

CHRIST LIFTED UP NO. 139

A SERMON
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AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS

*“And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.”
John 12:32*

IT was an extraordinary occasion upon which the Savior uttered these words. It was the crisis of the world. We very often speak of the “present crisis of affairs,” and it is very common for persons of every period to believe their own age to be the crisis and turning point of the whole world’s history. They rightly imagine that very much of the future depends upon their present exertions. But they wrongly stretch the thought and imagine that the period of their existence is the very hinge of the history of the world—that it is *the* crisis.

Now, however it may be correct, in a modified sense, that every period of time is in some sense a crisis, yet there never was a time which could be truly called a crisis in comparison with the season when our Savior spoke. In the thirty-first verse, immediately preceding my text, we find in the English translation, “Now is the judgment of this world.” But we find in the Greek, “Now is the *crisis* of this world.” The world had come to a solemn crisis—now was the great turning point of all the world’s history. Should Christ die or should He not?

If He would refuse the bitter cup of agony, the world is doomed. If He should pass onward, do battle with the powers of death and hell, and come off a victor, then the world is blessed and her future shall be glorious. Shall He succumb? Then is the world crushed and ruined beneath the trail of the old serpent. Shall He conquer? Shall He lead captivity captive and receive gifts for men? Then this world shall yet see times when there shall be “a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

“Now is the crisis of this world!” “The crisis,” He says, “is two-fold. Dealing with Satan and men. I will tell you the result of it. ‘Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.’ Fear not that hell shall conquer. I shall cast him out. And on the other hand, doubt not that I shall be victorious over the hearts of men. ‘I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.’” Remembering the occasion upon which these words were uttered, we shall now proceed to a discussion of them.

We have three things to notice. *Christ crucified, Christ’s glory.* He calls it a lifting Him up. *Christ crucified, the minister’s theme.* It is the minister’s business to lift Christ up in the Gospel. *Christ crucified, the heart’s attraction.* “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” *His own glory—the minister’s theme—the heart’s attraction.*

I. I begin then, CHRIST’S CRUCIFIXION IS CHRIST’S GLORY.

He uses the word “lifted up” to express the manner of His death. “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.” But notice the choice of the word to express His death. He does not say, I, if I be crucified. I, if I be hanged on the tree. No, but “I, if I be lifted up” and in the Greek there is the meaning of exaltation. “I, if I be exalted—I, if I be lifted on high.” He took the outward and visible fashion of the cross, it being a lifting of Him up, to be the type and symbol of the glory with which the cross should invest even Him. “I, if I be lifted up.”

Now, *the cross of Christ is Christ’s glory.* We will show you how. Man seeks to win his glory by the slaughter of others—Christ by the slaughter of Himself. Men seek to get crowns of gold—He sought a crown of thorns. Men think that glory lies in being exalted over others—Christ thought that His glory did lie in becoming “a worm and no man,” a scoff and reproach amongst all who beheld Him. He

stooped when He conquered and He counted that the glory lay as much in the stooping as in the conquest.

Christ was glorified on the cross, we say, first, *because love is always glorious*. If I might prefer any glory, I should ask to be beloved by men. Surely, the greatest glory that a man can have among his fellows is not that of mere admiration, when they stare at him as he passes through the street, and through the avenues to behold him as he rides in his triumph. The greatest fame, the greatest glory of a patriot is the love of his country—to feel that young men and maidens, old men and sires, are prepared to fall at his feet in love, to give up all they have to serve him who has served them.

Now, Christ won more love by the cross than He did ever win elsewhere. O Lord Jesus, You would never have been so much loved if You had sat in heaven forever, as You are now loved since You have stooped to death. Not cherubim and seraphim, and angels clad in light, ever could have loved with hearts so warm as Your redeemed above, or even Your redeemed below. You did win love more abundantly by the nail than by Your scepter. Your open side brought You no emptiness of love, for Your people love You with all their hearts.

