

THE CONDESCENSION OF CHRIST

NO. 151

A SERMON
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AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich.”
2 Corinthians 8:9.

THE apostle, in this chapter, was endeavoring to stir up the Corinthians to generosity. He desired them to contribute something for those who were the poor in the flock that he might be able to minister to their necessities. He tells them that the churches of Macedonia, though very much poorer than the church at Corinth, had done even beyond their means for the relief of the Lord's family and he exhorts the Corinthians to do the same! But suddenly remembering that examples taken from inferiors seldom have a powerful effect, he lays aside his argument drawn from the church of Macedonia and he holds before them a reason for being generous which the hardest heart can scarcely resist, if once that reason is applied by the Spirit. “My brethren,” he said, “there is One above, by whom you hope you have been saved, One whom you call Master and Lord. Now if you will but imitate Him, you cannot be ungenerous, for, my brethren, I tell you a thing which is an old thing with you and an undisputed truth—‘For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich.’ Let this constrain you to benevolence.” O Christian, whenever you are inclined to an avaricious withholding from the church of God, think of your Savior giving up all that He had to serve you and can you then, when you behold self-denial so noble—can you then be selfish and regard yourself? When the claims of the poor of the flock are pressed upon you, remember Jesus! Imagine you see Him look you in the face and say to you, “I gave Myself for you and do you withhold yourself from Me? If you do so, you know not My love in all its heights and depths and lengths and breadths.”

And now, dear friends, the argument of the apostle shall be our subject today. It divides itself in an extremely simple manner. We have, first, the pristine condition of our Savior—“*He was rich.*” We have next, His condescension—“*He became poor.*” And then, we have the effect and result of His poverty—“*That we might be made rich.*” We shall then close by giving you a doctrine, a question and an exhortation. May God bless all these and help us to tell them aright.

I. First, then, our text tells us THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS RICH. Think not that our Savior began to live when He was born of the Virgin Mary. Imagine not that He dates His existence from the manger at Bethlehem. Remember He is the Eternal! He is before all things and by Him all things consist. There was never a time in which there was not God. And just so, there was never a period in which there was not Christ Jesus our Lord! He is self-existent, has no beginning of days, neither end of years. He is the Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, our Savior! Now, in the past eternity which had elapsed before His mission to this world, we are told that Jesus Christ was rich and to those of us who believe His glories and trust in His divinity, it is not hard to see how He was so. Jesus was rich in possessions. Lift up your eyes, believer, and for a moment review the riches of my Lord Jesus before He condescended to become poor for you! Behold Him sitting upon His throne and declaring His own all-sufficiency. “If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the cattle on a thousand hills are Mine; Mine are the hidden treasures of gold; Mine are the pearls that the diver cannot reach; Mine every precious thing that earth has seen.” The Lord Jesus might have said, “I can stretch My scepter from the east even to the west and all is Mine, the whole of this world and yonder worlds that glitter in far off space, all are Mine. The illimitable expanse of unmeasured space, filled as it is with worlds that I have made—all this is Mine. Fly up-

ward and you cannot reach the summit of the hill of My dominions! Dive downwards and you cannot enter into the innermost depths of My sway; from the highest throne in glory to the lowest pit of hell, all, all is Mine without exception. I can put the broad arrow of My kingdom upon everything that I have made.”

But He had more—which makes men still richer. We have heard of kings in olden times who were fabulously rich and when their riches were summed up we read in the old romances, “And this man was possessed of the philosopher’s stone, whereby he turned all things into gold.” Surely all the treasures that he had before were as nothing compared with this precious stone that brought up the rear! Now, whatever might be the wealth of Christ in things created, He has the *power of creation* and therein lies His boundless wealth! If He had pleased He could have spoken worlds into existence. He had but to lift His finger and a new universe as boundless as the present would have leaped into existence! At the will of His mind, millions of angels would have stood before Him. Legions of bright spirits would have flashed into being. He spoke and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast. He who said, “Light be,” and light was—had power to say to all things, “Be,” and they would be! Herein, then, lies His riches. This creating power is one of the brightest jewels of His crown.

