

# FOR HIS GLORY

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Who is the man who keeps Christ's sayings? Obviously, *he is a man that has close dealings with Christ*. He hears what He says. He notes what He says. He clings to what He says. We meet with persons nowadays who talk about faith in God, but they do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as the great Sacrifice and Reconciler. But without a Mediator there is no coming to God. Jesus says, "No man comes unto the Father, but by Me." His witness is true. Brothers and Sisters, we glorify Christ as God, Himself! Truly, the unity of the Godhead is never doubted among us. And while "there is one God," there is also "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus." Remember that Christ Jesus, as God-Man, Mediator, is essential to all our communion with the Father! You *cannot* trust God, nor love God, nor serve God aright unless you willingly consent to His appointed way of reconciliation, redemption, justification and access which is only through the precious blood of Jesus Christ!—CHS, 1890



## REPENTANCE!

By A. W. Pink

To His servants Christ gave commandment "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). "Beginning at Jerusalem" not because of any dispensational reason, but because Grace would commence with the most unlikely and unworthy ones.

But O how little repentance is being preached today, even by those claiming to be the true servants of God! "Believe, believe, only believe" is being sounded forth widely, but where is the voice now being lifted up in the wilderness crying "repent"? Are not the claims of God to be pressed upon men and their utter and awful failure to meet those claims, *before* we tell them of His Grace?

And what are the claims of God upon every human creature? Are they not summed up in, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart." Is He not entitled to this? Can He ever demand less? Is He not infinitely worthy of being loved? And is not that love to be expressed by *obedience*, by complete subjection to Him, by seeking to please Him in all things?

And is not the failure of fallen man to meet this righteous demand

of God that which constitutes the very "sinfulness of sin"? Is it not that, so far from having been in subjection to God's will and having sought His pleasure, man has turned aside to his own way and sought only to please himself? And is it not the first duty of God's servants to expound and explain this solemn fact, pressing it on the consciences of their hearers?

Does not the Old Testament precede the New? Does not the ministry of John the Baptist precede that of Christ? Does not Romans 1:18 to 3:20 precede Romans 3:21-26? Does not repentance toward God precede faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ? Certainly it does! But where does it do so in the preaching of present-day evangelists? None can truly believe in Christ till their hearts are broken before God through a deep realization of the awfulness of their condition in His sight.

The ground must be plowed before it can receive the seed. To preach the finished work of Christ to those who have little or no realization of their awful condition before Him—that is, the consciousness that the whole of their life has consisted of self-pleasing to the

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## Are You Blessed of the Lord?

By C. H. Spurgeon

I see many little children here this evening. Oh, if you fear God, if you pray to God, if you trust in Jesus and if your young hearts have been taught to love God, small as you are, you are the blessed of the Lord that made Heaven and earth! Jesus loves to receive children to His bosom as much, now, as ever He did when He lived upon earth! Come to Him by faith and He will bless you!

There are here many young enquirers who have only just begun to pray and who are between hope and fear like new-born children whose lives tremble in the balances. To them it must be cheering to observe that the Lord blesses the "small" as well as the "great." The Lord regards the contrite in spirit and He hears the groans of broken hearts—His delight is to bless the lowly in mind. Though Grace is small in you, yet He will not quench the smoking flax. "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

And you poor in this world, you humble, you illiterate, you obscure, you sickly ones—you with little talent and slender opportunity for serving God—I pray you rejoice in the assurance of the text, for you are the blessed of the Lord if you walk before Him in

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## REPENTANCE!

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utterly ignoring of God—is only to cast pearls before swine. And what will be the effect?

What *is* the effect the world over? This—those who have never been convicted by the Holy Spirit will cordially assent to the letter of the Gospel, receive the Word with joy, accept Christ as their personal Savior and begin to swell the crowd of those having a form of godliness, but who are total strangers to a supernatural, conscience-plowing, contrite heart-giving and transforming power!

Proverbs 28:13, Isaiah 55:7, Acts 3:19 are just as much a part of God's Word as is John 3:16, yet none would ever discover it from what he now hears, even in the Gospel halls. O my Brothers in the ministry, preach *repentance* if you would honor God, discharge your responsibility and be faithful unto the souls of your hearers! Suppose it makes you to be unpopular: what of that if you receive *Christ's*, "well done," in that Day!—(Gleaned from Brother Pink's *Studies in the Scriptures*, November, 1933).

## DID YOU CRUCIFY YOUR LORD?

By C. H. Spurgeon

I address some tonight who would shudder at all this, and say, "Oh, Sir, I have neither persecuted His people, nor thought lightly of Him. Neither have I been negligent concerning Him, for oh, I long to be saved by Him. I seek His face day and night and confess my sins into His ear, and I ask for pardon through His blood."

Beloved, I am glad to hear you say this, but I must ask you a question, too. Have you ever doubted whether He could save you? Do you doubt now whether He is willing to save you? Ah, then you crucify Him, for there is nothing that so grieves Him as that unkind, ungenerous thought that He is unwilling to forgive! This touches Him in the heart. This pierces His heart as with a spear, for you to think that He will not, or cannot, pardon you! Be guilty of this no longer!

Satan told you it was humility—no, but it is dishonoring your Savior! Come, poor awakened Sinner, full of guilt, and full of fear, and say, "I do believe! I will believe that He is both able and willing to save me!" Then, but not until then, may you be able to say, "I have not crucified Him."—Adapted from the *C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.—Sermon #3457, Volume 61—ALL ARE GUILTY—Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).

**"FOR ME, TO LIVE IS CHRIST,  
AND TO DIE IS GAIN."**

(PHIL 1:21)

**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.**

## WHAT YOU SHOULD HEAR WHEN YOU LISTEN TO A GOSPEL PREACHER

I was called to pastor a church in a large American city a few years ago. I was quite unfamiliar with the religious climate in that city, having spent but one weekend in it some years earlier. Indeed, I was rather unfamiliar with the whole American religious climate, having ministered abroad the previous fourteen years. I therefore decided to familiarize myself with that religious scene by listening to religious radio programs during my drive to the church building every Lord's Day morning.

The first program to which I listened featured the pastor of the largest church in the state, and one of the ten largest churches in all America. I heard him tell many interesting stories, for he was a great illustrator. I heard him tell a lot of funny stories, for he was an amusing humorist. I heard him tell of the many good deeds he and his church had done, for they were evidently very humanitarian and proud of their works and achievements. I heard him give advice regarding interpersonal relationships, politics, finances, and a host of other earthly subjects, for he was quite an expert in earthly things.

