IS IT NOTHING TO YOU?

NO. 1620

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 11, 1881
BY C. H. SPURGEON
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

On a night when the Tabernacle was thrown open to all comers, the ordinary hearers vacating their seats for the occasion.

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?
behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me,
wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."
Lamentations 1:12

SYMPATHY with suffering ones is never content to act her part alone. The man who is sorrowful for another is sure to invite others to join him in his sympathy. It seems to him so sad a thing that he would have all men weep over it with himself. It is so great a grief that he would hang the heavens with blackness and drape the world in sackcloth.

Hence Jeremiah, when he saw the sorrows of Jerusalem, complained of all who dared to pass her by without a lamentation. He beheld that ancient and glorious city besieged by her adversaries, invaded by their fierce armies, and given over to plunder, to murder, to fire, and desolation. He beheld the streets running with the blood of her sons and daughters, her houses broken down, and her glorious temple defiled, and laid in ashes.

Do you wonder that he wept, and called upon others to weep with him? He pictured Jerusalem as sitting by the wayside, like a maiden who has been sore wounded, and is in bitter grief, and crying out in her loveliness and anguish, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."

In all the annals of history there never was sorrow equal to the fate of Jerusalem. Many cities have been destroyed, but none have fallen amid such a tempest of terrors. They have been devoured with famine, wasted with pestilence, or broken down by war, but as for you, O Jerusalem, all these evils met upon you as when the vultures hasten from afar, and meet upon the slain.

Beautiful for situation, yet terrible for desolation! Joy of the whole earth, and yet the queen of sorrow! How utterly were you spoiled! Had grape-gatherers gathered the grapes, they would have left here and there a cluster, but you are thoroughly stripped—no fruit remains in you—your desolation is complete!

How terrible was your lot, and how grievous was your fault! Well did the prophet, in the foresight of your tremendous doom, cry to all the nations, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me?"

But friends, the fact of sympathy's eager love of companionship is true in other instances. I too share the sympathetic avarice of Jeremiah's pity. Do you ask what grief I have, and for whose woes I am a mourner? I point you to the cross, and to the Man of sorrows there. All faithful servants of Christ who love their Master would have their hearers mourn for Him, even as the prophet foretold, "They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him."

When they think of Calvary, and of their wounded, bleeding Lord, they cannot help imitating Jeremiah, and picturing their Lord as crying from the cross, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." Hence in all ages of the church this has been a favorite text—not as directly meaning

what we shall say upon it, but as suggesting an adaptation, and asking to be used in our case as Jeremiah used it in his own.

We apply to Jesus and His sufferings tonight the words which the prophet wrote in reference to Judea and her national sorrow. We hear the Son of God saying in His death pangs to all this vast assembly, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."

And this is my first head tonight—*the sufferings of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, are unparalleled*. When we have dwelt enough upon this, we will proceed to note, secondly, *that they have a deep interest to many*. And we will conclude, thirdly, by inquiring *whether they have not some interest for you*?

O that God the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to bear witness to the Lord Jesus, would now bear His testimony in all your hearts, for His mercy's sake.

I. First, then, THE SUFFERINGS OF THE SON OF GOD UPON THE CROSS WERE ALTOGETHER UNPARALLELED.

I tell no idle tale tonight. I draw no picture of romance, but the sorrows which we now relate are matters of fact. Out of the excellent glory let the Lord confirm it tonight, if it be His truth, by the witness of His Spirit.

Jesus, the eternal Son of God, came down in boundless pity among the sons of men, and took upon Himself our human nature. Quitting the infinite honors of the skies, He came to the lowliness of the manger, and the labor of the carpenter's shop—and here He abode, suffering as a veritable man all the sorrows and infirmities of our mortality.

In our nature He lived some thirty years or more, enduring much of poverty, and labor, and at the end thereof He died, not amid the applause of all mankind, as He deserved, but nailed to a cross, like a felon or a slave, a spectacle of scorn and infamy—the despised and rejected of men.

The sufferings of this divine One were unparalleled, first, because of *the dignity of His person*, which gave such point to the insult which He endured. Kings have died. Philosophers have died. Philanthropists have died, but never such a one as this, for He that bled on Calvary was King, and Priest, and Prophet, a right royal man—and more—the Son of the Highest. God that made the heavens and earth was in personal union with that man who died upon the cross of Calvary.