We call men rich, too, who have *honor* and though men have ever so much wealth, yet if they are in disgrace and shame they must not reckon themselves among the rich. But our Lord Jesus has honor—honor such as none but a divine being could receive! When He sat upon His throne, before He relinquished the glorious mantle of His sovereignty to become a man, all earth was filled with His glory. He could look both beneath and all around Him and the inscription, “glory be unto God,” was written over all space! Day and night the smoking incense of praise ascended before Him from golden vials held by spirits who bowed in reverence! The harps of myriads of cherubim and seraphim continually thrilled with His praise and the voices of all those mighty hosts were always eloquent in adoration. It may be that on set days the princes from the far-off realms, the kings, the mighty ones of His boundless realms came to the court of Christ and brought each His annual revenue. Oh, who can tell but that in the vast eternity at certain grand eras, the great bell was rung and all the mighty hosts that were created gathered together in solemn review before His throne? Who can tell the high holiday that was kept in the court of heaven when these bright spirits bowed before His throne in joy and gladness and, all united, raised their voices in shouts and hallelujahs such as mortal ear has never heard? Oh, can you tell the depths of the rivers of praise that flowed hard by the City of God? Can you imagine to yourselves the sweetness of that harmony that perpetually poured into the ears of Jesus, Messiah, King, and Eternal, equal with God His Father? No! At the thought of the glory of His kingdom, and the riches and majesty of His power our souls are spent within us, our words fail, we cannot utter the tithe of His glories!

Nor was He poor in any other sense. He that has wealth on earth and honor, too, is poor if he has not *love*. I would rather be the pauper, dependent upon charity and have love, than I would be the prince, despised and hated, whose death is looked for as a benefit. Without love, man—give him all the diamonds and pearls and gold that mortal has conceived—is poor! But Jesus was not poor in love. When He came to earth, He did not come to get our love because His soul was solitary. Oh no, His Father had a full delight in Him from all eternity! The heart of Jehovah, the first person of the Sacred Trinity, was divinely, immutably linked to Him. He was beloved of the Father and of the Holy Spirit. The three persons took a sacred complacency and delight in each other. And besides that, how was He loved by those bright spirits who had not fallen! I cannot tell what countless orders and creatures there are created who still stand fast in obedience to God—it is not possible for us to know whether there are, or not, as many races of created beings as we know there are created men on earth. We cannot tell but that in the boundless regions of space there are worlds inhabited by beings infinitely superior to us—but certain it is there were the holy angels and they loved our Savior! They stood day and night with wings outstretched, waiting for His commands, listening to the voice of His word and when He bade them fly, there was love in their countenance and joy in their hearts! They loved to serve Him and it is not all fiction that when there was war in heaven and when God cast out the devil and his legions, then the elect angels showed

their love to Him, being valiant in fight and strong in power! He needed not our love to make Him happy, He was rich enough in love without us!

Now, though a spirit from the upper world should come to tell you of the riches of Jesus, he could not do it. Gabriel, in your flights you have mounted higher than my imagination dares to follow you but you have never gained the summit of the throne of God—

“Dark with insufferable light Your skirts appear.”

Jesus, who is he that could look upon the brow of Your Majesty? Who is he that could comprehend the strength of the arm of Your might? You are God! You are infinite, and we poor finite things are lost in You; the insect of an hour cannot comprehend You; we bow before You, we adore You; You are God over all, blessed forever! But as for the comprehension of Your boundless riches, as for being able to tell Your treasures, or to reckon up Your wealth—that is impossible! All we know about the wealth of God is that the treasures of the infinite, that the riches of eternity, are all Your own—You were rich beyond all thought!