But to this day, and after listening to him many times, I could not tell you much regarding what he believed about Jesus Christ. He rarely spoke of Christ except for a passing reference or mention of His name, or quoting His name when reading Scripture.

Another preacher to whom I often listened was of the more strident camp of the Campbellite sect. He delighted to speak of what he did not believe, and of the issues he loved to debate, and of the great evils of things such as eating food in a church building. About the only things of which he spoke highly were what he considered the superiority of his baptism and sect—and of course himself!

But again, I could not tell you much about what he believed about Jesus Christ. And like the other preacher, he rarely spoke of Christ except for a passing reference or mention of His name, or quoting His name when reading Scripture, or citing what he called "the Scriptural name" of his own church.

I hope whoever listens to my own messages hears otherwise. I am not a great story-teller, nor an amusing humorist, nor a notable achiever, nor an expert in earthly things. I find no delight in debating issues, nor in riding a hobby horse, nor in sounding like a stuck record regarding pet doctrines, nor in boasting of any sectarian distinctives. I therefore would not be wise to major on those things. And you should be greatly disappointed if you listened to me in the hope of hearing such things.

It is the great desire of my heart to be known for preaching Christ. I desire to be found in the ranks of those faithful Gospel ministers who confess—"We do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor 4:5). "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2). I hope to be found doing so the very first time you hear me preach, the very last time you hear me preach, and every time between. And if you ever find me failing to do so, please let me know.—Daniel E. Parks

**THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST  
IN SEVEN WORDS:  
"THE LORD SAYS, BEHOLD ME, BEHOLD ME."**

## ARE YOU BLESSED OF THE LORD?

(Continued from page 1)

holy fear! The eyes that look to God and trust Him even when they cannot see Him, are blessed eyes! The heart that pines after God even when it cannot rejoice in Him is a blessed heart!

And the hand that stretches itself out after God, saying, “Oh that I knew where I might find Him,” is still a blessed hand, even though, for the moment, it cannot lay hold upon the Word of promise. If you sigh and cry after God with a true heart, looking to Him in His own way, through Christ His Son, you are numbered with those that fear the Lord, who are blessed of Him whether they are small or great!—

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software,—Sermon #1077, Vol. 18—*The Lord Blessing His Saints*—Read/download entire sermon on [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).

## IF WE DENY...

By Charles Pennington,  
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- If we deny that man is dead in sin, that he is nothing, has nothing and can do nothing to merit salvation, then we make “man true and God a liar”!
- If we deny God’s eternal and unconditional election of a people unto salvation, make salvation to be by man’s choice and will instead of God’s choice, will and purpose, then we exalt man’s will above God’s, dethrone the Almighty and set man up in His place!
- If we deny the particular and effectual redemption of the elect by the blood of Christ, then we have no Gospel to preach, only an Atonement that does not atone, a redemption that does not redeem, and a Savior who cannot save—we make a mockery of the suffering and death of the Son of God and count the blood of the covenant an unholy (common) thing!
- If we deny the invincible and essential work of God the Holy Spirit in regeneration and the new birth, then we must deny that “that which is born of the flesh is flesh,” and say, “that which is born of the flesh is spirit”! Then we make Him to be less than man and emphatically deny that salvation is of the Lord, Who only can give life to the dead!
- If we deny the preservation and perseverance of the saints, then we openly declare that there is a power greater than God, one who can frustrate His purpose and pluck the sheep out of the Father’s hand, contrary to the words of the Lord Jesus!
- If we deny Him, He also will deny us. (2 Tim 2:12).

Gleaned from a bulletin of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, PO Box 305, Frederiksted, VI 00841, Daniel E. Parks, Pastor

### Mohammed

Although just now somewhat shorn of his power to persecute, Mohammed, the prophet of Mecca, still practices his sorceries, maddens the passions of men, holds the cup of carnal delight to the lips of his besotted worshipers and endeavors to light up the horrors of the grave by pointing to a Paradise of sin!—William S. Plummer, *The Rock of Our Salvation*, 1867.—Gleaned from GRACE GEMS! A Treasury of Ageless Sovereign Grace Devotional Writings—<http://www.gracegems.org>

## OUR MASTER APPOINTED ONLY TWO DUTIES FOR THOSE FOR WHOM HE DIED ON THE CROSS...

By C. H. Spurgeon

Dear Brothers and Sisters, there are only two great duties which the Lord has appointed for His people—and these we should observe because they are appointed by Him. I refer to *the two commands regarding Baptism and the Supper of the Lord*. In keeping these commandments there is a great reward to our own souls but we ought to come as Believers to be baptized out of love to Jesus. We ought not to ask, “What is the good of this?” We may not say, “Shall I get anything by it?” But we are to simply say this, “He bade me and I will do it for the love I bear His name.”

I am shocked when I hear people say, “But it is not *essential* to salvation.” You mean and beggarly spirit! Will you do nothing but what is *essential* to your own salvation? A Pharisee or a harlot might talk so! Is this your love to Christ—that you will not obey Him unless He shall pay you for it? Unless He shall make your soul’s salvation depend upon it?

Oh, if you love the Master, the least of His commandments will seem very precious in your sight and you will feel that because you love Him you will obey Him! If obedience to an ordinance should bring you no good, whatever—if Jesus bade you, it is enough for you—whatever it may be! Indeed, it is all the sweeter to do the Lord’s bidding when no trace of personal gain can be found mingling with the motive!

So, too, when we approach the Table of communion we shall get a blessing there if we come aright—but I think we too often fail to remember that we should sit at the holy table with the sole view of honoring the Lord who is remembered in that festival.

He says that we are to show His death until He comes. It is to Him that the feast is dedicated. To keep up the memory of His death and to testify the fact to others, we eat of the bread and drink of the cup. We celebrate the sacred Supper for our Lord’s sake—not because of Church rules, nor because it is the custom of the brotherhood to do so—nor even because it is a hallowed refreshment to our own hearts. We commune at the sacred feast out of love to our Well-Beloved.

PRAY FOR GRACE TO BE HOLY

# Letters to Mike Gendron Of Proclaiming the Gospel:

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**Douglas S., Internet, writes:**

For you to suggest that a majority of Roman Catholics will not be saved is ridiculous. To suggest that someone must leave the church which God Himself established in order to gain salvation is absolutely insidious. My advice to you, is get your head out of the Bible and into your heart.