Christ won glory by His cross. He was never so lifted up as when He was cast down. And the Christian will bear witness, that though he loves his Master anywhere, yet nothing moves his heart to rapture and vehemence of love like the story of the crucifixion and the agonies of Calvary.

Again, Christ at that time won much glory *by fortitude*. The cross was a trial of Christ's fortitude and strength, and therein it was a garden in which His glory might be planted. The laurels of His crown were sown in a soil that was saturated with His own blood. Sometimes the ambitious soldier pants for battle, because in days of peace he cannot distinguish himself. "Here I sit," says he, "and rust my sword in my scabbard and win no glory. Let me rush to the cannon's mouth. Though some call honor a painted bauble, it may be so, yet I am a soldier and I want it." And he pants for the encounter that he may win glory.

Now, in an infinitely higher sense than that poor glory which the soldier gets, Christ looked upon the cross as being His way to honor. "Oh!" said He, "now shall be the time of My endurance. I have suffered much, but I shall suffer more, and then shall the world see what a strong heart of love I have." How patient is the Lamb, how mighty to endure. Never would Christ have had such paeans of praise and such songs of honor as He now wins, if He had avoided the conflict, and the battle, and the agony.

We might have blessed Him for what He is and for what He wished to do. We might have loved Him for the very longings of His heart, but we never could have praised Him for His strong endurance, for His intrepid spirit, for His unconquerable love, if we had not seen Him put to the severe test of crucifixion and the agonies of that awful day. Christ did win glory by His being crucified.

Again, Christ looked upon His crucifixion *as the completion of all His work* and therefore He looked upon it as an exaltation. The completion of an enterprise is the harvest of its honor. Though thousands have perished in the arctic regions and have obtained fame for their intrepid conduct, yet, my friends, the man who at last discovers the passage is the most of all honored. And though we shall forever remember those bold men who pushed their way through winter in all its might and dared the perils of the deep, yet the man who accomplishes the deed wins more than his share of the glory. Surely the accomplishment of an enterprise is just the point where the honor hangs.

And my hearers, Christ longed for the cross, because He looked for it as the goal of all His exertions. It was to be the place upon which He could say, "It is finished." He could never say, "It is finished," on His throne, but on His cross He did cry it. He preferred the sufferings of Calvary to the honors of the multitude who crowded round about Him. For, preach as He might, and bless them as He might, and heal them as He might, still was His work undone.

He was straitened. He had a baptism to be baptized with, and how was He straitened till it was accomplished. "But," He said, "now I pant for My cross, for it is the top stone of My labor. I long for My sufferings, because they shall be the completion of My great work of grace." Brethren, it is the end that brings the honor. It is the victory that crowns the warrior rather than the battle. And so Christ longed

for this, His death, that He might see the completion of His labor. “Ay,” said He, “when I am crucified, I am exalted, and lifted up.”

And once again, Christ looked upon His crucifixion with the eye of firm faith *as the hour of triumph*. His disciples thought that the cross would be a degradation. Christ looked through the outward and visible, and beheld the spiritual. “The cross,” said He, “the gibbet of my doom may seem to be cursed with ignominy, and the world shall stand round and hiss at the crucified. My name may be forever dishonored as one who died upon the tree, and cavilers and scoffers may forever throw this in the teeth of My friends that I died with the malefactor, but I look not at the cross as you do.

“I know its ignominy, but I despise the shame—I am prepared to endure it all. I look upon the cross as the gate of triumph, as the portal of victory. Oh, shall I tell you what I shall behold upon the cross?—just when Mine eye is swimming with the last tear, and when My heart is palpitating with its last pang, just when My body is rent with its last thrill of anguish, then Mine eye shall see the head of the dragon broken, it shall see hell’s towers dismantled and its castle fallen. Mine eye shall see My seed eternally saved, I shall behold the ransomed coming from their prison-houses.