II. The Lord Jesus Christ, then, was rich. We all believe that, though none of us can truly speak it forth. Oh how surprised angels were when they were first informed that Jesus Christ, the Prince of Light and Majesty, intended to shroud Himself in clay and become a babe, and live and die! We know not how it was first mentioned to the angels, but when the rumor first began to get afloat among the sacred hosts you may imagine what strange wonderment there was! What? Is it true that He whose crown was all arrayed with stars, would lay that crown aside? What? Is it certain that He about whose shoulders was cast the purple of the universe, would become a man, dressed in a peasant’s garment? Could it be true that He who is everlasting and immortal would one day be nailed to a cross? Oh, how their wonderment increased! They desired to look into it. And when He descended from on high, they followed Him, for Jesus was “seen of angels,” and seen in a special sense. They looked upon Him in rapturous amazement, wondering what it all could mean! “He for our sakes became poor.” Do you see Him as on that day of heaven’s eclipse He did ungird His majesty? Oh, can you conceive the yet increasing wonder of the heavenly hosts when the deed was actually done? When they saw the tiara taken off, when they saw Him unbind His belt of stars, and cast away His sandals of gold? Can you conceive it when He said to them, “I do not disdain the womb of the virgin. I am going down to earth to become a man”? Can you picture them as they declared they would follow Him! Yes, they followed Him as near as He would permit them. And when they came to earth, they began to sing, “Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men.” Nor would they go away till they had made the shepherds wonder and till heaven had hung out new stars in honor of the new-born King! And now wonder, you angels, the Infinite has become an infant! He, upon whose shoulders the universe does hang, hangs at His mother’s breast! He who created all things and bears up the pillars of creation has now become so weak that He must be carried by a woman! And oh, wonder you that knew Him in His riches, while you admire His poverty! Where sleeps the new-born King? Had He the best room in Caesar’s palace? Has a cradle of gold been prepared for Him and pillows of down, on which to rest His head? No—where the ox fed, in the dilapidated stable, in the manger—there the Savior lies, swathed in the swaddling bands of the children of poverty! Nor there does He rest long—all of a sudden His mother must carry him to Egypt—He goes there and becomes a stranger in a strange land! When He comes back, see Him that made the worlds handle the hammer and the nails, assisting His father in the trade of a carpenter! Mark Him who has put the stars on high, and made them glisten in the night! Mark Him without one star of glory upon His brow—a simple child as other children. Yet leave for awhile the scenes of His childhood and His earlier life. See Him when He becomes a man, and now you may say indeed that for our sakes He did become poor! Never was there a poorer man than Christ. He was the prince of poverty. He was the reverse of Croesus—*he* might be on the top of the hill of riches, *Christ* stood in the lowest vale of poverty!

Look at His garment; it is woven from the top throughout, the garment of the poor! As for His food, He oftentimes did hunger, and always was dependent upon the charity of others for the relief of His needs! He who scattered the harvest over the broad acres of the world, sometimes had not anything to stay the pangs of hunger! He who dug the springs of the ocean, sat upon a well and said to a Samaritan

woman, "Give me to drink!" He rode in no chariot. He walked His weary way, foot sore, over the flints of Galilee. He had not where to lay His head. He looked upon the fox as it hurried to its burrow and the fowl as it went to its resting place and He said, "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests but I, the Son of man, have not where to lay My head." He who had once been waited on by angels becomes the servant of servants, takes a towel, girds Himself and washes His disciples' feet! He who was once honored with the hallelujahs of ages, is now spit upon and despised! He who was loved by His Father and had abundance of the wealth of affection, could say, "He that eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me." Oh for words to picture the humiliation of Christ! What leagues of distance between Him that sat upon the throne, and Him that died upon the cross! Oh, who can tell the mighty chasm between yonder heights of glory and the cross of deepest woe! Trace Him, Christian—He has left you His manger to show you how God came down to man; He has bequeathed you His cross to show you how man can ascend to God; follow Him, follow Him all His journey through! Begin with Him in the wilderness of temptation. See Him fasting there and hungering, with the wild beasts around Him. Trace Him along His weary way, as the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief—He is the by-word of the drunkard. He is the song of the scorner, and He is hooted at by the malicious! Look at Him as they point their finger at Him and call Him, "drunken man and wine-bibber!" Follow Him along His *via dolorosa*, until at last you meet Him among the olives of Gethsemane. Look at Him sweating great drops of blood! Follow Him to the pavement of Gabbatha; see Him pouring out rivers of gore beneath the cruel whips of Roman soldiers! With weeping eyes follow Him to the cross of Calvary; see Him nailed there! Mark His poverty, so poor that they have stripped Him naked from head to foot, and exposed Him to the face of the sun! So poor that when He asked them for water, they gave Him vinegar to drink! So poor that His unpillowed head is girt with thorns in death! Oh, Son of Man, I know not which to admire most—Your height of glory, or Your depths of misery! Oh, Man slain for us, shall we not exalt You? God over all, blessed forever, shall we not give You the loudest song? "He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor." If I had a tale to tell you this day of some king, who, out of love to some fair maiden, left his kingdom and became a peasant like herself, you would stand and wonder, and would listen to the charming tale. But when I tell of God concealing His dignity to become our Savior, your hearts are scarcely touched! Ah, my friends, we know the tale so well, we have heard it so often! And, alas, some of us tell it so badly that we cannot expect that you would be as interested in it as the subject demands! But surely, as it is said of some great works of architecture, that though they are seen every morning, there is always something fresh to wonder at—so we might say of Christ—that though we saw Him every day, we should always see fresh reason to love, and wonder, and adore. "He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor."

