

FOR HIS GLORY

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When our great High Priest prayed, "Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me" (John 17:11) it was not (as the Arminians say) that He asked merely that they might be provided with adequate means by the use of which they must preserve themselves. No, my Reader, it was for something more valuable and essential. The Savior made request that faith should be continually worked in them by the exceeding greatness of God's power (Eph 1:19) and where that is, there will be works of sincere (though imperfect) obedience and it will operate by responding to the holiness of the Law so that sins are mortified. The Father answers that prayer of the Redeemer's by working in the redeemed, "both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil 2:13), fulfilling in them "all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power" (2 Thess 1:11) preserving them "through faith unto salvation" (1 Peter 1:5). He leaves them not to their feeble and fickle wills but renews them in the inner man "day by day" (2 Cor 4:16).—A.W.P.



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO CHARLES H. SPURGEON

*"Oh that I knew where I might find Him."
Job 23:3.*

If any here should be in doubt on account of ignorance, let me, as plainly as I can, state the Gospel. I believe it to be wrapped up in one word—Substitution. I have always considered, with Luther and Calvin, that the sum and substance of the Gospel lies in that word, Substitution—Christ standing in the place of man. If I understand the Gospel, it is this—I deserve to be lost and ruined. The only reason why I should not be damned is that Christ was punished in my place and there is no need to execute a sentence twice for the same sin. On the other hand, I know that I cannot enter Heaven unless I have a perfect righteousness. I am absolutely certain I shall never have one of my own, for I find that I sin every day. But then Christ had a perfect righteousness and He said, "Here, take My garment, put it on—you shall stand before God as if you were I—and I will stand before God as if I had been you. I will suffer in your place and you shall be rewarded for works which you did not do, but which I did for you."

I think the whole substance of salvation lies in the thought that Christ stood in the place of man.

The prisoner is in the dock. He is about to be taken away to death. He deserves to die, for he has been a great criminal. But before he is removed, the Judge asks whether there is any possible plan whereby the prisoner's life can be spared. Up rises One who is, Himself, pure and perfect, has known no sin and, by the allowance of the Judge, for that is necessary, He steps into the dock and says, "Consider Me to be the prisoner. Pass the sentence on Me and let Me die. Reckon the prisoner to be Myself. I have fought for My country. I have deserved a reward for what I have done—reward him as if he had done good—and punish Me as if I had committed the sin." "But," you say, "Such a thing could not occur in an earthly court of law." No, but it has happened in God's Court of Law, in the great court of King's Bench where God is the Judge of All, it has happened! The Savior said, "The sinner deserves to die. Let Me die in his place and let him be clothed in My righteousness."

To illustrate this, I will give you two instances. One is that of an ancient king who enacted a law against a certain crime—the pun-

(See The Gospel on page 2)

ANSWER THE QUESTION!

By C. H. Spurgeon

*"What will they answer the messengers of the nation? That the LORD has founded Zion, and the poor of His people shall trust in it."
Isaiah 14:32.*

But sometimes, no doubt, the messengers of the nations will *ask out of admiration*. There were some of them that came, like the Queen of Sheba, and asked about everything because they admired it all. And there are, perhaps among us, some whose hearts God has touched. They have the first signs and tokens of an affection for the Truth of God and for the Lord—and when they come where you are who love His dear name, they will ask you many questions most admirably.

Oh, never be slow to answer such enquirers! No, but set out before their eager eyes all the wonders of Zion and all the glories of your Lord! Tell them what the Lord has done for you and for all His people. Tell them how you were washed in the blood of the Lamb, how your heart has been changed, cheered and comforted. Tell them everything, for now that the Lord has given them some hungering and some thirsting after these things, now is your time

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ANSWER!

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to bring out the “butter in a lordly dish!” Now is your opportunity to set before them the Bread that came down from Heaven, even Christ Jesus who is the Bread of Life!

Now let them all know about the “wines on the lees, well-refined,” and the “fat things full of marrow,” for you have before you those who will gladly feed on all the dainties and delights provided in the great banquet of the Gospel!

And it may be that while you are telling the story, there will be some enquirers who will *ask because they want to enjoy these good things for themselves*. The spouse in the Canticles said, “I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my Beloved, that you tell Him that I am lovesick.” And they then asked her, “What is your Beloved more than another Beloved, O you fairest among women? What is your Beloved more than another Beloved, that you so charge us?” So the spouse sat down and told them of all His matchless beauties and finished up by saying, “This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.” Then they enquired, “Where is your Beloved gone, O you fairest among women?—Where is your Beloved turned aside?—That we may seek Him with you.”

In like manner, dear Friends, when you see others who are willing to hear what you can say to them about Christ, do not hesitate to tell them, for perhaps they, too, will love your Savior! Perhaps they have a wish to participate in the merits of His blood and the blessings of His salvation—and that is exactly what you wish concerning them and concerning all mankind, for you often say—

***“His worth, if all the nations knew
Surely the whole world would love Him, too!”***

Therefore, tell all who are in the world about it, praying God’s Spirit to open their hearts that they may receive the message and may trust in Jesus and be saved.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2612, Volume 45—*Questions and Answers Concerning Zion*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

THE GOSPEL

(Continued from page 1)

ishment of anyone who committed the crime was that he should have both his eyes put out.

His own son committed the crime. The king, as a strict judge, said, “I cannot alter the law. I have said that the loss of two eyes shall be the penalty—take out one of mine and one of his.” So, you see, he strictly carried out the law, but, at the same time, he was able to have mercy in part upon his son.

But the case of Christ goes further than that. He did not say, “Exact half the penalty on Me and half on the sinner.” He said, “Put both My eyes out; nail Me to the tree; let Me die; let Me take all the guilt away and then the sinner may go free.”

We have heard of another case, that of two brothers, one of whom had been a great criminal and was about to die, when his brother, coming into the court, decorated with medals and having many wounds, rose up to plead with the judge that he would have mercy on the criminal for his sake.

Then he began to strip himself and show his scars—how here and there on his big broad chest he had received saber cuts in defense of his country. “By these wounds,” he said, and he lifted up one arm, the other having been cut away, “by these, my wounds, and the sufferings I have endured for my country, I beseech you, have mercy on him.” For his brother’s sake, the criminal was allowed to escape the punishment that was hanging over his head.

It was even so with Christ. “The sinner,” He said, “deserves to die. Then I will die in his place. He deserves not to enter Heaven, for he has not kept the Law of God, but I have kept the Law for him—he shall have My righteousness and I will take his sin—and so the Just shall die for the unjust, to bring him to God.”—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2615, Volume 45—*The Anxious Enquirer*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

PRAY FOR GRACE TO FORGIVE YOUR ENEMIES.

NOTABLE QUOTES OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“THE religion of Jesus is the most peaceful, mild and benevolent religion which was ever promulgated. When we compare it with any set of dogmas invented by men, there is not one of them that can stand the least comparison with it for gentleness, mildness and love. As for the religion of Mohamed, it is the religion of the vulture—but the religion of Jesus is that of the dove—all is mercy, all is mild. It is, like its Founder, an embodiment of pure benevolence, Grace and truth.”—1898, Sermon #2594

“I judge that the principal business of any minister of Christ, or of any elder of the Church of Christ, is to bear testimony to the sufferings of Christ. If the atoning sufferings of Christ are left out of a ministry, that ministry is worthless.”—1899, Sermon #2610

“Preach the Doctrine of Grace to a man who never had a sense of sin and he says, ‘I don’t believe in Calvinism.’”—1896, Sermon #2482

PRAY THAT OUR LORD WILL BLESS THE WORK OF TRANSLATING SPURGEON SERMONS INTO SPANISH BY ALLAN ROMAN IN MEXICO CITY.