“In that last moment of My doom, when My mouth is just preparing for its last cry of, ‘It is finished,’ I shall behold the year of My redeemed come. I shall shout My triumph in the delivery of all My beloved! Ay, and I shall see then, the world, Mine own earth conquered, and usurpers all dethroned, and I shall behold in vision the glories of the latter days, when I shall sit upon the throne of My father David and judge the earth, attended with the pomp of angels and the shouts of My beloved!”

Yes, Christ saw in His cross the victories of it, and therefore did He pant and long for it as being the place of victory and the means of conquest. “I,” said Jesus, “if I be lifted up, if I be exalted,” He puts His crucifixion as being His glory. This is the first point of our text.

II. But now, secondly, CHRIST HAS ANOTHER LIFTING UP, not ignominious, but truly honorable.

There is a lifting of Him upon the pole of the Gospel, in the preaching of the Word. Christ Jesus is to be lifted up every day. For that purpose He came into the world, “That like as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,” even so He might by the preaching of the truth be lifted up, “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Christ is THE MINISTER’S GREAT THEME, in opposition to a thousand other things which most men choose. I would prefer that the most prominent feature in my ministry should be the preaching of Christ Jesus. Christ should be most prominent, *not hell and damnation*.

God’s ministers must preach God’s terrors as well as God’s mercies. We are to preach the thunder of God’s law. If men will sin, we are to tell them that they must be punished for it. If they will transgress, woe unto the watchman who is ashamed to say, “The Lord cometh that takes vengeance.” We should be unfaithful to the solemn charge which God has given us if we were wickedly to stifle all the threatenings of God’s Word.

Does God say, “The wicked shall be cast into hell, with all the nations that forget God?” It is our business to say so. Did the loving Savior talk of the pit that burns, of the worm that never dies, and of the fire that can never be extinguished? It is ours to speak as He spake and not to mince the matter. It is no mercy to men to hide their doom.

But my brethren, terrors never ought to be the prominent feature of a minister’s preaching. Many old divines thought they would do a great deal of good by preaching this. I do not believe it. Some souls are awakened and terrified by such preaching. They, however, are but few. Sometimes, right solemnly, the sacred mysteries of eternal wrath must be preached, but far more often let us preach the wondrous love of God. There are more souls won by wooing than by threatening. It is not hell, but Christ, we desire to preach.

O sinners, we are not afraid to tell you of your doom, but we do not choose to be forever dwelling on that doleful theme. We rather love to tell you of Christ and Him crucified. We want to have our preaching rather full of the frankincense of the merits of Christ than of the smoke, and fire, and terrors

of Mount Sinai. We are not come unto Mount Sinai, but unto Mount Zion—where milder words declare the will of God and rivers of salvation are abundantly flowing.

Again, the theme of a minister should be Christ Jesus in opposition to *mere doctrine*. Some of my good brothers are always preaching doctrine. Well, they are right in doing so, but I would not care to have as the characteristic of my preaching, doctrine only. I would rather have it said, “He dwelt much upon the person of Christ and seemed best pleased when he began to tell about the atonement and the sacrifice. He was not ashamed of the doctrines, he was not afraid of threatening, but he seemed as if he preached the threatening with tears in his eyes, and the doctrine solemnly as God’s own Word. But when he preached of Jesus his tongue was loosed and his heart was at liberty.”

Brethren, there are some men who preach only doctrine, who are an injury, I believe, to God’s church rather than a benefit. I know of men who have set themselves up as umpires over all spirits. They are *the* men. Wisdom will die with them. If they were once taken away, the great standard of truth would be removed. We do not wonder that they hate the Pope, two of a trade never agree, for they are far more popish than he, they being themselves infallible. I am afraid that very much of the soundness of this age is but a mere sound, and is not real, does not enter into the eyes of the heart, nor affect the being.

Brethren, we would rather preach Christ than election. We love election, we love predestination, we love the great doctrines of God’s Word, but we had rather preach Christ than preach these. We desire to put Christ over the head of the doctrine, we make the doctrine the throne for Christ to sit on, but we dare not put Christ at the bottom, and then press Him down and overload Him with the doctrines of His own Word.