I have thought that there is one peculiarity about the poverty of Christ that ought not to be forgotten by us. Those who were nursed upon the lap of need feel less the woes of their condition. But I have met with others whose poverty I could pity. They were once rich. Their very dress which now hangs about them in tatters tells you that they once stood foremost in the ranks of life. You meet them among the poorest of the poor! You pity them more than those who have been born and bred to poverty because they have known something better. Among all those who are poor, I have always found the greatest amount of suffering in those who had seen better days. I can remember, even now, the look of some who have said to me when they have received assistance—and I have given it as delicately as I could, lest it should look like charity—"Ah, sir, I have known better days." And the tears stood in his eyes and his heart was smitten at bitter recollections. The least slight to such a person, or even too unmasked a kindness, becomes like a knife cutting the heart. "I have known better days," sounds like a knell over their joys. And verily our Lord Jesus might have said in all His sorrows, "I have known better days than these." I think when He was tempted by the devil in the wilderness; it must have been hard for Him to have restrained Himself from dashing the devil into pieces! If I had been the Son of God, I think feeling as I do now, if that devil had tempted me I would have dashed him into the nethermost hell in the twinkling of an eye! And then conceive the patience our Lord must have had, standing on the pinnacle of the temple, when the devil said, "Fall down and worship me." He would not touch him, the vile deceiver,

but let him do what he pleased! Oh, what might of misery and love there must have been in the Savior's heart when He was spit upon by the men He had created! And when the eyes He, Himself, had filled with vision, looked on Him with scorn and when the tongues, to which He, Himself, had given utterance, hissed and blasphemed Him! Oh, my friends, if the Savior had felt as we do, and I doubt not He did feel in some measure as we do—only by great patience He curbed Himself—I think He might have swept them all away. And, as they said, He might have come down from the cross and delivered Himself and utterly destroyed them! It was mighty patience that could bear to tread this world beneath His feet and not to crush it when it so ill-treated its Redeemer! Marvel at the patience which restrained Him. Marvel also at the poverty He must have felt, the poverty of spirit, when they rebuked Him, and He reviled them not again—when they scoffed Him, and yet He said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” He had seen brighter days; that made His misery more bitter, and His poverty more poor!