But what a stoop it must have been for Him—from the brightness of the Father's glory to be made the image of shame. A dethroned monarch is always the object of compassion, and a once famous general sitting at the city gate, and begging for a penny from every traveler that passes by, has been in all ages spoken of as a person to be deeply pitied.

But what shall I say of Him who stood as the center of angelic hosts, the prince of the kings of the earth? Aside He flung His most divine array. He girded Himself with garments of this flesh and blood, and then became a man among men, and for men—only to be despised of men. Being here among His own, His own received Him not. Instead of receiving Him, they dragged Him to the judgment hall. They scourged Him. They took Him into the common hall of the soldiery. They spat in His face, they blindfolded Him, they buffeted Him.

They mocked at all His holy offices. They put an old soldier's cloak about Him, and then brought Him out and cried, "Behold the man." They nailed Him to the cross, and then stood there and said, "If he be the Christ, let him come down."

They punned His prayers, and when He said, "Eloi, Eloi," they said, "He calleth for Elias." Nothing that shame could invent they spared Him. And all this was poured on One whose feet honored the ground they trod upon, the glances of whose eyes were angels' law, the words of whose mouth were the music of God's ear. "He was despised and rejected of men," even He who was and is the King of kings, the Lord of lords. Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow which was done unto Him.

There was also this strange point about our Redeemer's suffering, namely, *the perfect innocence of His character*. Many a man has died innocent of that which was laid to his charge, but no man has been

perfectly innocent of every kind of fault. In this man there was never taint of evil. He was born without tendency to sin, for the natural corruption of our nature was not in Him. And He lived never doing wrong to man, or woman, or child, and never by omission or by commission violating the divine will of the Most High. He was absolutely perfect, so that He could say when Satan came to assail Him, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."

Now, herein is a sorrow never to be forgotten—that He must bleed and die, and moreover, that He must so suffer as to be connected with sin. It is anguish and agony for even the breath of evil to blow upon innocence. He was never guilty, and never could have been so in any sense—and yet sin was laid to His charge for our sakes—and He died accused of treason and of blasphemy.

In Him was no sin, and yet the sins of men were laid upon Him. There, bring them here, the sins of ages. Heap them on His back—the sins of men that lived before He was on earth, the crimes of multitudes who transgressed in His own day, and the sins of all the ages since—your sins and mine. They are all brought together and massed together—the total sum how dreadful!

Hear you the Word, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on HIM the iniquity of us all." The innocent, therefore, not only suffers, but suffers in strange connection with sin—and this must have caused an awful shrinking to our Lord's most holy soul.

You and I are comparatively hardened to sin, and therefore it does not so alarm us as it did the perfect soul of Christ, who had no spot or trace of evil upon Him. There was one tried for murder years ago, and some thought it an argument for his innocence that he stood in the dock calm and composed. But others said, "Not so. Innocent men are the very persons who shudder most at having such a crime laid to their charge, and he who could bear the charge without emotion is most probably the man who has committed the crime."

Truth lies in that observation. For the innocent Christ to be made sin for us, and for the wrath of God to roll over Him instead of us, must have caused within His spirit a depth of anguish which the tenderest heart cannot fathom. Behold, and see if there was ever sorrow like unto His sorrow. Was there ever dignity that suffered such indignity, or innocence that came into contact with such a mass of sin, and suffered for it all?

But this is not all, nor half. There was another wonder about the sufferings of Christ, namely, that in His case there was such *a conjunction of griefs*. Have you ever noticed that when you have one trouble, as a rule some other one is absent? Of course, if the north wind blows, the south does not blow too, and if we have the troubles of summer, we do not also endure the evils of winter at the same time. One grief often strangles another in its arms.

We read in Acts of a place where two seas met. Rough navigation there, my brethren, where two seas met, for one sea is often more than enough for a sailor. Sometimes you and I have grief on grief, and sorrow upon sorrow—and things go hard then.

As to the Savior, it seemed as if every form of grief was let loose against Him on that dark, that dreadful night. All the winds of woe escaped from their cave at that dread hour. He was heavy within Himself, deserted by His friends who ought to have defended Him, betrayed by His bosom companion, slandered by false witnesses, hunted down by false-hearted men. He had no one to speak for Him, and He was unable for a certain reason to speak for Himself.

