing that. Some are almost afraid to come and talk to me about their own salvation. If anybody is afraid of *me*, he must be a great goose, I am sure, for there is nothing in me that should frighten anybody! I am too glad and too delighted to see anybody about his soul to be frightful to anyone. If you go to see any of the elders, you will find them still more tender. At any rate, do not be afraid of *them*.

The real tug of war is to confess Christ before the world. For the merchant, for instance, to stand up for that which is good and right when he is in a web of false trading and surrounded by unscrupulous dealers—this is honoring the Lord.

(See *How Man* on page 3)

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“Those who honor Me I will honor.”

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honored in his own spirit by the conviction that it must be wisdom to be right and true and honest—and that it can never be, under any circumstances, right to do wrong, or wise to break a divine command. The highest policy a man can pursue, if he must pursue policy at all, is never to deviate from the strict path of right. A straight line is the shortest distance between any two places and the shortest way to true happiness and prosperity is to do right though the heavens should fall.

Such a man honoring his God among his brethren shall be honored by God *in the church*. If he has glorified God in the church by his earnestness and zeal and holy living, his brethren shall mark him and esteem him. His godliness shall give him weight and influence. And though he may always prefer to take the lowest place, yet shall he be had in honor of them that sit at meals with him.

And *in the world* it shall be the same. I do not believe that a man truly serves God without, in the long run, winning the esteem of his fellow citizens. They burned such men of old, but when they burned them, they still honored them, for all over this nation, when Popery was in its prime, and saints were persecuted, the country people sat at their firesides and they talked of holy Master Taylor, or godly old Latimer who had suffered for Christ’s sake! Though they hardly dared speak, for fear some spy would hear, yet they said what a shame it was, and they muttered to one another what a detestable religion that must be which killed the saints of God! This kind of feeling went through all the tradesmen of London, and even affected the apprentices and serving-men.

In country towns and villages everybody said, “What a horrible system this must be which burns our pastors for preaching the gospel!” Then, all of a sudden, they shouted, “Down with it!” The fire, long smothered, at last broke out, and again they said of Popery, “Down with it!” Away went crucifixes and rosaries, and priest; the mass and the mass-makers all went packing, as they had a right to do, for they never brought good to England or to any other land which harbored them! Indignation burned quietly in the land and though, for years, it scarcely appeared, at last it found vent—and that thing was done for which it were worthwhile for all of us to die, and 10,000 more—Popery went down and the gospel went up! The gospel of Christ was proclaimed and the Bible was unchained that every man might read it! Brothers and Sisters, you will be honored in your turn as those men are honored today if, when the worst comes to the worst, you are found faithful as they were!

Therefore stand to your guns! Stand to your guns if you die there, for the Lord is coming! I see the banner, I mark the white horse, I hear the Captain’s voice. The trumpet rings out, “Behold, He comes!” Honored shall that man be who stands with loins girt in his place in the battle, in the day when the Captain is saluted as Conqueror all along the line!

What will become of the sneaking coward in the day of Christ’s appearing? Where will the fearful stand, who did not dare to wear the name of Christ for fear of being laughed at? Where will the false-hearted be when the Lord Jesus flames forth in His majesty? Then shall they ask the rocks to cover them, and the mountains to fall upon them to hide them from His face! Cowards that they were, they shall not know where to fly!

Oh come, let us seek our Savior’s face, now, by humble prayer and holy faith! Let us bow before the redeeming Lord and yield ourselves to Him, and then from this day forward be this our one objective—to crown Him with many crowns who left His crown for us, and to honor God who in infinite mercy has delivered us from going down into the pit of hell! How I wish I might stir some young heart to give itself up to Christ tonight! How I wish I might win some old heart for my Lord! Oh, ship-mate, you have had that black pirate flag flying at the masthead long enough. Down with it, now, and sail under the blood-red cross for Christ and for God, tonight! Let all the old cargo be turned out, and the new be taken in. May the Lord make a clean sweep of everything that is displeasing to Him, and then come on board and take the helm and steer you till He brings you to the port of everlasting peace!

“Who is on the Lord’s side?” Who, that has not been on His side, will enlist tonight? How is the enlisting to be managed? It is to be done as all enlisting is done. In our army, they enlist a man by making him give a shilling. You are not enlisted by

NOTABLE QUOTES OF CHARLES H. Spurgeon

“All the truths of God taken in connection with the cross are greatly enhanced in value! Holy Scripture itself becomes dearer to a sevenfold degree when we see that it comes to us as the redeemed of the Lord—and bears upon its every page marks of those dear hands which were nailed to the tree for us.” —1887, Sermon #1987

“*Comfort the feeble-minded. Support the weak.*” In doing this, you shall, yourselves, be comforted and supported. Hands that now hang down will, by God’s grace, be lifted up if they are used to raise others from the ground. Try this prescription, you that are yourselves cast down! It is recommended by the preacher.”—1891, Sermon #2183

“One might have thought, from what we have seen of late, that orders had come from headquarters that the soldiers were to lay down the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and take to lighter weapons. Entertainments, amusements, dramas and sing-songs are now used to do what they say the gospel has failed to achieve! Is it not sadly so?”—1891, Sermon #2201

HOW MAN MAY HONOR GOD

(Continued from page 1)

For the workman in the shop, when the men are making fun of every holy thing, to say, “Well, now, I believe in all that and if you want to laugh at anybody you may laugh at me, for I am on the Lord’s side”—this is honoring God! But the tendency is to sneak away and remain quite quiet. Christ seems to have nobody to speak up for Him! Is it really so? Is that dark hour being repeated, “Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled”? Everybody will speak up for the *devil*. You can hear them in the street far into the night—but as to Christ, how many are there to give Him a good word in this time of rebuke? The bulk of religious professors are cowards! Let it not be so with you! Honor God, dearly Beloved, by making a confession of Christ even though it may involve you in ridicule. Be all the more decidedly gracious because it will bring you into ill odor. Be firm for that which is right, not wishing to provoke opposition, but being quite able to bear it if it must be borne. Be men! Men are scarce creatures nowadays—men, I mean, who set their faces like a flint and are not to be moved from their integrity and their love to Christ, come what may. Honor God daily by a holy manliness.