**PRAY FOR MEN AND WOMEN IN PRISON.
PRAY FOR THEIR CHILDREN
AND SPOUSES.**

Blessing for Blessing

HYMN #8

A hymn by Donald S. Fortner
Grace Baptist Church
Danville, KY

Blessed is the man, O Lord,
Who was chosen by Your grace:
Your election and Your love
Cause our hearts to sing Your praise.
Cause our hearts to sing Your praise.

Come to Jesus? Yes, we do,
Come to Christ alone for grace;
By God's sov'reign grace and power,
We the Son of God embrace!
We the Son of God embrace!

God of love, You sent Your Son
To redeem Your chosen Ones!
Precious Savior! Precious blood!
For our sins Your blood atones!
For our sins Your blood atones!

Blessed Father, blessed Son,
Blessed Spirit, three in One,
We for grace our praise return—
Thank You, Lord, for all You've done!
Thank You, Lord, for all You've done!

When the time of love has come
God the Spirit comes to some:
By grace we cannot resist,
God's elect are caused to come.
God's elect are caused to come.

~ ~ ~

(Tune: *Take My Life and Let It Be*)
77.77.

From *Songs of Grace*, by Donald S. Fortner,
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NOTABLE QUOTES OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

"I do not say that either of our English versions [of the Bible] is Inspired, for there are mistakes in the translation, but if we could get at the original text, just as it was first written, I am not afraid to say that every jot or tittle—every crossed 't' of it and every dot of each 'i'—was Infallibly Inspired by God the Holy Spirit! I believe in the Infallibility and the Infinity of Holy Scripture! God Inspired the whole record, Genesis as well as Revelation, and all that is between—and He desires us to believe in one part of the Word as much as another. If you do not believe that, it will not be food to you. I am sure that it will not—it will only be a kind of emetic to you and not food. It cannot feed your soul as long as you are disputing about it. If it is not God's Word, then it is man's word, or the devil's word—and if you care to live on the devil's word, or on man's word, I do not! But God's Word is food for the soul that dwells with God and it cannot be satisfied with anything else."—1898, Sermon #2577

"The thoughts of angels, or the thoughts of perfect spirits above must be something very wonderful, but, oh, the thoughts of God! If I were told that some bright angel was sent to think of me all day and all night long, that he was my Master's servant to watch over me, I would feel pleasure in the thought, yet that would be a poor, poor thing compared with the fact that God thinks upon us and watches over us!"—1899, Sermon #2609

"My Lord Mayor is not more proud of his badge and chain than many a crossing sweeper is of his ragged trousers! Pride can live upon a dunghill as well as upon a throne! But God will hide pride from us, till, if we look about, we cannot find it and cannot see any reason for being proud."—1896, Sermon #2453

Letters to Mike Gendron Of Proclaiming the Gospel: ptg@pro-gospel.org - www.pro-gospel.org

B.M., Lebanon, KY, writes—I invite you to come to central Kentucky to teach, train and equip young committed Christians on how to **effectively** evangelize the huge percentage of Roman Catholics in this area. After meeting you in Bardstown three years ago, I truly admire your dedication to the most difficult ministry I could imagine along with your teaching and knowledge of Scripture. Since then we have rescued many from Catholic bondage. These young on-fire Christians still have hundreds of family members, neighbors and co-workers who are blinded from the Truth of God. We have been praying and believe many more souls could be won if only our Church body understood the grave danger Catholics are in, and had the tools to evangelize them. Our Church has grown to over 200 in about four years and this growth is not from the moving of letters, but from the changing of hearts. They are some of the most humble, loving and servant-minded saints I have ever met. At least 70% of our new attendees each month are being born out of the Catholic faith. It is only because of our lack of knowledge that we have not been a greater witness to the Catholic community. That is why I feel you could be a blessing by teaching us the most effective means to evangelize Catholics through love, gentleness and truth. I was 29 years old before someone thought enough of me to risk offending me by confronting me about my Catholic heritage. Please let us know your availability.

S.M., Littleton, CO—Today I was on an airplane and wish I had your CD *Last Days for Catholics* with me. There was a woman reading her Bible so I naturally began to speak with her and she said she was a Roman Catholic. With astonishment I declared, "And you're reading the Bible!" A conversation then began. I gave her a copy of your newsletter with all the questions one should ask a Roman Catholic. She gave me her address so I could send her more of your information along with a John MacArthur study bible. Nothing is more exciting or fulfilling than witnessing. It would be wonderful if I had your brain and depth of knowledge, but I'll just keep plugging away with what I do know and keep studying. Thank you for your ministry. You are a godsend.

M. E., Depew, NY—Thanks very much for replying to the Catholic who wrote the article in our newspaper. I love your response. Thank you for having such a great ministry. I can't tell you

how important it is to me to have your resources to read and refer to when talking to friends and family. I must say, though, how sad and frustrated I get when they are blind to the Truth of God. That veil over their hearts is so tough to penetrate! I also really enjoy it when you are on Jan Markell's radio show. I wish I was half as patient as you are with arrogant Catholics! I always pray for you; please keep doing what you're doing till He comes!

R.C., Grady, NM—I have a 21 year old friend who grew up in a Protestant home but at 19 was confirmed in the Catholic church. He recently told me about the "real presence" of Jesus in the Eucharist. Having read your newsletters, tracts and books, I shared with him the idolatry of these things. But he is very comfortable as a Catholic and is serious about becoming a priest. I am still praying for him. Be encouraged because without your ministry, I would have thought Catholicism was simply another denomination and Eucharist was a fancy term for the Lord's Supper. In love I told him he was following another gospel. Thanks for your ministry and your heart to reach Catholics with the Gospel.

J.F., Couer d'Alene, ID—Thank you so much for your Biblical counsel this morning and for your prayers. It's an honor to serve our King with you. I would gladly die today in defense of the integrity of His Word and His honor. May I be so courageous as to actually live today for that same cause!

D.B., Front Royal, VA—I cannot express enough my gratitude for the work you do in reaching out to Catholics! The materials I have ordered from your web site have been shared with many Christians and Catholics. Growing up, my mother warned us against the false teachings of Catholicism, especially for their attitude of going to a priest for forgiveness on Friday, then acting like the devil until the next Friday. But now I am grieved because my parents have recently converted to Catholicism. I believe people who were not raised Catholics but never studied the Bible are easily sucked into Catholicism through zealous Catholic friends. "My people perish for lack of knowledge." I was born-again some 30 years ago and the Bible is the only doctrine I believe. I realize that to witness to my parents I need to know the doctrinal differences. Your ministry and the books of John MacArthur have filled that Holy Spirit-driven need. I thank you so much for this great work you are doing and will keep this ministry in my prayers as I prepare to converse with my parents on this subject!