Griefs of body were added to His sadness of soul. Was there a part of His blessed form that escaped from suffering? I know of none. His whole corporeal frame was the center and seat of pain, a furnace of fever, the melting crucible of death. From the thorn-crowned head to the bleeding foot all, all was wounds and bruises for our sake.

But the bodily sufferings were only the body of His sufferings—there was an agony of heart, and mind, and soul. O brethren, if when you have sickness, you can keep your spirits up, it does not matter. And peradventure when the spirits sink, you are happy if you have no pain at the same time. But to have

body and soul at once in the fire, this is, indeed, torture. This is to do business in great waters, where all the waves and billows go over the mariner.

Hell from beneath was stirred against Him. Satan bade his legions aim all their arrows against His heart. Heaven veiled its sun, and left the sufferer in a chill darkness. God did hide His face, and make Him cry, "Why hast thou forsaken me!" Earth's inhabitants seemed leagued to cast Him out.

There is not, to my knowledge, a mitigating circumstance in the woes of Christ. It is bitter, bitter, bitter. And if there be a mixture, it is wormwood mingled with gall. But bitter all, tempestuous all, terrific all. No drop of water, for in His thirst they gave Him vinegar to drink. No ray of light—the sun is set. No stable ground of comfort—the very rocks do rend. Heaven and earth stand arrayed against Him. Well does He cry, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me."

Oh that these lips had language, and could speak aright upon such a theme as this! But I ask you to notice next that there is in our Savior's sorrow this singular point which is not found anywhere else, namely, that all His sorrow was *voluntarily undertaken*, and voluntarily continued in. When a man feels that it must be, he girds himself to bear the will of destiny. But concerning Christ, He was under no compulsion from any force which He could not Himself control. He dies but He says, "No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself."

He is betrayed into the hands of wicked men, but He says that He could presently pray to His Father, and He would send Him twelve legions of angels. He has not a word to say to Pilate, but He had ten thousand words which He might have spoken if He would, only that He could not then have effected the divine purpose or wrought out our salvation.

This perfect freedom involved Him in a double labor—He not only had to suffer, but to will to suffer even to the end. He had therefore to put a divine restraint upon Himself, and to bear on, when His human nature might have suggested that He should bear no more. It did suggest it, so far as it could do so, without a faulty shrinking. "If it be possible," said He, "let this cup pass from me." But His holy soul came to the rescue of His resolution, for He added, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

It is not in our power to thus yield ourselves to sorrow. If we gave up ourselves once to the hands of pain or death it would be but one act, and we should then be out of our own power. But our Lord always had Himself in His own hand, and hence He made a continuous offering of Himself by a distinct act of His will until He expired.

Brothers, recollect that if you were to die for your country, you would only then pay the debt of nature a little sooner than it would otherwise be due, but the debt would in any case have had to be paid in due time. If tonight I died for you, I should but anticipate that hour, which may be near enough now, when I must surely die.

Jesus needed not to die. There was no necessity, as far as His nature was concerned, that ever He should slumber in a grave. Oh, but this is a death altogether unexampled—voluntarily undertaken, and voluntarily borne for the good of others. Love led His perfect will in sweet captivity, so that He could not do otherwise than die, but and with the exception of His own unrivalled love, not another cord held Him, or could have held Him for a moment. Let us give Him our deepest love in return for so special a sacrifice.

And this makes it more singular still—that *those for whom He died thus voluntarily were His enemies*. Oh, tell it, tell it all the world over, that Jesus laid down His life for those who hated Him, for those who loved the wages of unrighteousness. Tell it in hell, tell it on earth, tell it in heaven! And let the three worlds overflow with wonder at this miracle of love.

Let the whole universe hear it—Jesus died for His enemies. His last breath said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He died for those who did not love Him, but thirsted for His blood. He died for those who could not see His beauties—who never will see His beauties unless He work a miracle upon them. He died for you and for me.

But oh, how shamefully have the best rewarded Him with chill penurious love! How shamefully are some here present rewarding Him at this very moment, by living in entire neglect of Him—living as if they had nothing to do with the death of Christ at all.

Scarcely for a righteous man will one die—peradventure for a benevolent man one would even dare to die, but "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Hear that, O you deaf ears, hear that! O you blind eyes, behold the splendor of this love! O you hard hearts, feel the magic of this deed!