Sometimes you can honor Christ by *some distinct service that you can do for Him*, or by some special obedience to His will. I know times where there are great temptations put in the way of men. Now, mind that you honor God at such times by an unhesitating allegiance. There is wealth, apparently, to be had for the putting out of your hand—only you could not do it with a clean conscience. Now, honor God and be bravely poor rather than be shamefully rich! “Get you behind me, Satan,” must be ready in the hour of trial. You have an opportunity of making a great change in your position in life, but, at the same time, you would be deprived of opportunities of usefulness, both of giving and of getting good—then let your choice be made promptly.

I have always admired the example of the pious Jew who was told that a certain city on the Continent would excellently suit his business. “But,” he asked, “is there a synagogue there?” And when they said that there was no synagogue, he preferred to stay in another place so that he might worship God, though he would do less business. I do not know that this is often the case among Jews, any more than it is among Gentiles and, I am sorry to say that I know many Gentiles to whom God’s worship is no consideration *whatever*—they would go to the bottomless pit if they could make large profits! It does not matter where they go, or what becomes of them, so long as gain can warm the palms of their hands. They trample on the name of God and upon Christ’s cross, as the Dutch are said to have done in Japan, in order that they may conduct their business. This spirit is from beneath! God save us from it! Say to yourself, young man, in the very beginning of life, “I will serve God. If I can make money, very well. But my first objective is to honor God. If I can gain a competence; if I can have sufficient to retire upon in my old age, I will be very thankful. But I am going to do right and to serve God as long as I live, come wealth or come poverty, come honor or come shame.” You are the man that God will honor—I am sure of it.

Then you can honor God *with your substance* when He gives it to you. I will not say much about this, but all through Scripture it is laid down as one mark of a child of God that he holds what he has as a steward and that he uses it for the promotion of the kingdom of God and the helping of the poor and the needy. Wherever he is, he does not seek substance merely to aggrandize himself, but with all his getting, he desires to get a liberal heart, without which the richest man is still a pauper. He longs to be useful to the cause and the kingdom of Christ. He believes in the joy of dedicating his tithe and more unto the Lord. He has heard a voice in his ears, saying, “Honor the Lord with your substance, and with the first fruits of all your increase: so shall your barns be filled with plenty, and your presses shall burst out with new wine.”

In a word, the man that really honors God seeks *to praise Him*. He wishes to make the Lord’s name great throughout all the world. His main objective in living is that he may make Jesus known—that he may win more hearts to God, the blessed

NOTABLE QUOTES OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“It is not only a duty, but a recreation to be grateful! I do not know any emotion which can give greater joy than that of thankfulness to the Most High.”—1891, Sermon #2187

“Do you want to give God something that is sure to please Him? You need not build a church of matchless architecture—I do not know that God cares much about stones and wood. You need not wait till you will have amassed money to endow a row of almshouses. It is well to bless the poor, but Jesus said that one who gave two mites, which made a farthing, gave more than all the rich men who cast in of their wealth into the treasury. What would God my Father like me to give? He answers, “My son, give Me your *heart*.” He will be pleased with that, for He Himself seeks the gift!”—1887, Sermon #1995

“The first motion towards reconciliation is never from the sinner, but always from God. The sinner does not cry, ‘O Lord, my God, permit me to return,’ but the Lord, Himself, who watches the wandering one and sees him falling to his ruin, cries out, in the freeness of His grace, ‘O Israel, return!’”—1891, Sermon #2192

A Study of Ephesians**INSTRUCTORS OF ANGELS**

In the third chapter of Ephesians, Paul is setting before us several of the great privileges that were given to him when he was called by the Lord Jesus to be an apostle. Today we come to yet one more of those privileges, found in verses 9-11—“And to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

What Paul is telling us here is that not only is he called to teach others the gospel, but that the whole church is called to do so. Furthermore, the church is not to teach the gospel just to men, but that those in the church are instructors of angels as well. In other words, part of the reason for which Paul was called to be a preacher of the mysteries of Christ is to give the whole church a part in that ministry by teaching angels about the manifold wisdom of God. Let us begin to look together at how this wonderful part of the work of the church unfolds.

We first note the intended audience of the gospel. Paul states that God made him a minister of the gospel in order to “make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God.” Even though Paul was called primarily as the apostle to the Gentiles, his ministry was in no way limited to the Gentiles. He always had a burden for his fellow Jews, and as he traveled to new places, he would often preach the gospel to the Jews in the synagogue before preaching to anyone else. But in the context here, I think Paul means that through his ministry to the church, even the angels would come to see the manifold wisdom of God. Maybe this is a new thought for us—that the preaching and living of the gospel is teaching angels as well as people. We shall return to this subject later.

The word, “fellowship,” in our verse should probably be better translated, “plan.” The gospel is part of God’s eternal plan. It is not an afterthought of God. It is important for us to understand the sovereignty of God’s purposes. To listen to many today, one would get the idea that God is at the mercy of the whims of men and nations, and has to adjust His plans accordingly. Nothing could be further from the truth, according to the Scriptures! What Paul tells us here is that God had intended to provide the gospel from all eternity; that He would create the universe, and all that is in it; that He would permit man to fall into sin, and that He would save a people out of sin through Jesus Christ were all in His mind and part of His plan from all eternity!