J.B., Lakeside, CA—I just wanted to let you know how the people reacted to what you said at the Prophecy Conference. There was not a peep from anyone until you mentioned Rick Warren's Purpose-Driven Church. You should have heard the gasps! Hopefully the Lord will prompt them to test the spirits, now that they know the truth. When we broke for lunch we overheard two other conference attendees. They talked about growing up Catholic, but until they heard you, they had no idea how their religion had deceived them. They seemed hungry for more information so I gave them some of your tracts. I could sense an urgency in their voices to tell their families and friends of the deception. I want to thank you and Jane for being obedient to God's calling. Your ministry has helped me understand how I was deceived and how I needed to respond to the Truth of God. I have placed your, "Which Jesus," tract whenever I see statues of Mary. Initially I thought you might get in trouble because the tracts have your name on them. But then I was reminded they have Jesus' name on them and they are really His Words. So I rejoiced to have been used by Him to tell His Truth. Praise God for using the both of you in such a huge way.

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

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

FAITH IS THE GIFT OF GOD

Robert Hawker (1753-1827)

Faith is the entire gift of God, which, like our stature, we can neither add to, nor take from. A soul in Grace, however conscious of the weakness of this blessed principle, should always take comfort in the assurance that it is a gift of God which can never die, *for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance* (Rom 2:29). A child of God, by virtue of that Grace-union in Christ, which was given him in Christ Jesus, before the world began (Eph 1:4) is, during this time-state of the Church, quickened into spiritual life in Christ Jesus.

Now, this quickening can never die. This *incorruptible seed lives and abides forever* (1 Peter 1:23). Death itself cannot destroy it. Hence, the Apostle blessedly says—*He that has the Son has life* (1 John 5:12). And Jesus declares it to be *life eternal* (John 17:2, 3). So that neither in life, nor death, can there be any alteration. And the reason is evident, because it is in Christ; yes, it is Christ Himself (John 11:25)!

How truly blessed is it then, to behold our safety wholly in Christ. There are no procuring causes. Neither great faith nor little faith have the least hand in the great work of salvation. And though, as was remarked before, it is a matter which calls for much love and praise to the Almighty Author and Finisher of our faith when we can cheerfully pass through a troubled path of darkness, *rejoicing in hope of the glory of God*, yet even in that path, though lightened by faith, this must be the Believer's song, when his heart is rightly tuned, and which is as much the portion of the weak Believer as the strong—*In the Lord have I righteousness and strength; even to Him shall men come; and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed* (Isa 45:24).

Gleaned from the Web Site of Zebulon Baptist Church
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HAVE YOU PRAYED
FOR YOUR CHAPLAIN OR
PASTOR AND HIS FAMILY
TODAY?

We are resting in a *finished* sacrifice, not in a sacrifice *to be* offered, nor in a sacrifice which continues to be offered, according to this Anglican Popery which reeks in so many parish Churches, but a sacrifice *complete*, for, “by one offering He has perfected forever them that are set apart.” There is no continuance of the offering of Christ in the popish “sacrifice” of the “mass”—it is a bare-faced lie before Almighty God! Christ declares that when He had once offered Himself, He forever sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. By that word, “It is finished!” He has put an end to all sacrifices and offerings by way of expiation for sin, because they are not needed—one death has accomplished it all!—CHS

THE “GOD” OF ARMINIANISM

By Augustus Toplady, 1740-1778

I dare say, that, in such an auditory as this, a number of Arminians are present. I fear that all our public assemblies have too many of them. Perhaps, however, even these people, idolaters as they are, may be apt to blame and, indeed, with justice, the absurdity of those who worship idols of silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

But let me ask—If it is so very absurd to worship the work of other men's hands, what must it be to worship the works of *our own hands*? Perhaps, you may say, “God forbid that I should do so” Nevertheless, let me tell you that trust, confidence, reliance and dependence for salvation are all acts and very solemn ones, too, of Divine worship.

And upon whatever you depend, whether in whole or in part, for your acceptance with God and for your justification in His sight—whatever you rely upon and trust in for the attainment of Grace or glory—if it is *anything* short of God in Christ Jesus, you are an idolater for all intents and purposes!

Very different is the idea which Scripture gives us, of the ever-blessed God, from that of those false gods worshipped by the heathens—and from that degrading representation of the true God which Arminianism would palm upon mankind.

Our God is in the heavens—He has done whatever He pleased. This is not the Arminian idea of God, for our free-willers and our chance-mongers tell us that God does *not* do whatever He pleases. They tell us that there are a great number of things which God *wishes* to do—and tries and strives to do—but cannot bring to pass!

Is their god the Bible-God? Certainly not! Their god “submits” to difficulties which he “cannot help” himself out of, and endeavors to make himself “easy” under millions and millions of inextricable embarrassments, uncomfortable disappointments, and mortifying defeats. This sad scheme ascends, on the ladder of blasphemy, to the mountain-top of atheism and then hurls itself from that precipice into the gulf of blind adamant necessity in order to prove mankind, free agents!

One great contest between the religion of Arminianism and the religion of Christ, is, who shall stand entitled to the praise and glory of a sinner's salvation? Conversion decides this point at once, for I think that, without any imputation of uncharitableness, I may venture to say that every truly awakened person, at least when he is under the smile of God's countenance upon his soul, will fall down upon his knees with this hymn of praise ascending from his heart—“Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but to Your name, give the glory: I am saved not for my righteousness, but for Your mercy and Your truth's sake.”

However much the Arminian may try to fritter away the meaning of this 8th chapter of Romans, we are obliged, as long as we use terms and words, to say that the 8th and 9th chapters of Romans are the very pillars of that Gospel which men now call Calvinism. No man, after having read these chapters attentively and having understood them, can deny that the doctrines of sovereign, distinguishing Grace are the sum and substance of the teaching of the Bible.—CHS

Study of Ephesians**PRAISING GOD FOR HIS AWESOME ABILITY (2)**

We have been considering the final verses of Ephesians chapter 3—“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen” (Eph 3:20-21).

Last time we dwelt on the fact that God has power to do above what we could ask. But now note that the Apostle says something else. Not only does God’s ability transcend beyond what we could ask, but it goes exceeding abundantly beyond what we could even *think*. You know that there are many things we can think of in our imagination that we might never pray for. We have a tendency to limit our requests in prayer to things we think are possible. But Paul says that God can do exceeding abundantly above and beyond what we can even imagine.

One of our greatest problems, even as Christians, is a lack of faith which manifests itself in a tendency to limit God. In fact, we tend to think of God in terms of our own standards and abilities as people. God complains of this in Psalm 50:21—“These things you have done, and I kept silent; You thought that I was altogether like you; But I will rebuke you, And set them in order before your eyes.”

It grieves the Lord when we have such small thoughts of Him. This was Sarah’s problem. When God announced that she would have the child of promise in her old age, she laughed. Even Mary, the mother of Jesus, seems to have had a momentary lapse of faith when the angel told her she would bear the Son of the highest and she said, “How can this be since I have never known a man?” She was thinking only in terms of what *man* can do. And the angel said to her, “For with God nothing will be impossible.”

The disciples of Jesus were constantly manifesting both their lack of understanding and their lack of faith. Just a few days after watching Jesus perform the miracle of feeding the 5000, they did not have any idea how the 4000 might be fed. On another occasion, when Jesus told them that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to be saved, they said to Him, “Who, then, can be saved?” And Jesus had to remind them in Matthew 19:26, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

God wants us to think big when it comes to thinking about Him. He said to His people in Psalm 81:10, “I am the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt; Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.” But there is something else here in Ephesians 3:20. Once again, the Apostle does not allow us to think of these things in concept, only. God’s ability is not simply an amazing truth that is mind-boggling to think about. It is something which is actually operating within the being of every Believer in Jesus Christ. For Paul says that this ability of God to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think is “**ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKS IN US!**”

This is not just theoretical. This is not something remote and removed from the reality of our lives. It is not something too good to be true with which we have no point of contact. No, no. It is **IN US!**

Paul has already told us in the second chapter that this is what happened to the Ephesians to whom he was writing this letter. “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom, also, we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of

wrath, just as the others” (Eph 2:1-3).