Christ died for the ungodly, for the guilty, for the profane, for the drunken, for the unchaste, for the worst of men—died that He might purify them, lift them out of their degradation, make new men of them, and prove what heavenly love can do. Men were utterly depraved and wedded to their sins—as mad about sin as the lunatic is mad in his delirium, as eaten up with it as a leper with leprosy—and yet for such Christ died. He gave Himself, not for our virtues, but for our sins, and He came to seek and save, not the good, but those that were lost. For such did He die, and therefore His death is altogether unparalleled.

Once more to crown this edifice of wonder. There was this about Christ's sorrow, which was never in any other sorrow under heaven, namely, that *it was expiatory*. Christ was dying and suffering in the stead of others—and by that dying and suffering He was putting away the sin of others. This is the substance of the revelation of God, that Jesus Christ has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and there is virtue in His blood to cleanse from all sin.

I hear certain philosophical divines denying this atonement, but I beseech you give no heed to them—they would rob you of your only hope of heaven. Mark you this—there is nothing left of Christianity when atonement is gone. "The blood is the life thereof," and if you remove its life, the Gospel will die.

What see you where this atoning sacrifice is left out of the preaching? Why, very soon empty places of worship, for the people soon find that there is nothing there for them, and they will not go where they are mocked with husks. To deny the great doctrine of atonement by the blood of Jesus Christ is to hamstring the Gospel, and to cut the throat of Christianity.

Look at this house tonight, this spectacle, this gathered throng! Into what corner could another hearer be thrust? One would think, from the vehement eagerness to enter that we gave some gorgeous entertainment. Come here any night in all the year, or any morning if you like, and it is still the same.

Well, why come the people? To see a man in fine raiment? We wear no millinery. To listen to sweet strains of music and the swell of organs? We have none of it. What come they for? To hear an orator? Far from it. I have never aimed at oratory, or desired to exhibit it.

I have preached Christ out of my very soul, and lifted Him up as the Savior of men, and therefore the people throng the house, and they always will while Christ is fully preached in language which they can understand. Men need a Savior as hungry men need bread, and as thirsty souls need drink, and they know where that is preached which they require.

Go, tell the men that preach their new doctrine that they cannot stir a tiny village with their fine theories, after they have preached them once or twice. And yet for twenty-seven years together we can hold a multitude with no magic but the name of Christ, with no mystery but the cross, the blood, and the one word—"Believe in Christ and live."

Therefore preach I the old, old Gospel yet again, harping forever on that one divine string, which has yet more music in it than all the flutes, harps, sackbuts, psalteries, and dulcimers of modern thought. If you would have sin forgiven, forgiveness is to be found in Jesus, and only there.

"Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow," for no other sorrow can wipe away sin—not even the pangs of hell can effect expiation—but the sorrow of Christ can put your sins away. Oh, seek a share in the boundless merit of the Crucified. Turn not away, but seek your Savior's face at once.

II. Thus have I spoken upon the first head, and pretty well exhausted my time—therefore only a minute or two upon the second—THE SUFFERINGS OF JESUS HAVE HAD A DEEP INTEREST IN THEM FOR MANY.

Oh that I could set Him forth before you. There He is! Look you upon Him! He is before my eyes. I see those languid eyes closing in death. I see that glorious head bowing upon His bosom. I see and I adore. I note with grief the gashes made by the nails in His dear hands and feet, from which does flow the ruddy stream which scatters roses among the lilies of His pure and spotless flesh. I look into His heart and see it breaking—the soldier has opened a door through which your soul may gaze.

My Savior's death is to me all things—I could live and die contemplating it. It stirs my blood, it opens the fountains of mine eyes, and makes my inmost heart dissolve. Is it not a thing of power to others also?

Did I hear one ask, "What good has this sorrow ever brought to anyone? Has anybody derived benefit from it?" Let me tell you. Multitudes have found in the sufferings of Christ *the cure for their despair*. Read the biographies of converted men, and you shall find cases upon cases where they had been ready to commit suicide, but the sight of a crucified Savior encouraged them to hope, and gave them rest.

Nay, you need not read books—speak to any godly man of your acquaintance, and he will tell you that the wounds of Jesus were and are the fountains of his hope. Many of you could speak for yourselves, and say that nothing could have brought you back from despair on account of sin but a sight of Christ.

I cannot speak without remembering my own case, and how bitter were my griefs, how dark my days, how hideous my nights, till I saw one hanging on a tree, and my state was changed from continual sorrow into perpetual joy.