This is more than an academic point, dear people. There is extraordinary comfort for us. Things are not out of God’s control. God is not, as it were, biting His fingernails trying to figure out how He will handle this situation that has arisen here, and that problem in that country over there. He has never once had to improvise or modify His plan. Paul told us in the first section of his letter to the Ephesians that God “works all things according to the counsel of His will.” His plan is the solid rock which was eternally made, and is right now being perfectly worked out.

There is another phrase in the 9th verse which also emphasizes this same point of God’s sovereignty over all, where God is described as the One “who created all things through Jesus Christ.” Paul mentions God as the Creator to remind us that this whole world is His and not man’s. Modern man tries to divorce the universe from God; he tries to make it out to be a grand accident. But, says Paul, the reason why God is working out His plan and purpose in this world is that **IT ALL BELONGS TO HIM!** It is His to do with as He pleases!

Paul here tells us something about the purpose of the gospel when he says that it was his calling “to make all see,” or, as the New American Standard Bible translates, “to bring to light.” This means that there is more to making the gospel known than giving information. The word used here does not mean to instruct, but rather to dispel darkness. The greatest problem of our world is not its ignorance of the gospel, though that is very serious, but the darkness which holds captive the minds of men. Paul explains this in 2 Corinthians 4:4, when he says of unbelievers, “whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”

There are many who do not believe the gospel and yet can give the facts of the gospel better than some who *do* believe it. Their problem is not one of knowledge—it is one of enlightenment. Paul describes the natural man earlier in this letter as “having no hope and without God in the world.” That is darkness! I believe that Paul is here saying that the gospel is the **ONLY** way to dispel the darkness. As Jesus Himself put it in John 8:12—“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” The illumination of men’s minds does not come from politicians or philosophers or universi-

NOTABLE QUOTES OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“We never go an inch towards heaven in any other power than that of the Holy Spirit. We do not even stand fast and remain steadfast except as we are upheld by the Holy Spirit.”—1891, Sermon #2200

“Delayed obedience is disobedience...Neglect of a standing command must grow very grievous if it is persisted in for years. In proportion as the conscience becomes callous upon the subject, the guilt becomes the more provoking to the Lord!”
—1890, Sermon #2195

BROTHER SPURGEON PREACHED CHRIST CRUCIFIED—

The remembrance of the death of Christ must be *a constant remembrance*. The Lord's Supper was meant to be a frequent feast of fellowship. It is a grievous mistake of the church when the communion is held but once in the year, or once in a quarter of a year—and I cannot remember any Scripture which justifies once in the month. I should not feel satisfied without breaking bread on every Lord's Day. It has come to me even more often than once a week, for it has been my delight to break bread with many a little company of Christian friends. Whenever this Supper is celebrated, we declare that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." We cannot think of that death too often! Never was man blamed in heaven for preaching Christ too much, no, not even on earth to the sons of God was the cross ever too much spoken of!

Outsiders may say, "This man harps only upon one string." Do you wonder? The carnal mind is enmity against God, and it especially shows its hatred by railing at the cross. Saintly ones find here, in the perpetual monotony of the cross, a greater variety than in all other doctrines put together. Preach Christ, and Christ, and Christ, and Christ, and nothing else but Christ—and opened ears shall find in your ministry a wondrous harmony of linked sweetnesses, and a charming perfectness of all manner of delicious voices! All good things lie within the compass of the cross—its outstretched arms overshadow the whole world of thought—from the east even unto the west it sheds a hallowed influence. Meanwhile, its foot is planted deep in the eternal mysteries and its top pierces all earth-born clouds, and rises to the throne of the Most High. Christ is lifted up upon the cross that He may draw all men unto Him, and if we desire to draw them, this must be our magnet.

Beloved, the precious blood of Christ should be had by us *in vivid remembrance*. There is something to me most homely about that cup filled with the fruit of the vine. The bread of the Supper is the bread of our common meal, and the wine is the usual attendant of feasts. That same pure blood of the grape which is set on our sacramental table I drink with my friends. Look at those ruby, ruddy drops, suggesting your Lord's own blood. *I had not dared to invent the symbol, nor might any man of mortal mold have ventured on such a thing, lest he should seem to bring that august death down to our lowly level!* But in infinite condescension Jesus Himself chooses the symbol, and while by its materialism He sets forth the reality of the sacrifice, by its commonness He shows how freely we may partake of it! He would not have us know Him after the flesh, and forget the spiritual nature of His grief, and yet He would have us know that He was in a real body when He bled—and that He died a real death and became most truly fit for burial, and therefore He symbolizes His blood, not by some airy fancy, or mystic sign—but by common wine in the cup! Thus would He reach us by our eyes and by our taste, using two gates of our nature which lead up to the castle of the heart, but are not often the King's roadway thereto. O blessed Master, do You arrange to teach us so forcibly? Then let us be impressed with the reality of the lesson, and never treat Your passion as a thing of sentiment, nor make it a myth, nor view it as a dream of poetry. You shall be in death most real to us, even as is that cup of which we drink.

The dear memorials of our Lord's blood-shedding are intended for *a personal remembrance*. There is no Lord's Supper except as the wine touches the lips and is received into the communicant's own self. All must partake. He says, "Drink you all of it." You cannot take the Lord's Supper by deputy or representative—you must each of you approach the table and personally eat and drink. Beloved, we *must* come into personal contact with the death of Christ. This is essential. We must, each one, say, "He loved me and gave Himself for *me*." *In His blood you must be personally washed. By His blood you must be personally reconciled to God. Through His blood you must personally have access to God, and by His blood you must personally overcome the enemy of your souls. As the Israelite's own door must be smeared with the blood of the Paschal lamb, so must you individually partake of the true sacrifice and know, each one for himself, the power of His redemption.*

As it is personal, it is a charming fact that it is *a happy remembrance*. Our remembrance of Christ is chastened with repentance, but it is also perfumed with faith. The Lord's Supper is no funeral meal, but a festival! Most fitly do we begin it with the giving of thanks, and close it with a hymn. It is called by many the "Eucharist," or the giving of thanks. It is not a fast, but a feast. My happiest moments are spent with the King at His table when His banner over me is love. The death of Christ is a well-spring of solemn joy. Before our great sacrifice died, the best token of His death was the blood of bulls and of goats. See how the victims writhe in death! The sacrificial knife does terrible work at the foot of the altar. It is hard to stand by and see the creatures bleed. After our Lord's death was over, the blood of animals was not the type, but the blood of the *grape*. That which was terrible in prospect is joyous in remembrance! That which was blood in the shedding is wine in the receiving! It came from Him with a wound, but it comes to us with a blessing! His blood is our song in the house of our pilgrimage, and it shall add the best

PRAY DAILY FOR YOUR PASTOR'S HOLINESS.