If man were able to fully comprehend how dead is the soul of an unbeliever, he could only stand in amazement at what had happened to these Ephesians. They had never even heard of God in any truthful terms. They grew up as sheer pagans, probably worshipping Diana and other false gods and idols. Yet, one day, a little Jewish man wandered into their city and suddenly, their whole lives are changed. Why? The power of God worked **IN THEM**.

But let us come closer to home. This is the power which is at work in every Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ today. Without the miracle-working power of God, we would all still be dead in our trespasses and sins. Left to ourselves, we would be scoffers to this day.

That brings us now to verse 21 and the assignment which now rests upon every one of us who have been the objects of this awesome power and saving Grace—“to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

Why does Paul put this giving glory to God in terms of the *Church* doing it? It is because the Church is God’s greatest miracle. In Paul’s day, this stood out in a remarkable way. Here were Jews and Gentiles coming together in one body as one family. The Gentiles, like the Ephesians, had been gross idolaters who were aliens from God’s covenants and promises. The Jews looked upon all Gentiles as scum in a sense of proud superiority. The thought of bringing Jew and Gentile together seemed impossible!

God manifested His power in an awesome way when He made the universe. By simply speaking a word, He caused the stars and planets and sun and moon to come into existence out of sheer nothingness. But nothing proclaims God’s power and glory like His Church—for here is a collection of once-dead sinners who were by nature haters of God and disobedient, made not only new, but beloved children of God and heirs of all that is God’s!

Not only is the Church God’s greatest miracle, but it is the chief privilege of the Church to give glory to God. Brothers and Sisters, it is so important that we keep a perspective concerning our priorities. *Our chief work is to glorify God!* This we do in the most focused way when we worship Him. The word “glorify” means to praise, honor and magnify who God is.

But our verse is very careful to point out that the only way we do this is “by Christ Jesus.” By herself, the Church cannot glorify God. Jesus Christ is our great High Priest. He is the One who takes all our praises and makes them acceptable to God.

Finally, we see that our praise is to be endless. Paul uses a very unusual expression here. He literally says that the Church will give glory to God by Christ Jesus “unto all generations of the ages of the ages.” Until He returns, His praise will go on through all generations.

In the meantime, while we are still in this world, we are in desperate need of God’s power. As Jude reminds us in the doxology at the end of his Epistle, only God is able to keep us from stumbling. Only Christ is able “to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.”

Are you joining in the doxology? Have you caught a glimpse of the power that is available to you right now in Jesus Christ? Does it stir you to ascribe all glory unto Him forever? May God make it so of us!—PF

Acceptable Worship - 9

Its Ordinances

By Daniel E. Parks, Pastor, Redeemer Baptist Church, 2801 Cleveland Boulevard, Louisville, KY 40206
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We here address the subject of worshipping God in the Christian ordinances. Worship is an act ascribing worthship or worthiness to one worthy of such an ascription. An ordinance in this instance is a ceremony or rite established by Jesus Christ to be observed by His disciples. The two Christian ordinances which we here address are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both these ordinances are acts of worship. In observing them, we Believers confess that Jesus Christ is worthy of our obedience (John 14:15).

I. Baptism is an act of worship. Baptism is the initiatory ordinance of the Christian faith. It was instituted by Christ shortly before His ascension into Glory (Matt 28:19). It is the immersion in water of one who has been saved through believing in Jesus Christ (as in Acts 8:36-38; 16:31-33). (Christian Baptism is, therefore, "Believer's Baptism," the immersion of one who is already saved, not of one who it is believed will thereby obtain salvation). It is called initiatory because it is to be observed very soon after conversion (Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16).

In Baptism we Believers confess that Jesus Christ is so worthy that we have united with Him forevermore. We have died to sin in order to do so. We hereby declare that we are "united together" in His death, burial and resurrection (Rom 6:4-6).

That is, we confess that "our old man was crucified with Him." This means that our native sinful nature was put to death in His death and that we are, therefore, dead to the mastery of sin. We furthermore confess that, "Therefore we were buried with Him through Baptism." This means that the baptismal water is the symbolic grave of "our old man," our native sinful nature. And we furthermore confess that, "just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we, also, should walk in newness of life." This means that we arise from the baptismal water as the sign of our regeneration and of having received remission of our sins.

So vital and intimate is this union that Believers are said to be

"baptized into Christ Jesus" (Rom 6:3) as a sign that we have "put on Christ" (Gal 3:27).

II. The Lord's Supper is an act of worship. The Lord's Supper is the continual ordinance of the Christian faith. It was instituted by Christ on the night prior to His crucifixion (Matt 26:26-33ff; 1 Cor 11:23). It is the partaking of Christ through the elements of unleavened bread, the symbol of His sinless body, and of wine, the symbol of His shed blood (Matt 26:26f), by baptized Believers (Acts 2:40-42). It is called *continual* because it is to be observed "often" until His return (1 Cor 11:26), perhaps even weekly (Acts 20:7).

In the Lord's Supper we Believers confess that Jesus Christ is so worthy that we will always commune with Him, alone. We have deserted idolatry in order to do so (2 Cor 6:14-18). We, therefore, in observing this ordinance, obey the command to "flee from idolatry...The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?...I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's Table and of the table of demons" (1 Cor 10:14-21).

In the Lord's Supper we Believers confess that Jesus Christ is so worthy that we will always memorialize Him. He says of the bread, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." And He says of the wine, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor 11:23-25). Saints hereby memorialize the body that was sacrificed for their salvation and the blood that was shed for their redemption and forgiveness.

In observing these two ordinances of Jesus Christ, we Believers worship Him by declaring that He is so worthy that we will obey Him, unite with Him, commune with Him and memorialize Him. Do you?

ASK OUR LORD TO BLESS PASTOR PARKS.

PRAY FOR THE HOMELESS.

WORDS FROM ABRAHAM BOOTH, 1734 - 1806

Never forget that Grace is either absolutely free or it is not Grace at all.

Sovereign Grace lifts the poor and needy out of the dust and sets them on thrones of glory among the princes of Heaven.

Election is the first link in the golden chain of our salvation and the cornerstone in the amazing fabric of human happiness.

The dreadful penalty due countless multitudes of the most serious sins is cancelled out—and all because of God's wonderful Grace.

Believers are declared by the Infallible Spirit to be justified in Christ, accepted in Him and saved in Him! This is the God-appointed method of

justification and the provision made by Grace for the final acceptance of guilty, ungodly and wretched creatures.

By the privilege of adoption we are invested with such a character and brought into such a state as to make us fit to join with the saints and angels in Glory. Only omnipotent, reigning Grace could be sufficient to effect such a change.

The very Grace which provides, reveals and applies the blessings of salvation also teaches, motivates and sweetly constrains a Believer to deny himself and walk in ways of holiness.

REFLECTIONS

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

HAVE YOU FELT THIS PAIN?

I am pained, pained, that I have not more to give my sweet Bridegroom. His comforts to me are not dealt with a stingy hand, but I would gladly learn not to idolize comfort, sense, joy and sweet-felt presence. All these are but creatures and nothing but the kingly robe, the gold ring and the bracelets of the Bridegroom. The Bridegroom Himself is better than all the ornaments that are about Him.