**Brother Mike Responds:**

There is only one Gospel that has the power of God for salvation (Rom 1:16). Paul said if you believe any other gospel you have believed in vain (1 Cor 15:2). The Roman Catholic Church not only proclaims another gospel but condemns those who believe the true Gospel with over 100 anathemas! I have found the majority of Catholics adhere to a gospel of works, sacraments, self-righteousness, indulgences and other requirements that oppose and nullify God's Grace. I have never said that Catholics must leave their church to be saved. However, once they have been born-again with the Spirit of Truth and are disciplined in the Word of God, they will have no choice but to leave the institution that once deceived them with a false gospel. If you desire to be a disciple of Christ, you will put your head in the Bible, because the mark of a true disciple is one who abides in Christ's Word (John 8:31-32).

**John L., Internet, writes:**

I'm a Catholic that had the unfortunate experience of having a friend send me one of your tracts called *Scripture vs. Tradition*. As anyone should know, Catholics don't believe Scripture is against Tradition. The title is misleading. The content was nothing more than hateful anti-Catholic propaganda, an angry attack on the Church and the accusation that Catholic's are "apostate in their faith." This tract attempts half-heartedly to disassociate Catholics from the Church. This is the common pattern of prejudice. It's easier to attack the institution than Catholics, themselves. This is an intrinsically false dichotomy however. I am the Church. I'm not ignorant, gullible or brainwashed as you would believe. If you hate the Church, you hate me. I believe that you do hate Catholics. I further believe that the real purpose of this pamphlet is to ensure that the coals under the fire of Protestant prejudice toward Catholics don't get cold. This tract will ensure the continuing enmity between Catholics and Protestants. No one could honestly put together such a blatantly misleading tract by accident. If you want someone to listen to your opinions, you must respect their opinions as well.

**Brother Mike responds:**

The tract objectively points out the opposition between the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the New American Bible, today's Bible of choice for American Catholics. The reason Catholics do not believe Scripture is against Tradition is because they have an "infallible" group of Bishops, called the Magisterium, who distort the interpretation of Scripture such that the two appear to be in harmony. The tract exhorts Catholics to examine their faith, as we are all asked to do (2 Cor 13:5). You are right in saying Catholics make up the Church, but its teachings and traditions are distinctively different from the Catholic people. By exposing the errors of

the Church's teachings, we point Catholics to the only truly Infallible source and interpreter for the Truth of God—the Holy Scriptures. Once they look into the Word and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the Truth to them, they will see they have been worshipping a convoluted Jesus—one who is unable to save them completely and forever. I do not understand how you can say that I hate Catholics. To hate them would be to ignore them as they march proudly towards Hell's gate. To love them is to do what I am doing—dedicating my life to equipping the saints throughout the world to reach them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Unless Roman Catholics are lovingly confronted with the Truth of God, they will never know they have been deceived about life's most important question—"What must I do to be saved." The enmity is not between Catholics and Protestants, but between Believers and unbelievers, truth and error, light and darkness and the temple of God and idols (2 Cor 6:14-17). None of us should respect another man's opinion if it opposes God's Word. We should correct it with Scripture (2 Tim 3:16).

**Leslie M., Internet, writes:**

I have brought hundreds of folks back into the Catholic Church and they are on fire for Jesus and His Church. You have pulled some out, but the best thing you have going for you is the ignorance of Catholics. But you don't have the Truth, which is so much more powerful. You ex-Catholics tend to be pretty hateful of the Church you left behind. But I bet you will be back one day. Please remember we will always welcome you home with open arms, just as the Father welcomed the Prodigal Son. I'll bet you have tons of relatives praying for you, both on earth and in heaven. May the Blessed Mother and all the angels keep you in their tender care.

**Brother Mike responds:**

Actually, the best thing I have going for me is the Word of God—the imperishable seed that brings forth life to those who are dead in their sins. The ignorance of Catholics has little to do with the Sovereign Grace of God. When the words of the Good Shepherd are proclaimed to Catholics who are chosen by God, they will follow Him because they will know His voice (John 10:3-4). The Truth is, indeed, powerful, so powerful that it sets religious people free from the bondage of sin, legalism and deception. The reason ex-Catholics, who have experienced the second birth, are hateful of the Roman Catholic religion is because the institution's false gospel has led many loved ones to a Christ-less eternity.

**A. S., Ocala, FL, writes:**

I am now hearing from folks who attended my class on Roman Catholicism. They have shown *Preparing Catholics for Eternity* to their Catholic friends and relatives and as a result they have requested more books to give to them. My mother-in-law is finally beginning to question the claims of Catholicism. She even went to our church and loved the clear, biblical teaching. However, she still goes to Mass for fear that if she does not, she will go to Hell. How tragic, but since God is ever faithful, we are trusting Him to somehow reach her through His Holy Spirit. Plenty of seeds have been planted, that's for sure! May God continue to bless you in this most important ministry.

**M. J., Las Cruces, NM, writes:**

Christians love you for loving the lost!

## REFLECTIONS

Precious Gems gleaned  
By Jim Robinette

'Reflections' is a Christian meditation sent by Action Uganda Ministries and is meant to encourage, instruct and edify.

I have been particularly acquainted with many persons that have been the subjects of the high and extraordinary transports of the present day. And in the highest transports of any of the instances that I have been acquainted with, and where the affections of admiration, love and joy, so far as another could judge, have been raised to a higher pitch than in any other instances, I have observed or been informed that following things have been united—viz. a very frequent dwelling, for some considerable time together, in such views of the glory of the Divine Perfections and Christ's excellencies, that the soul, meantime, has been, as it were, perfectly overwhelmed and swallowed up with light and love and a sweet solace, rest and joy of soul, that was altogether unspeakable and more than once continuing for five or six hours together, without any interruption, in that clear and lively view or sense of the Infinite beauty and amiableness of Christ's Person, and the heavenly sweetness of His excellent and transcendent love, so that (to use the person's own expressions) the soul remained in a kind of heavenly Elysium and did, as it were, swim in the rays of Christ's love, like a little mote swimming in the beams of the sun, or streams of his light that come in at a window. And the heart was swallowed up in a kind of glow of Christ's love, coming down from Christ's heart in Heaven as a constant stream of sweet light, at the same time the soul all flowing out in love to Him, so that there seemed to be a constant flowing and reflowing from heart to heart.

The soul dwelt on high and was lost in God, and seemed almost to leave the body, dwelling in a pure delight that fed and satisfied the soul—enjoying pleasure without the least sting, or any interruption, a sweetness that the soul was lost in—so that (so far as the judgment and word of a person of discretion may be taken, speaking upon the most deliberate consideration) what was enjoyed in each single minute of the whole space, which was many hours, was undoubtedly worth more than all the outward comfort and pleasure of the whole life put together!