Pray for divine grace to be *nothing*,
so that Jesus may be all in your life.

**PRAY DAILY FOR GOD'S ELECT IN PRISONS.
PRAY FOR THEIR SPOUSES AND CHILDREN.**

PRAY DAILY FOR MT. ZION AND

Come and drink, sinner. God wills it!

By Charles H. Spurgeon

*“So then, it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.”
Romans 9:16.*

“Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

Once more, and let me have the ear of the anxious yet again. It appears that when you have a willingness to come to Christ, there is a special promise for you. You know my dear hearers that we are not accustomed in this house of prayer to preach only one side of the truths of God, but we try, if we can, to preach it all. There are some brethren with small heads, who, when they have heard a strong doctrinal sermon, grow into hyper-Calvinists, and then when we preach an inviting sermon to poor sinners, they cannot understand it, and say it is a “Yes and No” gospel.

Believe me, it is not a “Yes and no,” but “Yes and yes!” We give our “Yes” to all the truths of God, and our “No,” we give to no doctrine of God. Can a sinner be saved when he wills to come to Christ? *YES*. And if he does come, does he come because *God brings him*? *YES!* We have no nays in our theology for any revealed truth of God! We do not shut the door on one word and open it to another. Those that do that are the “Yes and No” people who have a “No” to the poor sinner, when they profess to preach the gospel!

As soon as a man has any willingness *given to him*, he has a special promise. Before he had that willingness he had an invitation. Before he had any willingness, it was his *duty* to believe in Christ, for it is not man’s condition that gives him a *right* to believe. Men are to believe in *obedience* to God’s command! God commands *all men* everywhere to repent, and this is His great command, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.” “This is the commandment that you believe in Jesus Christ whom He has sent.”

Hence, your right and your duty to believe; but once you have got the willingness, then you have a special promise—“Whoever will, let him come.” That is a sort of extraordinary invitation. I think this is the utterance of the special call.

You know how John Bunyan describes the special call in words to this effect—“The hen goes clucking about the farm yard all day long; that is the *general* call of the gospel; but she sees a hawk up in the sky, and she gives a sharp cry for her little ones to come and hide under her wings; that is the *special* call; they come and are safe.” My text is a special call to some of you. Poor soul, are you willing to be saved? “O sir, willing? Willing indeed! I cannot use that word. I would give all I have if I might but be saved.” Do you mean you would give it all in order to *purchase* it? “Oh no, sir, I do not mean *that*. I know I cannot purchase it. I know it is God’s gift, but still, if I could but be saved, I would ask nothing else—*Give me Christ, or else I die!*”

Why, then, the Lord speaks to you this morning! To you, if not to any other man in the chapel, He speaks to you and says—“Whoever will, let him come.” You cannot say this does not mean you! When we give the general invitation, you may exempt yourself perhaps in some way or other, but you cannot now! You are willing, then come and take the water of life freely!

“Had not I better pray?” It does not say so; it says, take the water of life. “But had not I better go home and get better?” No, take the water of life, and take the water of life *now!* You are standing by the fountain outside, and the water is flowing, and you are willing to drink; you are picked out of a crowd who are standing round about, and you are especially invited by the person who built the fountain. He says, “Here is a special invitation for you; you are willing; come and drink.”

“Sir,” you say, “I must go home and wash my pitcher.” “No,” he says, “come and drink.” “But, sir, I need to go home and write a petition to you.” “I do not need it,” he says, “drink now, drink now!” What would you do? If you were dying of thirst, you would just put your lips down and drink.

Soul, do that now! Believe that Jesus Christ is able to save you now! Trust your soul in His hands now! No preparation is needed! Whoever will, let him come; let him come at once and take the water of life freely!

To take that water is simply to trust Christ; to repose on Him; to take Him to be your all-in-all. Oh that you would do it now! You are willing! God has made you willing! When the crusaders heard the voice of Peter the Hermit, as he bade them go to Jerusalem to take it from the hands of the invaders, they cried out at once, “Deus vult! God wills it! God wills it!” And every man plucked his sword from its scabbard, and set out to reach the holy sepulcher, for God willed it.

So come and drink, sinner. God wills it! Trust Jesus. God wills it! If you will it, that is the sign that *God* wills it! “Father, Your will be done on earth even as it is in heaven.” As sinners, humbly stoop to drink of the flowing crystal which streams from the sacred fountain which Jesus opened for His people. Let it be said in heaven, “God’s will is done!”

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REFLECTIONS

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

GROWTH IN GRACE

One more mark of “growth in grace” is increased *zeal and diligence in trying to do good to souls*. The man who is really “growing” will take greater interest in the salvation of sinners every year. Missions at home and abroad, efforts of every kind to spread the gospel, attempts of every sort to increase religious light and diminish religious darkness—all these things will, every year, have a greater place in his attention. He will not become “weary in well-doing” because he does not see every effort succeed. He will not *care* less for the progress of Christ’s cause on earth as he grows older, though he will learn to *expect* less. He will just work on, whatever the result may be—giving, praying, preaching, speaking, visiting, according to his position—and count his work its own reward. One of the surest marks of spiritual decline is a decreased interest about the souls of others and the growth of Christ’s kingdom. Does anyone desire to know whether he is growing in grace? Then let him look within for increased concern about the salvation of souls.