Now, I would not so much have these as God Himself, and to be swallowed up of love to Christ. I see that in delighting in a communion with Christ we may make more gods than one. But, however, all was but child's play between Christ and me till now. If one would have sworn unto me, I would not have believed what may be found in Christ!

I hope that you pity my pain that much, in my prison, as to help me, yourself, and to cause others help me, a debtor, a sinful wretched debtor, to pay some of my debts of praise to my great King. Let my God be judge and witness, if my soul would not have sweet ease and comfort, to have many hearts confirmed in Christ and enlarged with His love, and many tongues set on work to set on high my royal and princely Well-Beloved!

O that my sufferings could pay tribute to such a King!

—From *Letters of Samuel Rutherford*, Published by Banner of Truth Trust 1973. First Published in 1664. Samuel Rutherford was a Christian pastor imprisoned for the Gospel.

MAY WE LIVE TO SEE IT!

Many have spoken much of their hearts being drawn out in *love* to God and Christ, and of their minds being wrapped up in delightful contemplations of the Glory and wonderful Grace of God, the excellency and dying love of *Jesus Christ* and of their souls going forth in longing desires *after God and Christ*. Several of our young children have expressed much of this and have manifested a willingness to leave father and mother and all things in the world, to go and be with Christ.

Some persons, having had such longing desires after Christ, have risen to such a degree as to take away their natural strength. Some have been so overcome with a sense of the dying love of Christ to such poor, wretched and unworthy creatures, as to weaken the body. Several persons have had so great a sense of the Glory of God and excellency of Christ, that nature and life seemed almost to *sink* under it and, in all probability, if God had showed them a little more of Himself, it would have dissolved their frame.

I have seen some and conversed with them in such frames, who have certainly been perfectly sober and very remote from any thing like *enthusiastic* wildness. And they have talked, when they were able to speak, of the glory of God's perfections, the wonderfulness of His Grace in Christ and their own unworthiness in such a manner as cannot be perfectly expressed after them. Their sense of their exceeding littleness and vileness, and their disposition to abase themselves before God has appeared to be great in *proportion* to their light and joy.

—Jonathan Edwards from *A Narrative of Surprising Conversions*, 1736. Reprinted by The Banner of Truth Trust Carlisle, PA 1984.

**PRAY DAILY FOR
PRESIDENT BUSH.**

**PRAY DAILY
FOR THE CONVERSION
OF GAYS AND LESBIANS.**

SMALL CHILDREN IN THE CONGREGATION?

By C.H. Spurgeon

We read that *there were women and children among them* (Matt 15:38). Now, I must confess, myself, I am not partial to very small children coming into the congregation. I am glad to see their mothers and, if they cannot come without bringing their infants, I am glad that they should bring them. But they certainly are not an improvement to a congregation, as a rule. Yet here they were—here were women and children—and I suppose that some of the children were very closely connected with the women by being carried in their arms, because they are described as, “women *and children*.”

They were all fed and that would stop their crying! They were all supplied, however little they might be. And should not this be a great encouragement to me if I am seeking Christ, that if I am no better than a little crying child that might seem to be a nuisance in God's family, or if I am a person so poor, so ill-clad, that I may seem to myself to be as much out of place in a congregation as a crying babe, yet, nevertheless, the bounties of Divine Grace are as much for me as for others? Jesus would not have it said that He had no food for the children! He would not have the mothers go home and say, “The big men had their food, but we had only a few bones and broken scraps. And the poor dear children had none at all.”

In Christ's feasts there is no complaining of the widows as in Apostolic days. None are neglected in the general ministration when Jesus presides. Whoever will, may come and partake of the bounties which the King of Heaven has prepared for every hungry, thirsty soul! So much about the guests. May these suggestions be blessed by the Holy Spirit to induce some hungry sinner to join with the rest of the company and feast on Free Grace.—Adapted from *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.—Sermon #1218, Vol. 21—*The Miracle of the Loaves*—Read/download entire sermon on www.spurgeongems.org.

**PRAY THAT
GOD WILL DRAW
MANY CATHOLICS
TO HIS SON.**

The Work of the Spirit

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

It is a great mistake to suppose that the works of the Spirit are all of one kind, or that His operations preserve an equality as to degree. To insist that they are and do, would be ascribing less freedom to the Third Person of the Godhead than is enjoyed and exercised by men. There is variety in the activities of all voluntary agents: even human beings are not confined to one sort of works, nor to the production of the same kind of effects; and where they design so to do, they moderate them as to degrees according to their power and pleasure. Much more so is it with the Holy Spirit. The nature and kind of His works are regulated by His own will and purpose. Some He executes by the touch of His finger (so to speak), in others He puts forth His hand, while in yet others (as on the day of Pentecost) He lays bare His arm. He works by no necessity of His nature, but solely according to the pleasure of His will. (1 Cor 12:11).

Many of the works of the Spirit, though perfect in kind and fully accomplishing their design, are wrought by Him upon and within men who, nevertheless, are not saved. "The Holy Spirit is present with many as to powerful operations, with whom He is not present as to gracious inhabitation. Or, many are made partakers of Him in His spiritual gifts, who are not made partakers of Him in His saving grace. (Matt 7:22, 23)." (John Owen on Hebrews 6:4). The light which God furnishes different souls varies considerably, both in kind and degree. Nor should we be surprised at this in view of the adumbration in the natural world: how wide is the difference between the glimmering of the stars from the radiance of the full moon, and that, again, from the shining of the mid-day sun. Equally wide is the gulf which separates the savage with his faint illumination of conscience from one who has been educated under a Christian ministry, and greater still is the difference between the spiritual understanding of the wisest unregenerate professor and the feeblest babe in Christ; yet each has been a subject of the Spirit's operation.

"The Holy Spirit works in two ways. In some men's hearts He works with restraining grace only, and the restraining grace, though it will not save them, is enough to keep them from breaking out into the open and corrupt vices in which some men indulge who are totally left by the restraints of the Spirit . . . God the Holy Spirit may work in men some good desires and feelings, and yet have no design of saving them. But mark, none of these feelings are things that accompany salvation, for if so, they would be continued. But He does not work Omnipotently to save, except in the persons of His own elect, whom He assuredly brings unto Himself. I believe, then, that the trembling of Felix is to be accounted for by the restraining grace of the Spirit, quickening his conscience and making him tremble" (C.H. Spurgeon on Acts 24:25).

The Holy Spirit has been robbed of much of His distinctive glory through Christians failing to perceive His varied workings. In concluding that the operations of the blessed Spirit are confined unto God's elect, they have been hindered from offering to Him that praise which is His due, for keeping this wicked world a fit place for them to live in. Few today realize how much the children of God owe to the Third Person of the Trinity for holding in leash the children of the devil, and preventing them from utterly consuming Christ's Church on earth. It is true there are comparatively few texts which specifically refer to the distinctive Person of the Spirit as reigning over the wicked, but once it is seen that in the Divine economy all is from God the Father, all is

(See *Work of the Spirit* on page 10)

WITH APOLOGIES TO THE BEAST!

By C.H. Spurgeon

Sinner, you cannot be saved by any merit, penance, preparation, or feeling of your own! The Lord, alone, must save you as a work of gratis mercy, not because you deserve it, but because He wills to do it to magnify His abundant love. That is the straight furrow of the Word. We endeavor always to make a straight furrow upon the matter of *human depravity*—to preach that man is fallen, that every part and passion of his nature is perverted, that he has gone astray altogether, is sick from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet—yes, is *dead* in trespasses and sins and corrupt before God. "There is no one that does good, no, not one."