And again the minister ought to preach Christ in opposition to *mere morality*. How many ministers in London could preach as well out of Shakespeare as the Bible, for all they need is a moral maxim? The good man never thinks of mentioning regeneration. He sometimes talks of moral renovation. He does not think of talking about perseverance by grace.

No, continuance in well-doing is his perpetual cry. He does not think of preaching, “believe and be saved.” No his continual exhortation is, “Good Christian people, say your prayers and behave well, and by these means you shall enter the kingdom of heaven.” The sum and substance of his Gospel is that we can do very well without Christ, that although certainly there is a little amiss in us, yet if we just mend our ways in some little degree, that old text, “except a man be born again,” need not trouble us.

If you want to be made drunkards, if you want to be made dishonest, if you want to be taught every vice in the world, go and hear a moral preacher. These gentlemen, in their attempts to reform and make people moral, are the men that lead them from morality. Hear the testimony of holy Bishop Lavington, “We have long been attempting to reform the nation by moral preaching. With what effect. None. On the contrary, we have dexterously preached the people into downright infidelity. We must change our voice. We must preach Christ and Him crucified, nothing but the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.”

And yet one more remark. The minister ought to preach Christ in opposition to some who think they ought to preach *learning*. God forbid we should ever preach against learning. The more of it a man can get, the better for him. And the better for his hearers if he has grace enough to use it well, but there are some who have so much learning that if in the course of their readings they find a very hard word, out comes the pencil-case. They jot it down, to be glorified in the next Sunday morning’s sermon.

Do they find some outlandish German expression, which, if pulled to pieces, would mean nothing, but which looks as if it must be something wonderful, that must always come out, if all the Gospel go to the wall. You ought to pray to God that they may never be allowed to read anything but their Bibles all the week, because then you might hear something you could understand.

But this would not suit his reference. If he could be understood, he would not be a great preacher, for a great preacher, according to the opinion of some, is a man who is called intellectual—that is to say, a man who knows more about the Bible than the Bible knows about itself, a man who can explain all mysteries by intellect merely, who smiles at anything like unction and savor, or the influence of God’s Spirit as being mere fanaticism.

Intellect with him is everything. You sit and hear him, you go out, “Dear me, what a remarkable man he is. I suppose he made something out of the text, but I did not know what it was. He seemed to me to be in a fog himself, although I admit it was an extremely luminous haze.” Then people will go again and be sure to take a pew in that church, because they say he is such a clever man. The only reason is because they cannot understand him.

In reading the other day a book of advice to ministers, I found it stated, and very gravely too, by some good old tutor of a college, “Always have one part of your sermon which the vulgar cannot comprehend, because in that way you will have a name for learning, and what you say that they *can* understand will impress them the more, for by putting in a sentence or two which is incomprehensible, you at once strike their minds as being a superior man, and they believe in the weight and the authority of your learning, and therefore they will give credence to the rest which they can comprehend.”

Now, I hold that is all wrong. Christ wants us not to preach *learning*, but to preach the good Word of life in the simplest manner possible. Why, if I could only get lords and ladies to listen to me, by preaching to them so that they alone could understand me, there! they might go and I would not so much as snap my finger for them all.

I would desire so to preach that the servant maid can understand, that the coachman can understand, that the poor and illiterate may hear readily and gladly receive the Word. And mark you, there never will be much good come to the ministry until it is simplified, until our brethren learn one language, which they do not seem to know. Latin, Greek, French, Hebrew, and twenty other languages they know. There is one I would recommend to their very serious study—it is called Anglo-Saxon. If they would just try and learn that, it is astonishing what a mighty language they would find it to move the hearts of men.

Saxon before every language in the world. When every other has died out for want of power, Saxon will live and triumph with its iron tongue and its voice of steel. We must have the common, plain language in which to address the people. And mark this, we must have Christ lifted up, Christ crucified, without the gauds and fripperies of learning, without the trappings of attempted eloquence or oratory. If Christ Jesus be earnestly preached He will draw all men unto Him.