And all this without being in a trance, or being at all deprived of the exercise of the bodily senses! And the same heavenly delight and unspeakable joy of soul enjoyed from time to time, for years together, though not frequently so long together, to such an height—extraordinary views of Divine things and religious affections being frequently attended with the very great effects on the body, Nature often sinking under the weight of Divine discoveries—the strength of the body taken away, so as to deprive of all ability to stand or speak! Sometime the hands clinched and the flesh cold, but senses still remaining—animal nature often in a great emotion and agitation, and the soul very often, of late, so overcome with great admiration and a kind of omnipotent joy, as to cause the person (wholly unavoidably) to leap with all his might, with joy and mighty exultation of soul—the soul at the same time being so strongly drawn towards God and Christ in Heaven, that it seemed to the person as though soul and body would, as it were of themselves, of necessity mount up, leave the earth and ascend there!—Adapted from *Some Thoughts on the Late Revival of Religion in New England*, by Jonathan Edwards from the 1740's. [Edwards here describes the effects of that reviving work of God upon people as they were spiritually, emotionally and physically touched by the Spirit.]

**Pray for Brother Allan Roman of Mexico City who is translating, by God's Grace, Brother Spurgeon's sermons. Praise our Master's Holy Spirit for keeping him faithful in this work. Pray our heavenly Father will use the sermons to draw millions of Spanish-speaking Roman Catholics to His Son, Jesus Christ.**

**PRAY FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN PRISONS.**

## CALL ME ANYTHING BUT A PRIEST!

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

I would rather any day a man call me a demon than a priest! There is something so degraded, so detestable in the profession of a priest that my soul loathes it! I would tear off the last rag of priestcraft that ever stuck to my flesh and feel it to be like that tunic of fire which burned into the flesh of the heroes of old. Away with it!

But what must men be—what must human nature be that it submits to priests? I say you degrade human nature further when you say they put Christ to death because they submitted to the persuasions of the priests. It is true, but where is the manhood of man that he will be led by the nose by a fellow man who chooses to put on a strange, uncouth garb, and feign himself the messenger of God while he perverts the oracles of God and teaches lies?

When will the day come that human nature will prove itself to have pure mettle and manly spirit in it by shaking off the horrible iniquities of priestcraft? Set this crime down to priestcraft, if you will. The priests do conspire—they always did and always will conspire to set the people against God! And against Christ. But where is manhood that it should put itself beneath the foot of such a thing—a thing, that men call a priest?

Shame on you, human nature, that you should become so object as to be the football of a priest and submit yourself to an order which sacrilegiously usurps Divine Authority and insolently tyrannizes over human conscience!—Adapted from the *C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software—Sermon #3457, Volume 61—ALL ARE GUILTY—Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).

“Perhaps you do not see conversions in your work because you keep looking to the people—looking to the sinners—looking to the hardness of their hearts. What has all that to do with Christ's power to save? If this man, in addition to being paralyzed, could have had fever, leprosy, dropsy and all other diseases at once, it would not have mattered in the least to the Great Physician, for when Christ comes on the scene, if you have one impossibility, He can meet it—and if you have 50 impossibilities, He can meet them all just as easily! Granted an Almighty Savior, what room is there for doubt as to what He can do?”—1895, Sermon #2434, Volume 41—“A MAN UNDER AUTHORITY”—Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.

**Study of Ephesians****PURPOSES OF PASTORS — PART ONE**

(Ephesians 4:12a)

We have been looking at the very important paragraph in the middle of Ephesians 4, which runs from verse 11 through verse 16. Actually, this is one long statement in the Greek text. In this paragraph, the Apostle Paul is giving us insight into the nature and operation of the Church as the Lord Jesus has intended it to be. He starts by showing us that the Church is a living thing. It is not merely an organization. In some organizations, there are certain people who do everything while others simply attend. But the Church is more like a body. Every part is necessary because every part has a special and unique function in the body.

Having considered the spiritual gifts mentioned in verse 11, let us go on to elaborate on the gift of pastor-teacher. The pastor-teacher, as the name implies, is one who is both to shepherd and educate God's people by bringing to bear upon their lives the Word of God given to us by the Apostles and Prophets. In Ephesians 4:12, we are given the purposes of the pastor—"for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Our focus for this message will be on the first phrase of verse 12 because the word which the Apostle uses here is particularly rich with meaning. The word which here is translated "equipping" is translated "perfecting" in the King James version. It is the Greek word which is translated "perfecting" or "equipping" that is so rich in meaning. One meaning of the word is the idea of completing. From this meaning of the word, we may deduce that it is part of the work of the pastor to complete the number of the saints.

Now we know that a pastor cannot save anyone. Yet we should also realize that God uses pastors as an instrument for gathering in His chosen people. We have already seen in Chapter One of this Epistle that before the foundation of the world, God chose a people for Himself. But how does He bring those people to Himself? All men are born dead in trespasses and sin. All people are born alienated from God and hostile to Him in their innermost being. What can change a rebellious heart into a heart that delights in God and longs to know Him? The Scripture tells us that it is the preaching of the Word of God. Paul tells the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 1:21, "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe."

As a pastor preaches the Gospel, many unbelievers will continue to scoff and call it all foolishness. But upon a certain people, there will be a miraculous change. They will, by means of that Gospel, come to see their sin and repent and turn to Jesus Christ. This is very strikingly portrayed in a statement made in the Book of Acts. Paul and Barnabas had been preaching in a synagogue in Antioch. As was so often the case, the Jews became hostile to the Gospel message. Upon their rejection, Paul announced to the Jews that since they had rejected the Gospel, he and Barnabas would now preach it to the Gentiles. In response to this, we read in Acts 13:48, "Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the Word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed." These Gentiles heard the Word of the Lord, and because God had chosen them, they believed the Gospel and were saved!

The same wonderful privilege belongs to pastors today. As they announce that there is a full and free pardon for sinners through the blood of Jesus Christ for all who trust in Him to save them, God the Holy Spirit will take that message and work in hearts and lives and bring them to Christ. One can hardly imagine a greater privilege in all the world than to be the bearer of such a message as this!

That brings us, now, to a second meaning of this word translated, "perfecting," and to another of the purposes of pastors. The word also means "to make whole," or to work on something or repair something. We find this use of the word in Matthew 4:21, where we are told that James and John were in a boat helping their father mend their fishing nets. The idea of mending is in this word, "perfecting." The word was sometimes used to refer to setting in place bones that were dislocated.