Another mark of “growth in grace” is increase of *charity*. The man whose soul is “growing” is more full of love every year—of love to all men, but especially of love towards the brethren. His love will show itself actively in a growing disposition to do kindnesses, to take trouble for others, to be good-natured to everybody, to be generous, sympathizing, thoughtful, tender-hearted and considerate. It will show itself passively in a growing disposition to be meek and patient toward all men, to put up with provocation and not stand upon rights, to bear and forbear much rather than quarrel. A growing soul will try to put the best construction on other people’s conduct and to believe all things and hope all things even to the end. There is no surer mark of backsliding and falling off in grace than an increasing disposition to find fault, pick holes, and see weak points in others. Would any desire to know if he is growing in grace? Then let him look within for increasing charity.

**PRAY FOR GRACE
TO PRAY!**

Letters to Mike Gendron of Proclaiming the gospel:

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

S.S. Carroll, IA, writes: As an ex-Catholic I especially appreciate your uncompromising directness and consistent use of Scripture. Before I came to Christ, while attending college, I had some serious debates with a friend who shared what the Bible said about salvation. I was arguing out of my Catechism, and I vehemently rejected what she said. But I couldn't forget that she talked about something that I didn't have—God's Word. I looked up the definition of words she used that pertain to salvation, such as redeem, propitiation, atone, justify, impute and remission. I was amazed at what I found and how many times God's Word clearly states that salvation is free—it's a gift, and not of works. After I trusted Christ as my Savior, I wondered if I should stay in Catholicism to try to win others to Christ, but there was an immediate realization that I had to leave. I don't feel it was a choice I made, but the Holy Spirit's inner witness. Now I thank God that my friend didn't compromise the gospel—that she wasn't tolerant—and I praise God for His unchanging Word and the power of the Holy Spirit to reach lost Catholics!

C. W., Internet, writes: Thank you for the wonderful information you taught everyone this past weekend at the Evangelism Conference with John MacArthur. As a missionary to Italy, it was a tremendous help and blessing to me. Also, thank you so much for the gift of your book. That was too kind. I look forward to enjoying your website.

Anonymous, writes: This is a bunch of crock against a religion that does no harm to you. Why you devote a site to refute Catholicism is beyond me. This is a diabolical site. Christianity is about loving all people regardless of denominations. Your hatred for Catholicism is very evident. I am Catholic and will die one. We are also allowed salvation.

Millicent W., Internet writes: I have just left the Catholic church with much pain and disillusionment. Since leaving, I have e-mailed your articles to lots of my friends who are anchored in this cultic religion. Now I am accused of Catholic bashing, which I have explained is not my intent. My intent is for them to read Scripture and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth of God to them. There were two very difficult beliefs for me to surrender. First, was the Eucharist which I really believed was Jesus Christ. The 2nd was the Marian apparitions. I even went to Medjugorje two years ago, and brought back some cheap medallions. Now that I have repented, I am really getting rebuked from my Catholic friends. I pray to Jesus to enlighten them. My immediate family thinks I am crazy, and that I have been talking to the wrong people. I don't even want to enter their house anymore because of all the rosary beads and statues of the virgin Mary. Even when I point out Scripture that refutes them, they can't accept it. I pray for them and need some counseling to draw them to Jesus, the only truth.

Mateo, Internet, writes: Your article on the Pope was quite offensive. You seem to take some deep personal grievance with the Catholic faith. Your article showed more of a masochistic pleasure of souls burning in hell rather than a thoughtful persuasion of faith. I am not Catholic, but I refuse to take my Protestant liberty as liberally as you. Instead of praying for our Catholic brothers and sisters, you take great pleasure in attacking them. The Pope never deceived anyone. Can you tell me, without attacking Catholics, what you so desperately disagree with theologically? I believe in absolute truth and that is the Bible. The problem with you fundamentalists is that the truth you so readily profess has blinded you from the need to love.

Brother Mike responds: I consider it a privilege to share my theological differences with the Roman Catholic religion. My God-given faith embraces the Lord Jesus Christ—His Word, His promises, His grace, and His finished work of redemption. He is sufficient to save me completely and forever. I have repented of the fallacious doctrines of purgatory, indulgences, law-keeping, sacraments, and good works for my justification. I have also forsaken the blasphemous practice of Catholic priests making offerings for my sin. The High Priest who made one offering for all my sins now lives as my advocate in heaven. When I was held captive by the legalistic bondage of the Catholic religion, I had a different authority, worshipped and trusted a different Jesus, believed another gospel, and was destined for a different place in eternity. I hope you see that I have not *attacked* Catholics, but have *exposed* the false religion which has blinded them from the gospel truth. It puzzles me that you question my "need to love" and my refusal to pray for Catholics. Please know that without prayer, my missionary work would be fruitless and without love, my witness would lack zeal and motivation. I have experienced much joy as an adopted child of God, but the greatest joy is when I see those who were once dead in sin, come alive in Christ. May God grant you this life-changing faith!

J.B., Lakeside, CA, writes: Praise the Lord for your ministry! I am a saved former Catholic, and have lovingly tried to share the gospel with my family, only to be called a self-righteous Catholic-basher. When I heard your message, Mike, I cried because my passion is to share the gospel with the Catholic people also. I haven't had the tools, but now I do, and I thank God for your ministry. May He abundantly bless you!