Can I hear Him dishonored and not be moved? Do you think that those of us who owe all the light we have to Jesus crucified can ever think lightly of Him? I pray we never may become so mean, so base. We have a deep and abiding interest in Jesus, for He turned our darkness into day.

In others, the sorrows of the cross have wrought *a complete transformation of their lives*. The apostle Paul, on the way to Damascus was going to hunt Christians to death—but the voice of one who said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," changed his mind so completely that he became the greatest of all preachers of Christ.

You have, most of you, I dare say, heard of the life of Colonel Gardiner, a dissipated officer who indulged, as too many soldiers do, in wantonness. One night he had made an appointment of the most vicious kind, and reached the place an hour too soon. Waiting there alone, he thought that he saw upon the wall the Savior on the cross, and he thought that he heard Him say to him, "I did all this for thee. What hast thou ever done for me?" He fled the house, and you know what an earnest soldier of Christ from that moment he became.

Such miracles have been wrought in every age, and will be wrought to the end of time. Nor are they so rare that you need search far for them. One and another will tell you, if you will listen—some here can tell you for themselves—that the sight of Christ has changed them altogether in a manner as astounding as a miracle. It has been with them as marvelous a change as if Niagara, leaping down her profound abyss, were suddenly spoken to by the voice which made that mighty flood and her waters began to leap upward, ascending the steep adown which they have rushed for ages.

The transformation of the lives of men by the sight of the cross of Christ is as great a marvel as though rivers should seek their source, or midnight brighten into day. It is matchless, superb—there is nothing like it—and they that have once felt its transforming power laugh at infidelity. "What?" they say, "no truth in the cross? Let the man that has been a leper, the man that has been lame or blind suddenly receive a cure, and then tell him that there is nothing in it. 'Pshaw.' he would say, 'there is nothing in you, or you would not make the remark.'"

And he goes his way, and that is all the answer that he deigns. Matters of actual experience may be contradicted, but they cannot be disproved. Men may say what they will, but we are of the same opinion still, when once the cross has wrought its marvels upon our souls.

Ah, brethren, think again what power the cross has had on other men's minds *to gird them to heroic deeds*. I shall never forget when I shook the hand of Livingstone. I count it one of the great honors of my life to have known him, and even men of the world will join in doing homage to his name.

It was the love of Christ that made him tread pathless Africa, and die among the heathen. He was not the first by many a thousand who counted it all joy to succumb to climate, and to perish among strangers for the cross of Christ.

Moffat still lives, and what a life! There was a John Williams, of whom you older men can tell, who laid down his life at Erromanga for Christ's sake. These are but the later ranks of a mighty host that counted not life dear to them for Jesus' sake.

Look at the first centuries—how men marched to the rack to be tortured, to the stake to be burned, to the amphitheatre to be devoured of beasts for Christ's sake. The lifting up of the little finger of Christ was enough to move hosts of men and women to court death and defy the flames. The Roman empire, with all its legions and cruelties, could not stand against the insignificant, unlettered, humble, but earnest and intense followers of Jesus. The sufferings of Christ made them strong to suffer.

Later ages tell the same story. Our own land has seen the heroes of the cross enduring unto the end. Over there at your Smithfield, why, there were men and women there who early in the morning, while yet the sun was scarcely up, were summoned forth to stand at fiery stakes and burn—and they were seen to clap their hands, when every finger was a candle, and cry, "None but Christ! None but Christ!"

And the crowd that stood around them, who were they? There were cruel men and brutal priests, but there were also men, and women, and children, of whom it is written, in the humble church records of the day, that they went there to see their pastor burn *to learn the way*.

Oh, that is grand!—to learn the way to die when their turn came—for the idea of ever yielding up to the papacy, or of giving up Christ because they must die for Him or else deny Him, never entered into their heads. Even boys and girls learned at their mother's knee so much of Jesus' sufferings that they became invincible.

Ay, and we should be so again if it ever came to the same pass, for the old name and the old love still linger in the hearts of Christians today with all their faults and infirmities. And if it came to battle and to push of pike again, we are as ready, by the good hand and grace of God, as were our Puritan forefathers—our Protestant ancestors—ready to seal the faith with our blood. This is what the cross of Christ can do. It can make men suffer for His name sake.