III. AND NOW WE GO TO THE THIRD POINT, WHICH IS, INDEED, THE ESSENCE OF THE TEXT, THE ATTRACTIVE POWER OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

If Christ be thus preached, thus fully held forth, thus simply proclaimed to the people, the effect will be, He will draw all men unto Him. Now, I will show the attracting power of Christ in three or four ways.

Christ draws *like a trumpet* attracting men to hear the proclamation. Christ draws *like a net* bringing men out of the sea of sin. Christ draws also *with bonds of love*. In the next place, Christ attracts *like a standard*, bringing all the soldiers round Him, and in the last place, Christ draws *like a chariot*. “I, if I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me.” Now I will try if I can show these points.

First, I said that Christ draws *as a trumpet*. Men have been wont to sound a trumpet to attract an audience to the reading of a proclamation. The people come from their houses at the well-known sound, to listen to what they are desired to know. Now, my brethren, part of the attractive power of the Gospel lies in attracting people to hear it. You cannot expect people to be blessed by the preaching of the Gospel if they do not hear it. One part of the battle is to get them to listen to its sound.

Now, the question is asked in these times, “How are we to get the working classes to listen to the Word?” The answer is, Christ is His own attraction, Christ is the only trumpet that you want to trumpet Christ. Preach the Gospel and the congregation will come of themselves. The only infallible way of getting a good congregation is to do this.

“Oh!” said a Socinian once, to a good Christian minister, “I cannot make it out. My chapel is always empty and yours always crammed full. And yet I am sure mine is the more rational doctrine and you are not by any means as talented a preacher as I am”—“Well,” said the other, “I will tell you the reason why your chapel is empty and mine full. The people have a conscience and that conscience tells them that what I preach is true and that what you preach is false, so they will not hear you.”

You shall look through the history of this realm ever since the commencement of the days of Protestantism, and I will dare to say it without fear of contradiction, that you will almost in every case find that the men who have attracted the greatest mass of people to hear them have been men who were the most evangelical—who preached the most about Christ and Him crucified.

What was there in Whitefield to attract an audience except the simple Gospel preached with a vehement oratory that carried everything before it? Oh, it was not his oratory, but the Gospel that drew the people. There is something about the truth that always makes it popular. For tell me that if a man preaches the truth his chapel will be empty. Sir, I defy you to prove that. Christ preached His own truth and the common people heard Him gladly, and the multitude flocked to listen to Him.

My good ministering brother, have you got an empty church? Do you want to fill it? I will give you a good recipe and if you will follow it, you will, in all probability, have your chapel full to the doors. Burn all your manuscripts, that is Number One. Give up your notes, that is Number Two. Read your Bible and preach it as you find it in the simplicity of its language. And give up all your Latinized English. Begin to tell the people what you have felt in your own heart and beseech the Holy Spirit to make your heart as hot as a furnace for zeal.

Then go out and talk to the people. Speak to them like their brother. Be a man amongst men. Tell them what you have felt and what you know, and tell it heartily with a good, bold face. And my dear friend, I do not care who you are, you will get a congregation. But if you say, “Now, to get a congregation, I must buy an organ.” That will not serve you a bit. “But we must have a good choir.” I would not care to have a congregation that comes through a good choir. “No,” says another, “but really I must a little alter my style of preaching.” My dear friend, it is not the style of preaching, it is the style of feeling.

People sometimes begin to mimic other preachers, because they are successful. Why, the worst preachers are those who mimic others, whom they look upon as standards. Preach naturally. Preach out of your hearts just what you feel to be true, and the old soul-stirring words of the Gospel will soon draw a congregation. “Where the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.”

But if it ended there, what would be the good of it? If the congregation came and listened to the sound, and then went away unsaved, of what use would it be? But in the next place, Christ acts *as a net* to draw men unto Him. The Gospel ministry is, in God’s Word, compared to a fishery. God’s ministers are the fishermen, they go to catch souls, as fishermen go to catch fish.