B.G., Foxboro, MA, writes: According to a recent news article, the Catholic Bishops in America are planning to spend

ABOUT FAITH

By C. H. Spurgeon

In this great deep to which we would conduct you, *faith is the only channel by which we can draw our life from Jesus*. “I am the resurrection and the life: *He that believes in Me*”—that is it. He does not say, “He that *loves Me*,” though love is a bright grace and very sweet to God. He does not say, “He that *serves Me*,” though everyone that believes in Christ *will* endeavor to serve Him. But it is not so put. He does not even say, “He that *imitates Me*,” though everyone who believes in Christ *must* and will *imitate* Him. No, it is put, “He that *believes in Me*.” Why is that? Why does the Lord so continually make *faith* to be the only link between Himself and the soul? I take it because faith is a gift which arrogates nothing to itself and has no operation apart from Jesus, to whom it unites us.

You want to conduct an electric current, and in order to this, you find a metal which will not create any action of its own. If it did so, it would disturb the current which you wish to send along it. If it set up an action of its *own*, how would you know the difference between what came of the metal, and what came of the battery? Now, faith is an empty-handed receiver and communicator—it is nothing apart from that upon which it relies, and therefore, it is suitable to be a conductor for divine grace.

When an auditorium has to be erected for a speaker in which he may be plainly heard, the essential thing is to get rid of all echoes. When you have no echoes, then you have a perfect building—faith makes no noise of its own—it allows the Word of God to speak. Faith cries, “*Non nobis Domine! Not unto us! Not unto us!*” Christ puts His crown on faith’s head, exclaiming, “Your faith has saved you!” But faith hastens to ascribe all the glory of salvation to only Jesus! So you see why the Lord selects faith rather than any other grace—because it is a self-forgetting thing. It is best adapted to be the tubing through which the water of life runs because it will not communicate a flavor of its own, but will just convey the stream purely and simply from Christ to the soul. “He that believes in Me.”

To conclude, if you once believe in Christ, and come to live, there is this sweet reflection for you, “*Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die*.” Our Arminian friends say that you may be a child of God today, and a child of the devil tomorrow. Write out that statement, and place at the bottom of it the name, “*Arminius*,” and then put the scrap of paper into the fire—it is the best thing you can do with it, for there is no truth of God in it! Jesus says, “*Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die*.” Here is a very literal translation—“And everyone who lives and believes on Me, by no means shall die forever.” This is from, “The Englishman’s Greek New Testament,” and nothing can be better. The believer may pass through the natural change called death, as far as his body is concerned, but as for his *soul*, it cannot die, for it is written, “I give unto My sheep, eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.” “He that believes in Me has everlasting life.” “The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” “He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.”

These are not, “ifs,” and “buts,” and faint hopes—they are dead certainties! No, they are *living certainties*, out of the mouth of the living Lord Himself! You get the life of God in your soul and you shall never die! “Do you mean that I may do as I like and live in *sin*?” No! I mean nothing of the sort! What right have you to impute such teaching as that to me? I mean that you shall *not* love sin and live in it, for *that* is death—but you shall live unto God. Your likes shall be so radically changed that you shall abhor evil all your days, and you shall long to be holy as God is holy! And you shall be kept from transgression, and shall not go back to wallow in sin. If in some evil hour, you backslide, yet shall you be restored—and the main current of your life shall be, from the hour of your regeneration, towards God, holiness, and heaven! The angels that rejoiced over you “when you repented,” made no mistake—they shall go on to rejoice till they welcome you amidst the everlasting songs and hallelujahs of the blessed at the right hand of God!

Do you believe this? Come, poor soul, do you believe this? Who are you? That does not matter—you can get into the “*whoever*.” That ark will hold all God’s Noahs! What have you done? One said to me the other day, “I should like to tell you some of my sins!” I answered quickly, “I would like you would *not*—I have enough of my own without being infected with yours.” What is any man that he should have the filth of another man’s drains poured into his ears? No, no! Confess to *God*, but not to man unless you have wronged him, and confession of the wrong is due to him. “Ah,” says one, “you don’t know what I am.” No, and I don’t *want* to know what you are—but if you are so far gone that there seems to be not even a *ghost* of a shade of a *shadow* of a hope anywhere about you—yet if you believe in Jesus you shall live!

Trust the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is worthy to be trusted! Throw yourself upon Him, and He will carry you in His bosom! Cast your whole weight upon His atonement! It will bear the strain! Hang on Him as a vessel hangs on the nail

The Five Solas—

“Do not remove the ancient landmark.”

Proverbs 22:28

By Daniel E. Parks
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A landmark is an object used to mark the boundary of a field. It could be a movable object such as a stone, stake, or other monument. To remove a neighbor's landmark was an act of theft (Job 24:2) because it robbed one of part of his means of support. The Mosaic law strictly prohibited this act of theft (Deut 19:14). He who did was to be accursed by the people (Deut 27:17). God promised to pour out His wrath upon the one who did so (Hosea 5:10). Ancient Romans imposed the penalty of death upon the offender.

Holy Scriptures, therefore, warn, “Do not remove the ancient landmark which your fathers have set” (Prov 22:28; cp. 23:10).

We here will make a spiritual application to this prohibition in the context of what are commonly called the “Five Solas”—*Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Gratia*, *Sola Fide*, *Solo Christo* and *Soli Deo Gloria*. These landmarks of God's kingdom were set by the King, Himself, the heavenly Father. They were set in Scripture by the spiritual fathers He gave unto His subjects and who recorded them as He directed. They have been faithfully observed and valiantly defended by the Father's subjects throughout the centuries, very notably by the fathers of the Protestant Reformation.

I. Do not remove the ancient landmark of *Sola Scriptura*. This Latin phrase means, “Scriptures Alone.” It identifies the Bible, alone, as the only authority and guide for the Christian's faith and life, doctrine and practice.

So says God's word—“All Scripture [all 66 books of the Old and New Testaments] is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16). Only “the Holy Scriptures...are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (v 15). “The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever” (Psa 119:160). Christ declares, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away” (Matt 24:35). Faithful saints, therefore, having heard a preacher, have then “searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11). They judge all things by *Sola Scriptura*—“To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isa 8:20).