There is a great need for this use of the word, "perfect," among the saints of God. We need mending and repair. Thank God, Believers are forgiven of their sins and eternally saved. But God in His wisdom has not chosen to totally remove all sinful tendencies from His people at the moment of conversion. Instead, like the process of putting a precious metal through the fire in order to refine it, God puts His people through a process called *sanctification*. At the moment of salvation, the Believer's justification is complete. He is declared forgiven and righteous by God for the sake of Christ. But his sanctification has just begun! The believer has a new nature which the Holy Spirit has planted in his soul. But the old nature still clings to him. There is a spiritual war in every Believer between the flesh and the Spirit.

Thus, in preaching, the pastor should be an instrument for exposing sin in the lives of Believers. The Word of God preached is like a spotlight which will expose sin. The writer of Hebrews says in Hebrews 4:12, "For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Some Christians respond negatively to this aspect of preaching, but they should not. This is a wonderful first step in the ongoing sanctification process. You see, you cannot repent of a sin that you are not aware that you have. And so, before the Holy Spirit removes sin from our lives, He exposes it by means of His Word. Then, once the sin is exposed, the next step can be taken. Following the illustrations of the mending of nets and relocating of dislocated bones, the preaching of the Word of God not only exposes sin, but goes on to show the remedy.

When Paul later tells the Ephesians, in verse 22 of this Chapter, to "put off the old man," he immediately goes on to tell them in verse 24 to "put on the new man." And the more this process goes on by the enabling power and Grace of the Holy Spirit in the Believer's life, the more he is conformed to the image of Christ. The word, "perfecting," not only involves repairing what is broken and relocating what it out of place, but it has the positive meaning of making something better and equipping someone so that he is more useful. That is why the New King James and New American Standard versions have translated the word, "equipping."

# THE “I AM”’S OF JESUS CHRIST—PART 4 “I AM THE DOOR” (JOHN 10:7)

By Daniel E. Parks, Pastor  
Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, PO Box 305, Frederiksted, VI 00841

We need a door through which we may obtain access to fellowship with God. That door was shut in the fall of our race in the sin of the first man, Adam. He was created as a sinless creature with access to and fellowship with God. But he sinned against God and consequently lost access to God and was barred from fellowship with God. Since Adam’s sin and fall was the sin and fall of the whole human race, (Rom 5:12-19), the door of fellowship with God has been shut, also, to all his descendants. If any of us is to ever obtain fellowship with God, a door must be opened for us.

Jesus Christ declares, “I am the door” (John 10:7, 9). God has sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world so that sinners barred from Him might freely and boldly approach Him. Observe:

1) Jesus Christ is the door made available to all—“If anyone enters by Me...” (v 9). God bars the door of salvation and fellowship to no one who will come to Him through Jesus Christ. Whoever and whatever you are, you may, through faith in Jesus Christ, enter into fellowship with God.

2) Jesus Christ is the door entered only by the sheep—“I am the door of the sheep” (v 7). All mankind is divided by God into sheep and goats. Sheep are those who will believe in Jesus Christ; goats are those who will not (v 26). None but sheep, believers in Jesus Christ, will enter the door of fellowship with God.

3) Jesus Christ is the only door—“I am the door of the sheep” (v 7; cp. vv. 8, 10). “For there is...one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 2:5). Jesus therefore declares, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). You cannot approach God through any other person or thing!

4) Jesus Christ is the door to salvation—“If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved” (v 9). God is too holy to even look upon sin (Hab 1:13). They who would approach Him, therefore, must be forgiven of their sins. This forgiveness is obtained only through faith in Jesus Christ and His redeeming blood (Eph 1:7; Acts 16:31). “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).

5) Jesus Christ is the door to liberty—“If anyone enters by Me, he will...go in and out...” (v 9). Jesus Christ provides perfect freedom from all harm and danger to sinners enslaved by their fears and doubts. His sheep can say, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies...Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever” (Psa 23:4-6).

6) Jesus Christ is the door to provision—“If anyone enters by Me, he will...find pasture” (v 9). God ascertains that all His sheep are well fed and nourished. His sheep can say, “The LORD is My shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters” (Psa 23:1-3a).

7) Jesus Christ is the door to abundant life—“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (v 10). The “thief” is a false prophet or heretical preacher. All who would enter Heaven through following them will suffer the same fate as their leaders at the final judgment. God says, “...And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness’” (Matt 7:15-23). But all who follow Jesus Christ receive “life...abundantly.” Jesus Christ says to them, “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:28).

(Those professing Christians who claim they may be “saved today but lost tomorrow” have evidently never entered this Door). Have you entered God’s fellowship through Christ, the Door?

**PRAY FOR MT. ZION AND  
THEIR LEADERS,  
PASTOR/ELDER  
JEFF POLLARD AND  
STEVE FRAKES.**

**ASK OUR FATHER’S HOLY SPIRIT  
TO GRANT YOU GRACE TO  
DESIRE TO BE USED BY HIM  
FOR THE HONOR AND  
GLORY OF JESUS CHRIST.**

**TO MY SPANISH-SPEAKING  
BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN  
PRISONS:  
DON’T FORGET  
TO LET ME KNOW IF YOU WANT  
SPURGEON SERMONS IN SPANISH.  
BY GOD’S KINDNESS, WE  
HAVE OVER 365 SPANISH  
TRANSLATIONS PROVIDED BY BRO.  
ALLAN ROMAN OF MEXICO CITY.**

## Gone to Seed on Predestination

By Donald S. Fortner, Pastor

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***“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying,***

***My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure:***

***Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executes***

***My counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it,***

***I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.”***

***(Isa 46:9-11)***

It is often asserted that your pastor has “gone to seed on predestination and sovereignty.” And you might sometimes think I stress these matters too much, but if you read the 46<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Isaiah’s prophecy, you will see that the Lord God makes this the thing that distinguishes Him from all the imaginary gods of men.

The Lord our God identifies Himself as God and distinguishes Himself from all who are called gods with this declaration in verse 11—“*I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.*” We believe, according to the Scriptures, that the Lord our God is a God of purpose, absolute and unalterable purpose. Before the world began, Almighty God sovereignly purposed all that ever comes to pass in time. Nothing in this world is left to chance. Everything is moving toward the predetermined end of God’s eternal purpose with absolute and precise accuracy. Everything that comes to pass in time was purposed by God in eternity.