How shall souls be caught? They shall be caught by preaching Christ. Just preach a sermon that is full of Christ and throw it to your congregation, as you throw a net into the sea—you need not look where they are, nor try to fit your sermon to different cases. But throw it in, and as sure as God’s Word is what it is, it shall not return to Him void. It shall accomplish that which He pleases and prosper in the thing whereto He has sent it. The Gospel never was unsuccessful yet, when it was preached with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

It is not fine orations upon the death of princes, or the movements of politics which will save souls. If we wish to have sinners saved and to have our churches increased, if we desire the spread of God’s kingdom, the only thing whereby we can hope to accomplish the end is the lifting up of Christ, for, “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.”

In the next place, Christ Jesus draws *as the cords of love*. After men are saved, they are still apt to go astray. It needs a cord to reach all the way from a sinner to heaven. And it needs to have a hand pulling at him all the way. Now, Christ Jesus is the band of love that draws the saint to heaven. O child of God, you would go astray again if Jesus did not hold you fast. If He did not draw you to Himself, you would still, still wander.

Christian people are like our earth. Our world has two forces—it has one tendency to run off at a tangent from its orbit, but the sun draws it by a centripetal power and attracts it to itself, and so between the two forces, it is kept in a perpetual circle. Oh! Christian, you would never walk aright and keep in the orbit of truth, if it were not for the influence of Christ perpetually attracting you to the center.

You feel, but if you do not feel always, it is still there—you feel an attraction between your heart and Christ, and Christ is perpetually drawing you to Himself, to His likeness, to His character, to His love, to His bosom, and in that way you are kept from your natural tendency to fly off and to be lost in the wide fields of sin. Bless God that Christ lifted up draws all His people unto Him in that fashion.

And now, in the next place Christ Jesus is the center of attraction, even *as a standard* is the center of gathering. We want unity in these days. We are now crying out, “Away with sectarianism.” O for unity! There are some of us who truly pant after it. We do not talk about an evangelical alliance, alliances are made between men of different countries. We believe that the phrase, “Evangelical Alliance,” is a faulty one—it should be, “Evangelical Union”—knit together in union.

Why! I am not in alliance with a brother of the Church of England. I would not be in alliance with him if he were ever so good a man! I would be in union with him, I would love him with all my heart, but I would not make a mere alliance with him. He never was my enemy and he never shall be. And therefore, it is not an alliance I want with him—it is a union. And so with all God’s people, they do not care about alliances. They love real union and communion one with another.

Now, what is the right way to bring all the churches to union? “We must revise the Prayer Book,” says one. You may revise it, and revise it as long as ever you like, you will never bring some of us to agree to it, for we hate Prayer Books as such, however near perfection.

“Well then, we must revise the doctrines, so that they may meet all classes.” You cannot. That is impossible. “Well then, we must revise the discipline.” Yes, sweep the Augean stable. And then after that, the mass of us will stand as much aloof as ever. “No, but we must, each of us, make mutual concessions.” Indeed, I wonder who will, except the Vicars of Bray, who have no principles at all. For if we have to make mutual concession, who can be guaranteed that I must not concede a part of what I believe to be true? And that I cannot do, nor can my brother on the opposite side.

The only standard of union that can ever be lifted up in England is the cross of Christ. As soon as we shall begin to preach Christ and Him crucified, we shall be all one. We can fight anywhere except at the foot of the cross—there it is that the order goes forth, “Sheathe swords.” And those who were bitter combatants before, come and prostrate themselves there and say, “You dear Redeemer, You have melted us into one.”

Oh! my brethren, let us all preach the Gospel mightily and there will be union. The Church of England is becoming more united with Dissenters. Our good friends at Exeter Hall have gone a very long way to bless the world and uproot the exclusiveness of their own system. As sure as ever they are alive, they have taken the most excellent step in the world to pull down the absurd pretensions of some of their own brethren, to the exclusive claim of being “the Church.” I glory and rejoice in it! I bless God for that movement and I pray that the day may come when every bishop may do the same.