I have noticed some preachers plowing this furrow very crookedly, for they say, "There are still some very fine points about man and many good things in him which only need developing and educating." You may have read in the history of Mr. Whitfield's time what a howl was made at him because he once said that man was half beast and half devil. I do not think he ever got nearer the Truth of God than when he said that—only I would beg the beast's pardon—for a beast would scarcely become so evil and vile as human nature becomes when it is left alone fully to develop itself! O pride of human nature, we plow right over you!—Adapted from *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.—Sermon #1217, Vol. 21—*Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*—Read/download entire sermon on www.spurgeongems.org.

PRAY DAILY FOR GRACE TO BE HOLY.

WHAT A CONTRAST BETWEEN "I AM" and "I AM A WORM!"

"*But I am a worm, and no man*" (Psa 22:6). This verse is a miracle in language. How could the Lord of Glory be brought to such abasement as to be not only lower than the angels, but even lower than men? What a contrast between "I AM" and "I am a worm!" Yet such a double nature was found in the Person of our Lord Jesus when bleeding upon the tree. He felt Himself to be comparable to a helpless, powerless, down-trodden worm, passive while crushed, and unnoticed and despised by those who trod upon him. He selects the weakest of creatures, which is all flesh and becomes, when trodden upon, writhing, quivering flesh, utterly devoid of any might except strength to suffer. This was a true likeness of Himself when His body and soul had become a mass of misery—the very essence of agony—in the dying pangs of crucifixion. Man by nature is but a worm, but our Lord puts Himself even beneath man on account of the scorn that was heaped upon Him and the weakness which He felt and, therefore, He adds, "*and no man*." The privileges and blessings which belonged to the fathers He could not obtain while deserted by God—and common acts of humanity were not allowed Him, for He was rejected of men. He was outlawed from the society of earth and shut out from the smile of Haven. How utterly did the Savior empty Himself of all Glory and become of no reputation for our sakes!—CHS

WORK OF THE SPIRIT

(Continued from page 9)

through God the Son, and all is *by* God the Spirit, each is given His proper and separate place in our hearts and thoughts. Let us, then, now point out a few of the Spirit's *general and inferior* operations in the non-elect, as distinguished from His *special and superior* works in the redeemed.

1. *In restraining evil.* If God should leave men absolutely to their own natural corruptions and to the power of Satan (as they fully deserve to be, as He will in Hell, and as He would now but for the sake of His elect), all show of goodness and morality would be entirely banished from the earth: men would grow past feeling in sin, and wickedness would swiftly and entirely swallow up the whole world. This is abundantly clear from Genesis 6:3, 4, 5, 12. But He who restrained the fiery furnace of Babylon *without* quenching it, He who prevented the waters of the Red Sea from flowing *without* changing their nature, now hinders the working of natural corruption *without* mortifying it. Vile as the world is, we have abundant cause to adore and praise the Holy Spirit that it is not a thousands times worse.

The world *hates* the people of God (John 15:19): why, then, does it not devour them? What is it that holds back the enmity of the wicked against the righteous? Nothing but the restraining power of the Holy Spirit. In Psalm 14:1-3 we find a fearful picture of the utter depravity of the human race. Then in verse 4 the Psalmist asks, "Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up My people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD." To which answer is made, "There were they in great fear: *for* God is in the generation of the righteous" (v 5). It is the Holy Spirit who places that "great fear" within them, to keep them back from many outrages against God's people. He curbs their malice. So completely are the reprobate shackled by His almighty hand, that Christ could say to Pilate, "You could have no power at all against Me, *except* it were given you from above" (John 19:11)!

2. *In inciting to good actions.* All the obedience of children to parents, all the true love between husbands and wives, is to be attributed unto the Holy Spirit. Whatever morality and honesty, unselfishness and kindness, submission to the powers that be and respect for law and order which is still to be found in the world, must be traced back to the gracious opera-

tions of the Spirit. A striking illustration of His benign influence is found in 1 Samuel 10:26, "Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts *God* (the Spirit) had touched." Men's hearts are naturally inclined to rebellion, are impatient against being ruled over, especially by one raised out of a mean condition among them. The Lord the Spirit inclined the hearts of those men to be subject to Saul, gave them a disposition to obey him. So too, later, the Spirit touched the heart of Saul to spare the life of David, melting him to such an extent he wept (1 Sam 24:16). In like manner, it was the Holy Spirit who gave the Hebrews favor in the eyes of the Egyptians—who hitherto had bitterly hated them—so as to give earrings to them (Exo 12:35, 36).

3. *In convicting of sin.* Few seem to understand that conscience in the natural man is inoperative unless stirred up by the Spirit. As a fallen creature, thoroughly in love with sin (John 3:19), man resists and disputes against any conviction of sin. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, *for* that he also *is flesh*" (Gen 6:3): man, being "flesh," would never have the least distaste of any iniquity unless the Spirit excited those remnants of natural light which still remain in the soul. Being "flesh," fallen man is perverse against the convictions of the Spirit (Acts 7:51), and remains so forever unless quickened and made "spirit" (John 3:6).

4. *In illuminating.* Concerning Divine things, fallen man is not only devoid of light, but *is* "darkness" itself (Eph 5:8). He has no more apprehension of spiritual things than the beasts of the field. This is very evident from the state of the heathen. How, then, shall we explain the intelligence which *is* found in thousands in Christendom, who yet give no evidence that they are new creatures in Christ Jesus? They have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit: Hebrews 6:4. Many are constrained to enquire into those Scriptural subjects which make no demand on the conscience and life—yes, many take great delight in them. Just as the multitudes took pleasure in beholding the miracles of Christ, who could not endure His searching demands, so the *light* of the Spirit is pleasant to many to whom His *convictions* are grievous.—A.W.P.

HOW CAN YOU SERVE CHRIST? READ ON...

By Charles H. Spurgeon

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

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

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

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

GOOD ADVICE ON PRAYING AND READING OF THE WORD

By Charles H. Spurgeon

If you are earnest in regular prayer, but do not as regularly read or hear the Scriptures, your soul gives out without taking in and is very apt to run dry. Not only thoughts and desires will flag, but even the expressions will become monotonous. If you consider how it is that your prayer appears to lack vivacity and freshness, the probable reason is that you are trying to maintain a maimed fellowship. When conversation is all one-sided, do you wonder that it flags?

If I have a friend at my house, tonight, and we wish to have fellowship with each other, I must not do all the talking, but I must wait for him to answer me or to suggest new topics, as he may please. And if he is wiser than I am, there is the more reason why I should play second in the conversation and leave its guidance very much to him. It is such a condescension on God's part to speak with us that we ought eagerly to hear what He has to say! Let Him never have to complain that we turned away our ear from Him.

At the same time, we must not be silent, ourselves. For to read the Scriptures, to hear sermons and never to pray would not bring fellowship with God. That would be a lame conversation! Remember how Abraham spoke with God again and again, though he felt himself to be but dust and ashes? Remember how Moses pleaded? Do you remember how David sat before the Lord and then spoke with his tongue? Above all, remember how Jesus talked with His Father as well as listened to the Voice from Heaven. Let both forms of conversation unite and all will be well.