Let others worship at the altars of “good luck,” “misfortune” and “chance,” if they wish. We worship the God of Glory, whose distinguishing glory He declares in these words—“*I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.*” I assert, with all the dogmatism I can muster, that everything that comes to pass in time was purposed by God in eternity. But my dogmatism is as meaningless as the promises of a politician unless that which I assert is the plainly revealed truth of Holy Scripture! I ask only that you look into the Book of God for yourself to see if the doctrine I preach is true. The Word of God alone must determine the matter. “*To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.*”

What does the Book say? Nothing else matters.

—“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *His purpose.*” (Rom 8:28).

—“*The children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the *purpose* of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calls.” (Rom 9:11).

—“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the *purpose* of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will.” (Eph 1:11).

—“According to the eternal *purpose* which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Eph 3:11).

—“Who has saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own *purpose* and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” (2 Tim 1:9)

These five texts taken directly from the Word of God, Himself, tell us five distinct facts about the purpose of God.

The purpose of God is eternal. As A. H. Strong put it, “What God does, He has always purposed to do.”

The purpose of God includes all things.

The purpose of God has the benefit of His elect for its particular design.—Everything that God has purposed is for the ultimate, spiritual and eternal benefit of His covenant people.

The purpose of God is Immutable and sure.—God says, “*My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.*” (Isa 46:10).

And in its ultimate end, God’s purpose will accomplish the eternal salvation of His people and the glory of His own great name.—“*My salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel, My glory.*”

That by which our God, the triune Jehovah, specifically distinguishes Himself from all the idols of men, that which distinguishes the true and living God from all the false gods concocted and made by ignorant men is just this—Our God is the God of Purpose and all that He purposed in eternity He shall bring to pass in time. A god without purpose, or whose purpose can fail—a god whose purpose can be altered or thwarted, a god whose purpose can be resisted is not God—but only a useless idol carved from one of the trees in the dark forest of man’s depraved imagination.—“*But our God is in the heavens: He has done whatever He has pleased!*”

God Almighty, the one true and living God, the God of the Bible, is a God of Purpose, sovereign, eternal, unalterable purpose! Everything that comes to pass in time is brought to pass by the hand of our God, “*According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” This eternal purpose of God is what we call, in Bible terms, predestination. Charles Buck rightly defined predestination as “the decree of God whereby He has, for His own glory, foreordained whatever comes to pass.”

There is absolutely no question about the fact that the Word of God teaches the doctrine of predestination. It is taught throughout the Scriptures and clearly stated in numerous passages of Inspiration (Mat 25:34; Rom 8:29, 30; Eph 1:3, 6, 11; 2 Tim 1:9-10; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Peter 1:1-2; John 6:37; 17:2-24; Rev 13:8; 17:8; Daniel 4:35; 1 Thess 5:19; Matt 11:26; Exo 4:21; Prov 16:4; Acts 2:23; 4:28; 13:48).

The fact that predestination is a Bible doctrine simply cannot be disputed. The basis of our faith is the Word of God and the Word of God alone. We believe this doctrine, rejoice in it and preach it from the housetops because it is plainly taught in Holy Scripture.—Adapted from a weekly *Grace Bulletin*.

**Remember the Cesspool  
From Where God Rescued You?**

## THE TREASURY OF A TRUE CHURCH IS ITS PRAYER MEETINGS!

By Charles H. Spurgeon

*“And David’s place was empty.”  
1 Samuel 20:25*

I have now to say just a few words specially to the members of the Church about THEIR PLACE AT THE PRAYER MEETING. “David’s place was empty.” What was being done then? “Well, it was only a Prayer Meeting!” Yes, but, but, but, but, but, but, that is saying a great deal! Did any member of the Church give that answer? I do not think even one would do so, but I would like to enquire of all the members of this Church, “how many times have you been to the Prayer Meeting this year?” There are some of you who are never away unless something absolutely prevents you from coming. I am glad, even, to see some of you come in late on Monday nights. If you cannot come at seven, come at half-past seven, or come at eight! Come at any time you can, so that you may but throw in your portion of supplication with the rest of the Brothers and Sisters.

But I am ashamed of some of our members. They will say, “Whom do you mean?” Last Sunday week, a little boy came to this Tabernacle for the first time. So, when I stood up and began to preach, the little fellow said to his nurse, “Nurse, is Mr. Spurgeon talking to me?” I wish you would all say that, if my words apply to you, for I am talking to some of the members of the Church when I say that I am ashamed of you who never come to the Prayer Meetings! I do not mean this rebuke for you who live at a very great distance, or who are fully occupied with your families or business cares—for you would be wrong to come. God forbid that I should ask you to present to Him one duty stained with the blood of another duty! But there are some who might be here, and *ought* to be here at our Prayer Meetings and they are spiritually suffering positive mischief in their own souls through their absence, besides the loss that they are causing to the treasury of the Church—for the wealth of the Church lies in the power of intercession!

The measure of the Church’s influence will be found to be in exact proportion to the amount of prayer presented by the members, for if there is not much prayer, there cannot be much power. “But we can pray at home,” says one. Yes, I know you can, but, as a rule, I think the people who pray at home are those who pray at Prayer Meetings, too. The assembling of ourselves together for prayer is very generally (special circumstances being taken into consideration) the exponent of our private prayer. Let me stir up any of you whose places at the Prayer Meetings have been empty, and let it not be so again.

My beloved in the Lord, my fellow soldiers in Christ, what has been the source and secret of our strength, as a Church, up till this time? It has been our prayer! How well do I remember what Prayer Meetings we had in Park Street! When we began we were so very few and feeble that, in most of the Prayer Meetings we had, we met in a little vestry. But we soon had to burst open our doors and get into the Chapel, and we have never gone back into the vestry since then! And oh, the power that the Lord graciously gave us in prayer! I felt there, and

many of you felt, that we seemed, by our supplications, to bring down the blessing of God upon us! And then our numbers were speedily increased, souls were converted, and God was glorified!

If we slacken prayer, we shall condemn ourselves! We have proved, not by hearsay, but by personal experience, that prayer is power—and if we relax our prayer even to a small extent, or even for a little while, we shall deserve to have this place made a by-word and a hissing—and all our prosperity taken from us and Ichabod written upon our walls! May God grant that this voice may be silent in death before this people shall ever cease to be a praying people! Rather may our prayerfulness be quickened and our intercessions multiplied—and let it not be said of any men or women here who fear the Lord—that their place is empty when God’s people assemble together for prayer!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #2288, Volume 38—*THE EMPTY PLACE—A CHRISTMAS SERMON*—Read/download entire sermon at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.