III. Well, now we come to the third point—WHY DID THE SAVIOR COME TO DIE AND BE POOR? Hear this, you sons of Adam—the Scripture says, “For your sakes He became poor that you through His poverty might be made rich.” For *your* sakes! Now, when I address you as a great congregation, you will not feel the beauty of this expression, “For your sake.” Husband and wife, walking in the fear of God, let me take you by the hand and look you in the face—let me repeat those words—“For your sakes He became poor.” Young man, let a brother of your own age look on you and repeat these words—“Though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor.” Gray-headed believer let me look on you and say the same—“For your sake He became poor.” Brothers and sisters take the words home and see if it does not melt you—“Though He was rich, yet for *my* sake He became poor.” Beg for the influences of the Spirit upon that truth of God and it will make your heart devout and your spirit loving—“I am the chief of sinners, yet for *my* sake He died.” Come let me hear you speak, let us bring the sinner here and let him soliloquize—“I cursed Him, I blasphemed Him and yet for *my* sake He was made poor. I scoffed at His minister, I broke His Sabbath, yet for my sake was He made poor. What? Jesus, would You die for one who was not worth Your having? Would You shed Your blood for one who would have shed Your blood, if it had been in his power? What? Would You die for one so worthless, so vile?” “Yes, yes,” says Jesus, “I shed that blood for *you*.” Now let the saint speak—“I,” he may say, “have professed to love Him, but how cold my love! How little have I served Him! How far have I lived from Him! I have not had sweet communion with Him as I ought to have had. When have I been spending and spent in His service? And yet, my Lord, You say, “For *your* sake I was made poor.” “Yes,” says Jesus, “see Me in My miseries; see Me in My agonies; see Me in My death—all these I suffered for *your* sake.” Will you not love Him who loved you to *your* great excess and became poor for your sake?

That, however, is not the point to which we wish to bring you just now. The point is this, *the reason why Christ died* was “that we through His poverty might be rich.” He became poor from His riches, that our poverty might become rich out of His poverty! Brothers and sisters, we now have a joyful theme before us—those who are partakers of the Savior's blood are rich! All those for whom the Savior died, having believed in His name, and given themselves to Him, are this day rich! And yet I have some of you here who cannot call a foot of land your own—you have nothing to call your own today—you know not how you will be supported through another week! You are poor, and yet if you are a child of God I know that Christ's end is answered in you. You are *rich*. No, I did not mock you when I said you were rich. I did not taunt you—you are! You are really rich—you are *rich in possessions*. You now have in your possession things more costly than gems, more valuable than gold and silver! “Silver and gold have I none,” you may say, but if you can say afterwards, “Christ is all,” you have outspoken all that the man can say who had piles of gold and silver! “But,” you say, “I have nothing.” Man, you have all things! Know you not what Paul said? He declares that “things present, and things to come, and this world, and life and death, all are yours, and you are Christ's and Christ is God's.” The great machinery of providence has no wheel which does not revolve for you! The great economy of grace with all its fullness is yours. Remember that adoption, justification, sanctification—are all yours! You have everything that heart can wish in spiritual things and you have everything that is necessary for this life, for you know

who has said, "Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content." You are rich—rich with true riches and not with the riches of a dream. There are times when men by night do scrape gold and silver together, like shells upon the seashore. But when they wake in the morning they find themselves penniless. But yours are everlasting treasures. Yours are solid riches! When the sun of eternity shall have melted the rich man's gold away, yours shall endure! A rich man has a *cistern* full of riches; but a poor saint has got a *fountain* of mercy. And he is the richer who has a fountain! Now, if my neighbor is a rich man, he may have as much wealth as ever he pleases—it is only a cistern full—it will soon be exhausted! But a Christian has a fountain that always flows and let him draw; draw on forever—the fountain will still keep on flowing! However large may be the stagnant pool—if it is stagnant—it is but of little worth, but the flowing stream, though it seems to be but small, needs but time and it will have produced an immense volume of precious water! You are always to have a great pool of riches; they are always to keep on flowing to you! "Your bread shall be given you and your water shall be pure." As old William Huntington says, "The Christian has a hand-basket portion; many a man, when his daughter marries, does not give her much; but he says to her, 'I shall send you a sack of flour one day, and so-and-so the next day, and now and then a sum of gold. And as long as I live I will always send you something.'" He says, "She will get a great deal more than her sister who has had a thousand pounds down. That is how my God deals with me—He gives to the rich man all at once, but to me, day by day." Ah, Egypt, you were rich when your granaries were full, but those granaries might be emptied. Israel was far richer when they could not see their granaries but only saw the manna drop from heaven, day by day. Now, Christian, that is your portion—the portion of the fountain always flowing and not of the cistern—full and soon to be emptied.