Ah, but you may not be called to that you say, "What is the use of the cross of Christ to us in everyday life?" Why, it is of this use—that men who love the suffering Savior become *patient in their everyday sufferings*. They say to themselves—

"His way was much rougher and darker than mine.
Did Christ, my Lord suffer, and shall I repine?"

They learn to hate sin by seeing the agonies by which redemption was obtained. They learn to be upright by seeing with what a price they are bought. They learn to be self-denying at the feet of the Crucified. This is the good of the cross to them, and this is the way they learn both to live and to die.

This black cloth which casts its somber hue around my platform is the memorial of one dear soul, my sister, who learned to love the Savior while she was yet young, and in her early days joined with this church.

And in her death, when it was a pang to draw each breath, she found her joy, her victory, in resting in the divine Savior. She was a soldier's daughter, and was not ashamed to join with the despised people

of God, and in her long pains and agonizing death she found sustaining power in the doctrine of the cross, and found victory in death.

"Hold thou thy cross before my failing eyes." O Jesus, let me see You when I can see naught else. At the sight of You, I will leap the stream of death. I will defy death, as Samson defied the lion. I will find honey in the vanquished monster if You be there. It is not death to die if the death of Christ be but the life of the soul.

This is what multitudes of men and women have had to do with Christ. They have not passed Him by, but bowed at His feet, and found life, light, joy, perfection, heaven.

III. And I close with this last appeal—what, dear hearers—WHAT HAVE YOU TO DO WITH HIM?

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."

Now, I do not suppose that Jesus Christ means much to some that are here present, I mean people that are getting on in the world. Everything is going very easily with you. You are rising like a balloon, you are filled and inflated with prosperity. You are getting as much money as you can count. You are going on very well without a Savior. You have your portion in this life.

I should not wonder if you turn on your heel and despise Him, and say that you do not want a Savior. We will meet another day, young sir, when all that wine is sour, and that gold is corroded, and those pleasures, like the rime of the morning, shall have disappeared beneath the burning sun of care. But for awhile, I doubt not, Jesus Christ will be nothing to you. It is dreary talk, and a weariness to hear about Him.

But is there one here heavy of heart? Are there not many here conscious of fault? Are you wrong? Would you be right? Are you guilty? Would you be forgiven? Ah, then, the cross for you! Jesus is for you! Turn aside and look at Him. Look till your eyes are full of tears. Look till you brush those tears away, and say, "I see it all. Jesus has suffered in my stead. I am forgiven. My Father has adopted me. I am His child. I am glad." Oh, guilty ones, there is something in Christ for you, for He died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.

Peradventure there is another here who is not so much laboring under a sense of fault as under a sense of aimlessness in life. Do you feel, "Well, somehow, I have no purpose in life. I keep on like a blind horse round a mill, but I do not get any forwarder, and what is more, I do not know what I am toiling for."

To bring up my children? Well, perhaps that is done. They are all settled in life, and you say, "I do not know what more is to be done. I do not seem to have any object worth striving after." My Master's sorrows may enlist you.

The Red Cross Knight, when he bore the cross upon his arm, as he fought with the Saracen, though he was under a grave delusion, for Christ would not have us fight with deadly weapons, yet felt strong because he thought that the name of Christ was named upon him. But if you become a true knight of the red cross by living for the glory of Christ, you will rise to a noble enthusiasm, and find an aim in life of which you will never tire. The love of the Crucified shall be a wellspring of vigor to your own heart. It shall make you brave against all odds, and shall bring you great reward and sure victory.

Oh, if I had not an object in life today, I would wish to give myself to Christ, and then begin to tell of His dear name to others that I might win their hearts to the love of my sweet Lord. For, as it is, I know of no man I would change with so long as I have but opportunities of spreading abroad the fame and name of Jesus Christ, my suffering Lord and royal Master.

Perhaps you are anxious to benefit others. Oh, if you are, you want to be doing something real and effective. The world is going to the bad. There is a great deal of mischief abroad. You say, "I want to do good." Friend, turn aside and look at Christ's sufferings, and see whether you have not there the fulcrum for your lever. To move rocks and mountains here is an unrivalled force—not steam power or dynamite, but something stronger, for an ounce of the doctrine of the cross would blast all the walls of error, and

burst the dungeons of misery, if rightly applied. Come you to Christ and see if you have not there, by the power of the Holy Ghost, an irresistible agent of good to all mankind.