## “THREE DOLLARS WORTH OF GOSPEL, PLEASE”

“I would like to buy about three dollars worth of Gospel, please. Not too much—just enough to make me happy, but not so much that I get addicted. I don’t want so much Gospel that I learn to really hate covetousness and lust. I certainly don’t want so much that I start to love my enemies, cherish self-denial and contemplate missionary service in some alien culture—I want ecstasy, not repentance! I want transcendence, not transformation. I would like to be cherished by some nice, forgiving, broad-minded people, but I myself don’t want to love those from different races—especially if they smell. I would like enough Gospel to make my family secure and my children well behaved, but not so much that I find my ambitions redirected or my giving too greatly enlarged. I would like about three dollars worth of Gospel, please.”—D.A. Carson, *Basics For Believers: An Exposition of Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996/2005), pp. 12-13.

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## SPURGEON ON DEATH

Beloved, in a short time, unless the Lord shall come, you and I will have to go upstairs and gather up our feet in the bed and die to meet our fathers’ God. Well, if it should happen to be some disease which gives us warning and opportunity to think beforehand—we will go onward, in the strength of the Lord, with death in full view—without any trepidation! Some of us know what it is to lie for days and weeks, looking into eternity, till our eyes have been able to gaze steadily on death and all the future. We have grown so used to the prospect and so peaceful in reference to it that we have almost been sorry to come back again to life and its trials and sins!

## BROTHER SPURGEON SPEAKS OF “STRANGE THINGS”

*“We have seen strange things today”  
Luke 5:26.*

I can tell you what I saw, one day, and I never shall forget the sight throughout eternity. I saw a sinner whom I know right well—and I can say no good of him, but much, very much that is evil, without at all slandering him. He had been proud and haughty in his opinion of himself, but there shone a light into his soul which unveiled to him his deep corruption and depravity, the sin that mixed with all his best things, and the still more dreadful sin that fermented in his worst things. I saw that sinner—for I know him well—self-condemned. He wrote his own sentence and he handed it to the Judge. He said that he deserved to be cast away forever from the Presence of God and the Glory of His power. And, as he passed up his own death-warrant, he dropped a tear upon it and he said, “I now trust myself to the sovereign mercy of God in Christ Jesus.” I remember it well and I saw that self-condemned sinner pardoned in a moment! The Lord said to him, “Your sins, which are many, are all forgiven,” and his face changed from darkness and gloom into shining light and joy! And he has never lost the impression of that blessed day—and, as he stands here to tell you the story, he can truly say that he saw strange things that day! But, Brothers and Sisters, there are hosts of you who have undergone the same blessed operation! Self-condemnation brought you where the Savior did absolve you and, though it seems so easy to talk about it now, oh, how blessed it was when first we felt it! My heart did leap for joy! I was never so happy before and I sometimes think that I have scarcely ever been quite as jubilant as I was on that day of holy excitement and exhilaration!

I remember, also, *a natural heart renewed by Divine Grace*. I have gone into my garden and I have seen a great number of trees that have new branches which have been grafted into them, but I never yet saw a tree get a new heart. I have seen it get new bark and many changes have happened to it, but it cannot change its heart. There are some living creatures that shed their claws and grow fresh ones, but I never heard of a living creature that grew a new heart. That must be a strange, a wondrous thing, to change the very center and source of life! Yet the Lord Jesus Christ is constantly doing it—giving men new motives, new desires, new wishes, new habits—changing them entirely and, especially, creating in them new hearts and right spirits! Whenever you see that

miracle of Grace worked, you can say, “We have seen strange things today.” A woman came to see me and cast herself down at my feet. She said that she had been such a sinner that she was not fit to speak with me. I bade her rise, for I said I, also, was a sinner. And she told me what she had been—I will not tell you the sad story, for I should have to use words of shame if I described her. But she is among us now, washed and sanctified—and she delights to serve her God and honor and glorify Him! What changed that woman? Was it fear? No, she was a brave spirit who would have dared any kind of devil, but the Grace of God changed and transformed her, and made her into a loving servant of the living Savior. Oh, whenever we see this deed of Grace done—and we do see it continually—we say, “We have seen strange things today.”

Another marvel is, *a soul preserved in spiritual life amid killing evils*. Did you ever see a bush burn and yet not be consumed? Did you ever see a spark float in the sea and yet not be quenched? Many persons here are, to themselves, just such wonders. They are living godly lives in the midst of temptation, holy in the midst of impurity, serving God in spite of all opposition. These are strange things! Did you ever see evil turned into good? There are many of God’s children who constantly see it. “All things work together for good to them who love God.” They are made rich by poverty, made healthy by sickness, made strong by weakness, made alive by killing made to go up by going down! You who live the new life know the meaning of these paradoxes and understand how these strange things make up a Christian’s progress to the Eternal City of God. Strange things do the people of God see in their own lives as they find Heaven on earth! It is a singular thing for anyone to be on earth and yet in Heaven, but we have proved it to be so. We have seen men sick and we have seen men dying—and yet as full of bliss as they could hold, as thankful in their room of poverty—and almost as joyful, as if they had been among the angels before the Throne of God above! There are surprises all the way along the road to Glory, but what will it be when we come to the end of it?—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2614, Volume 45—*Strange Things*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

**HAVE YOU PRAYED FOR YOUR  
PASTOR TODAY?**

**THERE IS NO SIN THAT WE CANNOT  
PRAY DOWN OR WEEP DOWN  
IF WE LIVE AT FOOT  
OF THE CROSS.—CHS**

**LOG ON TO  
<http://www.spurgeongems.org>  
AND DOWNLOAD/READ  
OVER 3,450 C. H. SPURGEON SERMONS  
IN TODAY’S LANGUAGE.**

**Public prayer** is no evidence of piety! It is practiced by an abundance of hypocrites! But *private* prayer is a thing for which the hypocrite has no heart—and if he gives himself to it for a little time he soon finds it too hot and heavy a business for his soulless soul to persevere in—and he lets it drop. He will sooner perish than continue in private prayer! O for heart searching about this! Do I draw near to God alone? Do I pray when no eyes see, when no ears hear? Do I make a conscience habit of private prayer? Is it a delight to pray? For I may gather that if I never enjoy private prayer I am one of those hypocrites who will not always call upon God.—CHS

**PRAY DAILY FOR OUR PRESIDENT.**

# “HYMNS MAKE LIARS OF US ALL!”

By Daniel E. Parks, Pastor  
Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, PO Box 305, Frederiksted, VI 00841

I had the privilege in 1993 of succeeding Dr. N. Burnett Magruder in the pastorate of Redeemer Baptist Church of Louisville, Kentucky. It also was my pleasure to serve as his pastor the last few years of his earthly pilgrimage.