Some have tried to replace this landmark of *Sola Scriptura* with extra-Biblical man-made authorities. Pharisees were sorely rebuked by Jesus Christ for exalting their “tradition of the elders” and “commandments of men” (Matt 15:19). The Roman Catholic Church appeals to the authority of its church and believes its Pope speaks with “infallibility” when he does so *ex cathedra*, “from the chair.” Many denominations and sects embrace unbiblical doctrines and practices because they are expressed in their creeds and confessions, or authorized by their founders and governing authorities.

II. Do not remove the ancient landmark of *Solo Christo*. This Latin phrase means, “Christ Alone.” It identifies Christ, alone, as the only access men have to God.

So says God's word—“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 2:5). Jesus Christ declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). His apostles concurred—“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Some have tried to replace this landmark of *Solo Christo* with the mediation of some other person or device. The Roman Catholic church claims that in the intermediate state of “Purgatory,” the sins and faults of those who die in a state of grace are cleansed, and atonement is obtained for unforgiven sins. It also claims “purgatorial punishment” may be relieved by the offerings of the living faithful, such as Masses, prayers, alms and other acts of piety and devotion. It also claims its church is a mediator of truth from God to man and that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is, “Mediatrice of all graces,” and that prayers of intercession to God may be made to its saints—and that its priests have the power to forgive sins of men. It and all others who believe salvation is obtained through baptism (e.g., Campbellites) express thereby the belief that assumes a necessity for an authorized priesthood as a mediator between men and their divine needs or aspirations.

III. Do not remove the ancient landmark of *Sola Gratia*. This Latin phrase means, “Grace Alone.” It identifies the grace or unmerited favor of God in Jesus Christ, alone, apart from any merit in or work of man, as the only ground of salvation.

(See *The Five Solas* on page 12)

The Five Solas

(Continued from page 11)

So says God's word—Every aspect of salvation from beginning to end, including election to salvation, and its sanctification and justification, predestination to sonship, acceptance in Christ, redemption and forgiveness; the application of all these benefits to the redeemed elect, who are immutably sealed for glory, is, “according to the riches of His grace” and, “to the praise of the glory of His grace” (Eph 1:3-14). Salvation is “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us” (Titus 3:5).

Some have tried to replace this landmark of *Sola Gratia* with the doctrine alleging salvation is attained and or maintained by man's merits, or works, or righteousness, including baptism, Sabbath-keeping, and observing the law of Moses. The Roman Catholic Church even claims to possess a Treasury of Merits containing the superabundant store of the “supererogate merits and works” of the saints by which an “indulgence” (or remission) may be given to the living by way of “absolution,” or to the departed in “Purgatory!” All such works are for those who would attempt to reach heaven by a toll road, not by the freeway—and are all an abomination to the Lord!

IV. Do not remove the ancient landmark of *Sola Fide*. This Latin phrase means, “Faith Alone.” It identifies faith in Christ, apart from any merit in or work of man, as the only access the sinner has to the grace of justification by God.

So says God's word—“For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ ... But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness” (Rom 4:2-5). “[K]nowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified” (Gal 2:16). “The just shall live by faith” (Hab 2:4; Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:28). “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand” (Rom 5:1f). “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Eph 2:8f).

Some have tried to replace this landmark of *Sola Fide* with a doctrine of justification by works, or by a mixture of works and grace. Judaizers in apostolic days posited the doctrine of justification by grace plus circumcision (Acts 15:1). Some, today, have amended this heresy by exchanging circumcision with some other work, such as baptism or Sabbath-keeping. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that they in whom there is “faith co-operating with good works [will] increase in that justice which they have received through the grace of Christ, and are still further justified.” “If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone...let him be anathema” (Council of Trent in 1563). Campbellites are quite vocal in their agreement with this last statement!

V. Do not remove the ancient landmark of *Soli Deo Gloria*. This Latin phrase means, “Glory to God Alone.” It identifies God, alone, as the object of praise for the Christian.

So says God's word—“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31). “For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen” (Rom 11:36).

As we have already observed, some have tried to replace this landmark of *Soli Deo Gloria* by exalting their churches,

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, *CEREMONIES* DO NOT SAVE ANYONE!

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Many to this day quarrel with God's glorious gospel on ceremonial grounds. The Scripture says that men are to be saved by faith, but these formalists say, “Surely, they must be regenerated in *baptism*—they must be further fed by the blessed Eucharist.” Persons who are evangelical in their hearts, and who unwittingly preach the gospel, nevertheless muddle it up with a number of outward ordinances and thus they say, practically, “Not so, Lord.” Ritualism is practically battling against that gospel which lies in faith in Christ and not in ceremonies—that gospel which demands *spiritual* life and not external performances! All of us are apt to err in this manner, for we incline to attach undue importance to matters which are proper and useful in their places, but which are by no means, essential to salvation!

One person thinks a great deal of confirmation which is purely an ordinance of man! Another thinks equally much of attending class meetings which is an instructive practice, but not a subject of divine command. Where Jesus has made no rule, we are not to make any! We are to receive all whom Christ receives! None are unclean whom He has cleansed! None are to be set aside if He admits them to His love. Yet this lesson is not soon learned by sticklers for propriety—they question any man's salvation who follows not with *them*, and when bid to commune with them, they start aside with Peter's cry in their hearts, if not on their lips, “Not so, Lord.”—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #1823, Volume 31—*Peter's Blunder—A Lesson*

Only One Altar!

By Don Fortner
Pastor, grace Baptist church, Danville, KY

*“We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.”
Hebrews 13:10*

There is but one altar by which sinful men may approach the holy God. In the Old Testament there was but one altar of sacrifice by which men could ceremonially approach God—and that one altar finds its fulfillment in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The only altar which can sanctify us and make us acceptable to God, is Christ.