Again, it will be well, sometimes, to *vary the order*. Dear Mr. Muller, who is a man living near to God, whose every word is like a pearl, said, the other day, "Sometimes when I go into my closet to pray, I find I cannot pray as I would. What do I do then? Why, since I cannot speak to the Lord, I beg the Lord to speak to me and, therefore, I open the Scriptures and read my portion. And then I find the Lord gives me matter for prayer." Is not this a suggestion of much weight? Does it not commend itself to your spiritual judgement?

Have you not observed that when somebody calls to see you, you may not be in a fit condition to start a profitable conversation? But if your friend will lead, your mind takes fire and you have no difficulty in

following him. Frequently it will be best to ask the Lord to lead the sacred conversation, or wait awhile till He does so. It is a blessed thing to wait at the posts of His door, expecting a Word of Love from His Throne. It is generally best, in communion with God, to begin with hearing His voice, because it is due to His sacred majesty that we should first hear what He has to say to us. And it will especially be best for us to do so when we feel out of order for communion. If the flesh, in its weakness, hampers the spirit, then let the Bible reading come before the praying, that the soul may be awakened thereby.

Still, there are times when it will be better to speak to our heavenly Father at once. For instance, if a child has done wrong, it is very wise of him to run straightaway to his father, before his father has said anything to him, and say, "Father I have sinned." The prodigal had the first word and so should our penitence seek for speedy audience and pour itself out like water before the Lord. Sometimes, too, when our heart is very full of thankfulness, we should allow praise to burst forth at once. When we have received a great favor, we ought not to wait till the Giver of it speaks to us, but the moment we see Him we should at once acknowledge our indebtedness.

When the heart is full of either prayer or praise, and the Presence of Jesus is felt, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we begin addressing the Lord with all our hearts. The Lord has spoken and it is for us to reply at once. On the other hand, when, for wise reasons, our Lord is silent unto us, it is well to take with us words and go to Him. If you have read your Bible and have felt no visit from the Holy Spirit, or if you have heard a sermon and found no dew from the Lord attending it, then turn at once to prayer. Tell the Lord your condition and entreat Him to reveal Himself to you. Pray first and read afterwards, and you will find that your speaking with God will be replied to by His speaking to you through the Word.—Adapted from *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.—Sermon #1255, Vol. 21—*How to Converse with God*—Read/download entire sermon on www.spurgeongems.org.

"The man who followed the wagon from Edinburgh to London to see when the back wheel overtook the front wheel went on a fool's errand, but he was the personification of intelligence compared to the preacher who took a man down into the river that he might sprinkle a little water on his head."—B.H. Carroll

(The above quote is from a debate B.H. Carroll had with Orset Fisher on baptism in Davilla, Texas, in September 1871. Fisher was a Methodist champion and was contending that while Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan and Philip took the Eunuch down into the water to baptize him, it was done not by immersion, but by sprinkling).

Ben Stratton [benstratton@iolky.com]
"One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism."
Ephesians 4:5

**Christians are dying
all over the world
for the sake of
Jesus Christ.
Are you praying for
them daily?**

**PRAY FOR
GOD'S ELECT
IN IRAQ.**

PRAYER AND WISDOM

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Wavering may be seen in some persons *as to the fact of God's hearing prayer at all*. Possibly they are not even sure that there *is* a God, or, if that Truth of God is believed, yet God's *existence* is to them a matter of great obscurity. They know little about Him and do not care to know any more. "Yes," they say, with a kind of languid assent which they have not the moral courage to refuse, "no doubt there is a God"—and they are a little proud to think that they are not atheists as some people are—"Yes, there is a God, but does He really hear prayer as a man hears the requests of his fellow men? And does God actually attend to the prayer so as to be affected by it and to grant the desire of His creature?" If, my dear Friend, you have been led to question this Truth of God, you must not expect to receive anything of the Lord, for, "he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." If either of these is a moot point with you, you might as well stand upon a hill and whistle to the wind, as go up into your chamber and bow your knee in prayer! You are a waverer about matters in which a man must not waver if he expects to be successful in pleading with God! Your fulcrum is not fixed, so you cannot have any effectual leverage in prayer. This must be a settled and fully-believed fact, that God *is*, and that He hears and answers prayer. You may not be able to make out how that is consistent with His fixed purposes and it is a blessing that you need not try to make it out. The way to Heaven is not by explaining riddles, but by believing Revelations. The way to Heaven is not through the cleverness that can spell out an enigma, but through the simplicity that believes in God who cannot lie. It is true that God's eternal purpose is fixed, do not doubt that—but it is equally true that the Lord listens to the voice of a man and that whatever we ask in prayer, believing, we shall receive.

Furthermore, there are some who very greatly spoil their prayers because they waver *as to God's granting the specific thing which they are seeking at His hands*. You know, dear Friends, that there is a way of praying in which you ask for nothing *and get it*. I have heard that kind of praying even in public Prayer Meetings. It was a very good prayer, indeed, containing many admirable phrases—a prayer that was very well put together—I seem to have heard it ever since I was a boy. But there is no real prayer in it and that is the fatal flaw in it. It would be a capital prayer if it were a prayer at all—it has all the makings of a prayer—and yet it is no prayer! It is just as though you might see in a shop window all the garments of a man, but no man wearing the garments! Now, such a prayer as that never succeeds with God because He does not play at hearing prayer though far too many play at praying. It is earnest work with God and it must be downright business work with us.

Suppose you go into a bank and stand at the counter, and say, "I want some money." The clerk says, "How much do you want, Sir? Please put the amount down on this check." "Oh, I do not want to be specific! You can give me a few hundred pounds, but I do not know to a sixpence exactly what I want, I am not sure that I could put it down in black and white." You will get no money at all that way! But if you write down in black and white exactly how much you want—spell it in letters and put it down, also, in figures—the clerk will give you the money if you have so much in your account at that bank. So, if you have an account with the great God—as, blessed be His name, some of us have—go and ask

for what you need!

The Apostle James says in the chapter we read, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." If a man asks of God *riches*, that is not what He has promised to give! If he asks of God good health, that may be granted to him but, still, the promise is concerning *wisdom*, and that is what the man needs! Therefore, let him with all his heart pray, "Lord, give me wisdom." I think our prayers would succeed much better if we were not so wavering about what it is that we really require, and if we were not dubious as to whether God could give us that very thing.

You, dear Friends, are in a fix—you do not know which way to move. Happily, you have forgotten your troubles the little while you have been in the House of Prayer, but tomorrow morning the first thing you will say to yourself will be, "What am I going to do today?" Do you believe that God can give you wisdom and that He will do so if you ask Him? Then go at once to Him and say, "Lord, this is what I need." Specify your needs. State your exact condition. Lay the whole case before God with as much orderliness as if you were telling your story to an intelligent friend who was willing to hear it and prepared to help you. And then say, "Lord, this is specifically what I think I need, and I ask this of You believing that You can give it to me."

If it is wisdom that you need, it will be essential, when you ask for that wisdom, that you decidedly believe that this Book, through which God teaches us wisdom, is really Inspired, so that what it teaches is distinctly and unquestionably true—and is received by you as the utterance of Infallibility. Ask of God in the full belief that it is so, or else I do not see how you can pray to be guided. Moreover, the Author of the Bible is prepared to teach you concerning the things which are written in this Book and it is essential, when you ask for wisdom, that you should believe that the Holy Spirit is able to enlighten you and is willing to instruct you concerning those things which now perplex you. Go, then, to God in prayer, believing in His Word and believing in His Holy Spirit.