During a certain worship service, and after the congregation had sung a hymn in which the Christian expresses his devotion to the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Dr. Magruder said aloud, “Hymns make liars of us all!”

How true!

Many churches in their worship services sing...

*Tell me the story of Jesus; / Write on my heart every word.  
Tell me the story most precious, / Sweetest that ever was  
heard. ...*

And their preachers lead them in singing...

*I love to tell the story / Of unseen things above,  
Of Jesus and His glory, / Of Jesus and His love...*

However, these same preachers preach some other story to their congregations, perhaps with but a passing mention of Jesus and His love. And their congregations love to hear that other story, and would not walk across the street to hear another preacher telling that sweet and precious story they claim to love to hear. Their hymns make liars of them!

Many preachers posit what they suppose to be the free will of man, and set forth what they purport man, with that free will, can do for his own salvation, and tell their hearers what they can do to find the Lord. Then they sing a hymn that makes liars of them all—

*Amazing grace! How sweet the sound /  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost but now am found; /  
Was blind but now I see.*

Hymns have made a liar of me, particularly those expressing the Christian’s devotion to Jesus Christ. For example, I have been convicted when singing ...

*My Jesus, I love Thee; I know Thou art mine.  
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign. ...*

When singing that first line, I truthfully acknowledge that I love Jesus. But at the same time I am convicted of the inconsistency of that love. I have often felt Jesus was speaking to me when He said to His Church, “I have this against you, that you have left your first love” (Rev 2:4).

When singing that second line, I truthfully acknowledge that I have resigned from sin for Jesus. But at the same time I am convicted of continuing to sin. I identify with Paul the Apostle when he laments his indwelling sin (Rom 7:15, 19, 24).

But this I also acknowledge, by God’s Grace—This wretch is not lying when he sings “Tell me the story of Jesus...”—for the Gospel of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is the only truly good story for sinners like me. And this wretch is not lying when he sings, “Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! ...”—for that Divine Grace must be amazing if it finds and saves this chief of sinners! And this unworthy preacher is not lying when he sings, “I love to tell the story...”—for the Glory and Love of Jesus is the story I love most to tell. And I look forward to the day when I shall stand before my Lord and Savior and sing with glorified lips and a sinless body, in all truthfulness and without the least hint of a lie, “My Jesus, I love Thee ...”

Thanks to the Grace of Christ, no hymn I sing in Heaven will make a liar of me!

## NOTABLE QUOTE OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“Oh, Beloved, if we are called to preach, we must believe what we preach, or else we had better give it up! “I believed, therefore have I spoken,” is a text which should be written over every minister’s study door, and over his pulpit, too.”—1893, Sermon #2297

“Let us ask for wisdom and discretion in doing that which is right. Firmness of purpose should be adorned with gentleness of manner in carrying it out.”—1893, Sermon #2291

“You will find all true theology summed up in these two short sentences—salvation is all of the Grace of God—damnation is all of the will of man.”—1895, Sermon #2411

“No sin, whatever it is, shall ruin any man if he shall come to Christ for mercy. Though you are black as Hell’s midnight through iniquity, yet if you will come to Christ, He is ready to cleanse you. It is sin, after all, that lies at the door and blocks your way to the Savior.”—1895, Sermon #2411

“A man who worships his belly is a worse idolater than the one who worships a god of wood! A man who worships gold and silver, if that gold and silver should take the shape of sovereigns and shillings, is not a bit more justified in his idolatry than if he had made it into the shape of a calf and had bowed before it in idolatrous homage and reverence.”—1894, Sermon #2384

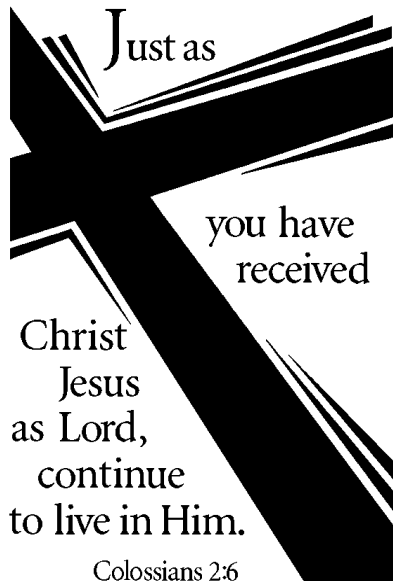
“That experience which a man boasts of is an experience he ought to be ashamed of!”—1892, Sermon #2274

“Let me say, concerning the wine of communion with Christ, that it is never so sweet to a man as when he treads the grapes out himself—‘My meditation of Him shall be sweet.’”—1895, Sermon #2403

“All the works that we can ever do, be they what they may, can never bring such Glory to God as a single act of trust in Him!”—1893, Sermon #2305

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**Pray for unconverted spouses and children.**

**In This Issue...**

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

## SPURGEON'S TESTIMONY

As I look back upon my own spiritual career, when I was seeking the Savior, I am wonderfully struck with the way in which God performed everything for me. For if He had not, I do remember well when I should have rendered it impossible for me to have been here to tell of the wonders of His Grace! Hard pressed by Satan and by sin, my soul chose strangling rather than life. Had I known more of my own guiltiness, my heart would utterly have broken and my life have failed.

But wisdom and prudence were mingled with the teachings of God's Law. He did not allow the schoolmaster to be too severe, but stayed the soul beneath the dire remorse which conviction caused. I had never believed on Him if He had not taught me to believe! To give up hope in self was desperate work, and then to find hope in Christ seemed more desperate, still. It appeared to me easy enough to believe in Jesus while one was really believing in one's self, but when "despair" was written upon self, then one was too apt to transfer the despair even to the Cross, itself, and it appeared impossible to believe!

But the Spirit worked faith in me, and I believed. That is not my testimony, only, but the testimony of all my Brothers and Sisters—in that hour of sore trouble it was God who performed all things for us! Since then and up to this moment, my Brothers and Sisters, if there has been any virtue, if there has been in you anything lovely and of good repute, to whom do you or can you attribute it? Must you not say, "Of Him all my fruit was found"? You could not have done without Him!

If you have made any progress, if you have made any advance, or even if you *think* you have, believe me, your growth, advance, progress, have all been a mistake unless they have come entirely from Him! There is no wealth for us but that which is dug in this mine. There is no strength for us but that which comes from the Omnipotent One Himself. "You who perform all things for me," must be our cry up to this hour!—Adapted from the *C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software—Sermon 3445, Volume 61—STRONG FAITH IN A FAITHFUL GOD—Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).