Today all physical, carnal, ceremonial altars are instruments of idolatry. Use anything as an altar for acceptance with God, other than Christ, and you have no right to the merits of Christ. If you have another altar, your altar will drag your soul down to hell.

There are many who think of the cross upon which our Lord died as an altar. I have heard it said that the cross was the altar upon which our Lord offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin. But it is not so. That cross upon which our Lord was crucified was nothing more than the instrument of His torture. It is no more to be revered as an altar than the whips of Pilate’s soldiers, or the spit of those Jews which defiled His holy face. I would no more wear a cross around my neck than I would take the dagger a murderer used to kill my wife, and wear it on my belt.

Sometimes men talk of the heart as an altar to God. I know what they mean. They mean that *sincerity* makes our service to God acceptable. It is true that there must be sincerity in our service to God or it will never be acceptable. But *sincerity* itself will never make our most solemn devotion acceptable to God. Nothing but blood will ever make a man acceptable to God. Only the blood of Christ, shed for the atonement of our sin, can make us accepted with God.

It is common for men to talk of having a family altar. It is good to worship God in your home, with your family. But your family devotions will never make you acceptable to God. The church of God is a family and we *have* a family altar. His name is Jesus Christ our substitute.

In many churches the table used for serving the Lord’s Supper is looked upon as an altar. But the Scriptures never speak in such a way. The table spread before you is a table of *communion*, but it is not a table of *sacrifice*. It is a place of *remembrance*, but not a place of *atonement*. It is a solemn feast, but not a sanctifying feast.

Perhaps the most deceptive of all idolatrous notions is the idea that there is an altar of salvation at the front of the church. You can no more obtain salvation by walking down the aisle of a Baptist church to an altar, than the Papists can by going to a confessional booth, or making a pilgrimage to Rome, or climbing the stairs to the pope’s seat of infamy.

There is but one altar. There is but one place of salvation. That altar is Christ. He is God’s salvation. God only meets with men in His Son. We read in Exodus 20:23-26...“*You shall not make with Me gods of silver, neither shall you make unto you gods of gold. An altar of earth you shall make unto Me, and shall sacrifice thereon your burnt offerings, and your peace offerings, your sheep, and your oxen: in all places where I record My name I will come unto you, and I will bless you. And if you will make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone: for if you lift up your tool upon it, you have polluted it. Neither shall you go up by steps unto My altar, that your nakedness be not discovered thereon.*”

Christ is our altar of earth. He is our altar of stone. He is the altar of God’s making—“*If you lift up your tool upon it, you have polluted it.*” That is to say, if you add *anything* to His work for acceptance with God, you pollute the altar and the sacrifice! Christ is the altar with no stairs for men to climb! We do not come to God by *degrees* of holiness and sanctification, but by faith in Christ, alone!

All forms of carnal worship; all forms of physical things that men call “holy”; all attempts to place any merit of any kind or any reverence of any kind in material things is base idolatry (Exo 20:23; John 4:23-24; Phil 3:3).

Let us once and for all put away every form of idolatry from our midst (2 Kings 18:4), and worship God in spirit and in truth. We must worship God spiritually, from within, by the power and grace of the Holy Spirit. And we must worship God truthfully, in truth and sincerity, and according to the revealed truth of holy Scripture. And we must worship God in Christ who is the truth.

Pray for the men and women being released
from prison this year.
Dare to ask God to use **YOU** to help them!

PLEASE PRAY FOR PASTORS
PAUL FERRIE (PF) - North Dakota
DON FORTNER - Kentucky
DANIEL E. PARKS - US Virgin Islands
who provide articles for this publication.

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

Our prayer for you:

¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height—

¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.



Pray for your Chaplain/Pastor.

In This Issue...

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

CONFESS!

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Baptism is the confession of our faith. Constantly in Scripture the faith to which salvation is promised is a faith which makes a confession of itself. It is never a dumb faith—it is a faith that speaks, a faith which acknowledges its existence—yes, a faith which acknowledges the Lord in the teeth of adversaries! We must confess Christ before men, or we may not believe that we have the faith of God's elect. How can I know what you believe in your heart? I must first *hear* what you confess with your mouth! An inquirer comes to me to join the church, or to be acknowledged as a Christian. I cannot begin with his heart—I have no means of reading his thoughts. I say to him, "Speak, that I may see you." If he confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, he has done what, in the order of practical religion, must lead the way towards friend and foe.

Let me add that in a certain sense, confession with the mouth is actually first in the man. Many persons never receive in their hearts the comfort of Christ's resurrection because they have never, with their mouth, confessed the Lord Jesus as their Savior and Master. The Lord will not give to you the warmth of faith which cheers the heart unless you are willing to yield to Him the obedience of faith by taking up your cross, and coming out and confessing Him! Their are numbers of Christians—Christians, I mean, in the judgment of charity—who never enter into the joy of their Lord because they have never obeyed His rule, nor acknowledged His name before men. The Spirit of God, as a Comforter, has not borne His witness with their spirit that they are the children of God, because they have never borne their witness to the Lord Jesus! The comfort of believing with the heart is hindered by the absence of confession with the mouth!

Will you listen to this, some of you who cry, "We desire to be saved?" I dare not preach to you a backstairs gospel for cowards—a secret green-lane of salvation which winds about through the woods so that you can travel it without being seen! No, at my Lord's bidding, I preach to you an open King's highway, which the fearful and the unbelieving refuse to go! And yet there is only this one way to the kingdom! We must not attempt to be moonlighters. Let us follow Jesus in broad daylight. Jesus says, "He that confesses Me before men, him will I confess before My Father which is in heaven; but he that denies Me"—(which in that connection means he that does not confess Me)—"he that denies Me before men, him will I deny before My Father which is in heaven." Hear, I pray you, the text—"If you shall confess with your mouth the