God also teaches men sometimes by Providence. He guides their way as otherwise it could not have been directed. Believe in the Providence of God, in the overruling hand of God everywhere in everything and, believing that, go upon your knees and say to Him, "Lord, give me direction. Give me wisdom by Your Word, by Your Spirit, or by some other means in Your gracious Providence, and I will bless Your name for it." But, mark you, when you go to God asking for wisdom, you will not get any help from Him unless you are prepared to follow the guidance of that wisdom when He gives it to you. Many people, when they ask advice, have long before made up their minds what they mean to do. It is not infrequently my lot, as pastor, to be consulted by some persons about marriage. I am very careful as to what I say upon that matter because I am pretty sure that, long before they ask my opinion, they have decided whom they mean to marry. In the case of marriage with ungodly persons, they only come just to salve their consciences, meaning, all the while, to do what they know is wrong.

Now, dear Friends, do not go to God in that fashion—having already made up your mind what you mean to do! "Lord," says one, "help me to do right in this business." And he means to do right if it

(See *Prayer and Wisdom* on page 13)

PRAYER AND WISDOM

(Continued from page 12)

will not be too expensive! “Lord,” he says, “keep me upright in this transaction.” And he means upon the whole, preferably, to be upright—if, if, if—if there is anything to be made by it! He would sooner get the money honestly than the other way but, still, he means to make money somehow! Well, that kind of praying is impudence and, worse than that—it is an attempt to flatter the Oracle to take the responsibility of iniquity off your shoulders—and that will never do when God Jehovah, the All-Glorious One, is the Oracle to which you appeal! No, there must be in our cries to God a firm belief in the power of prayer, a firm conviction of the truth of Revelation and a strong resolve that whatever the Lord bids us do, we will do it, for only to the man who keeps His Commandments and delights himself in the Lord, will God give the desires of his heart. If you will not listen to God’s Word, neither will God listen to your word when you come to Him in prayer.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2537, Volume 43—*A Warning to Waverers*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>

HERE THEY COME!

By C. H. Spurgeon

Here they come—a detachment of late-comers stamping up the aisle, interrupting the first prayer. Others come straggling in all through the reading of the Scriptures. God’s Word seems so contemptible in their esteem that they tramp up the aisle as if it were some unimportant book that was being read. Then comes the singing and some join in it heartily. But others do not even know what hymn it is, for they have only just arrived! And I have known some friends, in certain places, come so late that the minister had almost finished his sermon—and they were just in time to go home with the congregation! This ought not to be the case anywhere and is not the case where all are waiting for Jesus. I like the thought of the good woman who said that she never went to a service late, for it was part of her religion not to disturb the worship of other people. I wish many more agreed with her. Oh, how much loss of spirituality, how much loss of blessing has come by that straggling in, one by one, instead of all being assembled, waiting for the Savior with such due respect to His holy name that they would not think of being late!—CHS

Pray for God’s called pastors, that they might open their mouths boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel of Christ Crucified!
Ephesians 6:20

DO YOU KNOW A ROMAN CATHOLIC WHO IS SAVED?

By Mike Gendron

Proclaiming the Gospel—www.pro-gospel.org

Occasionally, we hear from well-meaning Christians who tell us they know a Roman Catholic who is saved. While there may be born-again Christians who worship in the Catholic church, they should no longer be identified as Roman Catholics. Catholics are those who believe Rome’s gospel of works and sacraments and, according to the Apostle Paul, they have “believed in vain” (1 Cor 15:2). They remain dead in their sins along with the many other “professing Christians” who have believed another gospel. Conversely, Christians are those who believe the Gospel of Jesus and have been saved from the power and punishment of sin (Rom 1:16).

For Catholics to believe God’s Gospel of Grace, they must repent (have a change of mind) concerning the Catholic gospel of works. It is impossible to believe both gospels at the same time because the two gospels are diametrically opposed to one another. Accordingly, we should be defined by which gospel we believe, irrespective of which church we attend. However, those in the Catholic Church, who have experienced the second birth, must be exhorted to leave their apostate church. For what communion has light with darkness? Or what part has a Believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God [Christians] with idols? (2 Cor 6:14-18).

So when someone tells us they know a Catholic who is a born-again Christian, we have to ask, how do you know? Since no one can see a person’s heart, it is impossible to know with absolute certainty “who” is a Christian. However we can know with certainty “what” is a Christian. From the Bible we know a Christian is one who has been called by God according to His purpose and Grace to believe on the One He sent (John 6:29; 2 Tim 1:9). A Christian knows God’s Word is true through the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:12). He has the ability to discern truth from error and has a teachable spirit (1 John 4:6). A Christian is one who has received eternal life, the complete forgiveness of sins and a right standing before God by forsaking all efforts to save himself and by transferring his trust to the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph 2:8-9; Col 2:13). By abiding in God’s Word, the Christian is liberated from man’s traditions and legalistic bondage (John 8:31-32). A Christian is one who is motivated to obey God’s commands by his love for God, *not* to merit salvation (1 John 5:13). He endeavors to live according to God’s will, to do the things pleasing to God and to avoid the things that God hates (Titus 2:11-14).

A true understanding of the Gospel is necessary to trust God’s only provision for the salvation of sinners. Often, the Truth of God must be contrasted against the errors of religious indoctrination for the Gospel to be clearly understood. Biblical terms must be shared and defined in order to expose man’s traditions which oppose the Gospel. Only by asking questions can we know if a Roman Catholic has a true understanding of the glorious Gospel of Grace.

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Pray for all Chaplains and their families.

In This Issue...

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

BROTHER SPURGEON SPEAKS OF HIS REASON FOR COMING TO CHRIST

The Lord draws men to Himself in different ways. I was allured to Christ very much by the hope of eternal safety. I was but a lad and I saw young men, a little older than myself, who had been very promising youths, go off into drunkenness and into vice of different kinds. And I thought that I might do the same. But when I read those words of the Apostle, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day," I was charmed with Christ as a sort of Preserver of character—an Insurer of my soul unto eternal bliss! And I came to Him for that reason.

I have known others who have seen the happiness of Christians—their peace in the midst of turmoil, their joy in times of sorrow, their contentment in poverty, their calmness in prospect of death—and they have said, "If all this happiness can be had in Christ, I will come to Him for it." And in that way He has allured them. Perhaps some of you have never had any great terrors of conscience, or distress of soul—do not fret on that account! If you come by allurements, it is a Covenant way of coming. If you are fascinated by the charms of Christ, it is the very way that God declares He will draw His erring and His guilty people. Oh, that you would yield to the fascination! I pray that you may feel the allurements and say—

*"I yield—by mighty love subdued!
Who can resist its charms?
And throw myself, by wrath pursued,
Into my Savior's arms."*

Do any of you feel some soft drawing? Is there a pierced hand touching you and a loving voice saying, "Seek the Lord"? Have you been very hard up till now, but does an unusual gentleness steal over your spirit as you are sitting in this House of Prayer? Give yourself up to it—it may be that the time of Divine Grace is now upon you. I hope that it is so, that your birth-night has come and that you are passing from death unto life! We have prayed about you. We met for an hour before service and there was hard pleading for you. And God has given us the desire of our spirit and you are to come to Christ tonight! Blessed Lord, if it is so, there will be work for angels in Heaven to sing Your praises concerning a sinner that repents!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307—Sermon #2564, Vol. 44—*Strange Ways of Love*—read/download the entire sermon free of charge at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>