And I do not glory in it merely because I look upon it as the beginning of union, but because of the preaching of the Gospel. But at the same time I know this, let their example be followed and the barriers between Dissenters and the Church of England are not tenable. Even the nationality of Episcopacy must yet come down.

If my lord, the bishop of so and so, is to have so many thousands a year for preaching to a number of people in Exeter Hall, I have as much right as he has to a State grant, for I serve as many Englishmen as he does. There is no one church in the world that has any right to take a farthing of national money any more than I have. And if there are ten thousand gathered here, it is an unrighteous thing that we should have no subsidy from the State, when a paltry congregation of thirteen and a half in the City of London is to be supported out of national money.

The thing cannot be held long, it is impossible. Christ’s church will one day reject the patronage of the State. Let all of us begin to preach the Gospel and we shall soon see that the Gospel is self-supporting, and that the Gospel does not want entrenchments of bigotry and narrow-mindedness in order to make it stand.

No, we shall say, “Brother, there is my pulpit for you. You are an Episcopalian, preach in my pulpit, you are right welcome to it.” The Episcopalian will say, “You are a Baptist and my brother, there is the parish church for you.” And I just announce that the first chance I get to preach in a parish church, I will do it and risk the consequence.

They are our structures, they belong to all England, we can give them to whom we please, and if tomorrow the will of the sovereign people should transfer those edifices to another denomination, there is nothing in the world that can prevent it. But if not, by what law of Christian love is one denomination to shut its pulpit doors against every other? Many of my dear friends in the Episcopal church are willing to lend their edifices, but they dare not.

But mark you? when the Gospel is preached fully, all those things will be broken down. For one brother will say, “My dear friend, you preach Christ and so do I, I cannot shut you out of my pulpit.” And another will cry, “I am anxious for the salvation of souls and so are you, come into my house, come into my heart, I love you.” The only means of unity we shall ever get will be all of us preaching Christ crucified.

When that is done, when every minister’s heart is in the right place, full of anxiety for souls—when every minister feels that, be he called bishop, presbyter, or preacher—all he wants to do is to glorify God and win souls to Jesus, then, my dear friends, we can maintain our denominational distinctions, but the great bugbear of bigotry and division will have ceased and schism will no more be known.

For that day I anxiously pray. May God send it in His own time. As far as I am concerned there is my hand for every minister of God in creation and my heart with it, I love all them who love the Lord Jesus Christ. And I feel persuaded that the nearer we all of us come to the one point of putting Christ first, Christ last, Christ midst, and Christ without end—the nearer we shall come to the unity of the one church of Christ in the bond of holy permanence.

And now I close by noticing the last sweet thought, “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” Then Christ Jesus will draw all His people to heaven. He says He will draw them unto Himself. He is in heaven. Then *Christ is the chariot* in which souls are drawn to heaven. The people of the Lord are on their way to heaven, they are carried in everlasting arms, and those arms are the arms of Christ. Christ is carrying them up to His own house, to His own throne. By and by His prayer, “Father, I will that they, whom thou hast given me be with me where I am,” shall be wholly fulfilled.

And it is fulfilling now, for He is like a strong courser drawing His children in the chariot of the covenant of grace unto Himself. Oh! blessed be God, the cross is the plank on which we swim to heaven. The cross is the great covenant transport which will weather out the storms and reach its desired heaven. This is the chariot, the pillars wherewith are of gold and the bottom thereof silver, it is lined with the purple of the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And now, poor sinner, I would to God Christ would pardon you. Remember His death on Calvary. Remember His agonies and bloody sweat—all this He did for you, if you feel yourself to be a sinner. Does not this draw you to Him?

***“Though thou art guilty, He is good,
He’ll wash thy soul in Jesus’ blood.”***

You have rebelled against Him and revolted, but He says, “Return, backsliding children.” Will not His love draw you? I pray that both may have their power and influence, that you may be drawn to Christ now, and at last be drawn to heaven.

May God give a blessing for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.