But remember, O saint, that your wealth does not all lie in your possessions just now. Remember you are rich in *promises*. Let a man be ever so poor as to the metal that he has—let him have in his possession promissory notes from rich and true men—and he says, "I have no gold in my purse but here is a note for such-and-such a sum—I know the signature, I can trust the firm—I am rich, though I have no metal in hand." And so the Christian can say, "If I have no riches in possession, I have the promise of them—my God has said, 'No good thing will I withhold from them who walk uprightly'—that is a promise that makes me rich! He has told me, 'My bread shall be given me and my water shall be sure.' I cannot doubt His signature; I know His word to be authentic. And as for His faithfulness, I would not so dishonor Him as to think He would break His promise. No, the promise is as good as the thing itself! If it is God's promise, it is just as sure that I shall have it, as if I had it."

But then the Christian is very rich in *reversion*. When a certain old man dies that I know of, I believe that I shall be so immensely rich that I shall dwell in a place that is paved with gold—the walls of which are built with precious stones. But, my friends, you have all got an old man to die and when he is dead, if you are followers of Jesus, you will come in for your inheritance! You know who that man is, he is very often spoken of in Scripture—may the old man in you die daily and may the new man be strengthened in you! When that old man of corruption, your old nature, shall totter into its grave, then you will come in for your property! Christians are like heirs, they have not much in their minority and they are now minors—but when they come of age, they shall have the whole of their estate. If I meet a minor, he says, "That is my property." "You cannot sell it sir; you cannot lay hold of it." "No," he says, "I know I cannot, but it is mine when I am twenty-one. I shall then have complete control, but at the same time it is as really mine now as it ever will be. I have a legal right to it and though my guardians take care of it for me it is mine, not theirs." And now, Christian, in heaven there is a crown of gold which is yours today! It will be no more yours when you have it on your head than it is now. I remember to have heard it reported that I once spoke in metaphor and bade Christians look at all the crowns hanging in rows in heaven—very likely I did say it—but if not, I will say it now. Up, Christian, see the crowns all ready and mark your own—stand and wonder at it—see with what pearls it is dressed and how heavy it is with gold! And that is for your head, your poor aching head! Your poor tortured brain shall yet have that crown for its arraying! And see that garment! It is stiff with gems and white like snow. And that is for you! When your week-day garment shall be done with, this shall be the raiment of your everlasting Sab-

bath! When you have worn out this poor body, there remains for you, “A house not made with hands eternal in the heavens.” Up to the summit, Christian! And survey your inheritance and when you have surveyed it all. When you have seen your present possessions, your promised possessions, your entailed possessions—then remember that all these were bought by the poverty of your Savior! Look upon all you have and say, “Christ bought them for me.” Look on every promise and see the bloodstains on it. Yes, look, too, on the harps and crowns of heaven and read the bloody purchase! Remember, you could never have been anything but a damned sinner unless Christ had bought you! Remember if He had remained in heaven, you would forever have remained in hell! Unless He had shrouded and eclipsed His own honor, you would never have had a ray of light to shine upon you! Therefore bless His dear name, extol Him, trace every stream to the fountain, and bless Him who is the source and the fountain of everything you have! Brothers and sisters, “You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich.”

IV. I have not finished. I have three things to say and I shall say them as briefly as possible.

The first is a *doctrine*. The doctrine is this—If Christ in His poverty made us rich, what will He do now that He is glorified? If the Man of Sorrows saved my soul, will the man now exalted allow it to perish? If the dying Savior availed for our salvation, should not the living, interceding Savior, abundantly secure it?—

*“He lived, He lives and sits above,
Forever interceding there!
What shall divide us from His love,
Or what shall sink us in despair?”*

If when the nail was in Your hands, O Jesus, You did rout all hell, can You be defeated now that You have grasped the scepter? If when the crown of thorns was put about Your brow You did prostrate the dragon, can You be overcome and conquered now that the acclamations of angels are ascending to You? No, my brothers and sisters, we can trust the glorified Jesus—we can repose ourselves on His bosom! If He were so strong in poverty, what must He be in riches?

The next thing is a *question*. That question is a simple one. My hearer, have you been made rich by Christ’s poverty? You say, “I am good enough without Christ; I need no Savior.” Oh, you are like her of old who said, “I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing, whereas, says the Lord, ‘You are naked and poor and miserable.’” O you who live by good works, and think that you shall go to heaven because you are as good as others—all the merits you can ever earn yourselves are good for nothing! All that human nature ever made, turns to a blot and a curse! If those are your riches, you are not saints! But can you say this morning, my hearers, “I am by nature without anything, and God has by the power of His Spirit taught me my nothingness”?

My brother, my sister, have you taken Christ to be your all-in-all? Can you say this day, with an unflinching tongue, “My Lord, my God, I have nothing. But You are my all”? Come, I beseech you, do not shirk the question! You are careless, heedless; answer it then, in the negative. But when you have answered it, I beseech you beware of what you have said! You are sinful, you feel it. Come, I beseech you, and lay hold on Jesus! Remember, Christ came to make those rich who have nothing of their own. My Savior is a Physician. If you can heal yourself, He will have nothing to do with you. Remember, my Savior came to clothe the naked; He will clothe you if you have not a rag of your own. But unless you let Him do it from head to foot, He will have nothing to do with you! Christ says He will never have a partner; He will do all or none. Come then, have you given up all to Christ? Have you no reliance, and trust save in the cross of Jesus? Then you have answered the question well! Be happy, be joyous! If death should surprise you the next hour, you are secure! Go on your way, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God!

And now I close with the third thing, which is an *exhortation*. Sinner, do you this morning feel your poverty? Then look to Christ’s poverty! O you that are today troubled on account of sin—and there are many such here—God has not let you alone—He has been plowing your heart with the sharp plowshare of conviction! You are this day saying, “What must I do to be saved?” You would give all you have to

have an interest in Jesus Christ! Your soul is this day sorely broken and tormented. O sinner, if you would find salvation, you must find it in the veins of Jesus! Now wipe that tear from your eye a moment and look here. Do you see Him high where the cross rears its terrible form? There He is! Do you see Him? Mark His head. See the crown of thorns, and the beaded drops still standing on His temples? Mark His eyes. They are just closing in death! Can you see the lines of agony, so desperate in woe? Do you see His hands? See the streamlets of blood flowing down them? Hark, He is about to speak. “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me!” Did you hear that, sinner? Pause a moment longer, take another survey of His person—how emaciated His body, and how sick His spirit! Look at Him. But hark, He is about to speak again—“It is finished!” What does He mean by that? He means that He has finished your salvation! Look to Him, and find salvation there! Remember, to be saved, all that God needs of a penitent is to *look to Jesus!* My life for this—if you will risk your all on Christ, you shall be saved. I will be Christ’s bondsman today to be bound forever if He breaks His promise! He has said, “Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth.” It is not your hands that will save you; it must be your eyes! Look away from those works whereby you hope to be saved; no longer strive to weave a garment that will not hide your sin; throw away that shuttle, it is only filled with cobwebs! What garment can you weave with that? Look to Him, and you are saved! Never sinner looked and was lost! Do you mark that eye there? One glance will save you; one glimpse will set you free! Do you say, “I am a guilty sinner?” Your guilt is the reason why I bid you look! Do you say “I cannot look”? Oh, may God help you to look now! Remember, Christ will not reject you, though you may reject Him. Remember now, there is the cup of mercy put to your lips by the hand of Jesus. I know if you feel your need, Satan may tempt you not to drink, but he will not prevail! You will put your lips, feebly and faintly, perhaps, to it. But oh, do but sip it, and the first draught shall give you bliss, and the deeper you shall drink, the more of heaven shall you know! Sinner, believe on Jesus Christ! Hear the whole gospel preached to you! It is written in God’s Word, “He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.” Hear me translate it—He that believes and is *immersed* shall be saved. Believe! Trust yourself on the Savior! Make a profession of your faith in baptism, and then you may rejoice in Jesus, that He has saved you!

But remember not to make a profession till you have believed; remember, baptism is nothing until you have faith. Remember, it is a farce and a falsehood until you have first believed; and afterwards it is nothing but the profession of your faith. Oh, believe that; cast yourself upon Christ, and you are saved forever! The Lord add His blessing, for the Savior’s sake. Amen.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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