"Oh," says one, "I do not believe in Him." What do you believe in?—for whatever you believe in, try to use it for the good of your fellow men. I would like to see you sending city missionaries from street to street to preach what you do believe in. Come, be reasonable and do something more than find fault.

Some are so fond of pulling down. Would they try a little building up? Come, then. You say that we Christians are doing no good. Just try your own hand at it. Go to the dying. Go to the sick. Take them bottles of your philosophy, and comfort them with the elixir of scientific doubt. Go ahead! If somebody says that the current system of medicine is faulty, we reply—Very well, sir. Have you found the right medicine? "Yes." Then distribute it, train physicians, and build hospitals. Get to work at it. Why not?

Now, you that do not believe in God or Christ, send your own missionaries abroad. Enlighten the heathen by telling them that there is no God, no sin, no hell, no heaven, no soul, no anything. Go into the center of Africa, and win them from their bloody superstitions by the doctrines of science. Go ahead. If you have a gospel, do not hide it. What? You have no zeal in that direction. But why not? There is no particular use in it, is there? Not worth spending your money on. Miserable comforters! Wretched physicians that cannot heal!

But now, if you want to know whether there is power in the cross, ask a city missionary to let you go with him for a day. Pitch on the right man, and go and see for yourself. He will show you what the doctrine of the cross can do in comforting, in sobering, in cheering, in elevating. "I do not believe it," says one. No one said you did. I will, however, venture to observe that, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." A good old English proverb, my dear sir.

Here is a ship filling with water, and you do not believe in pumps. Very well. I am going on pumping. You are anxious to discuss. Discuss away, but meanwhile I pump. Let every Christian man here make practical use of the cross of Christ, and keep on at it. And if men will not even take the trouble to inquire what are its results—their disbelief is irrational and inexcusable—and they must take the consequences. Our skirts are clear of their blood.

Dear friend, what if it should turn out that you have such a connection with the cross that Christ redeemed you there—that Christ put your sins away there? What if He so bought you there that He means to have you? What if you are so His that He means to save you? What if, when He died there, He bought for you eternal life, and insured for you a place in heaven at the right hand of God, to reign there with Himself?

"Oh, if I thought that," says one, "I would come to Him." Come to Him, then, and it is true, for, "Whosoever believeth in him hath everlasting life." Let me say that word over again. "He that believeth in him hath everlasting life." If he only believed a minute ago—if he only believed a second ago, he has not only life but everlasting life. That life, therefore, is a thing that can never die. You have heaven, as well as all the blessings of earth, if you believe in Jesus.

But if you say, "I will have nothing to do with Jesus," I would like you to say so to yourself in a deliberate manner. If Christ be not worth having, say that you will not have Him, and say it most distinctly. I feel hopeful when a man will come to a decision one way or the other. The sort of people for whom I tremble are those who say, "I hope it will be all right somehow."

O, sirs, do not hesitate another hour, but answer me as in God's name I question you—will you have Christ tonight or will you not? Say "Yes" or "No." I would ask you to write down your decision when you get home. Is Christ's yours or not? Sit down deliberately and say, "Yes, my Lord, in the merits of Your death I put my trust." Or else write it if you mean it—"He is not mine at all." We have known some get comfort out of this act of decision.

There was a poor girl who had long been a Christian, but she was very sad at heart through sickness. And when her minister came to see her, he said to her, "Well, Susan, how is your hope?" She said, "Sir, I am afraid I am not a Christian. I do not love the Lord Jesus Christ." He said, "Why, I always thought

you did. You acted as if you did." "No," said she, "I am afraid I have deceived myself, and that I do not love Him."

The minister wisely walked to the window, and wrote on a piece of paper, "I do not love the Lord Jesus Christ," and he said, "Susan, here is a pencil. Just put your name to that." "No, sir," she said, "I could not sign *that*." "Why not?" "I would be torn to pieces before I would sign it, sir." "But why not sign it if it is true?" "Ah, sir," said she, "I hope it is not true. I think I do love Him."

Get to know where you are, friend. If Baal be God, serve him. If God be God, serve Him. If Christ be a Savior, have Him—if He be not a Savior, do not pretend to serve Him. Decide one way or the other. God help you to decide tonight, as you will decide when the heavens are on a blaze, when sun and moon have vanished from their spheres, when the solid earth shall rock and reel, and over all shall be heard the trumpet note, "Come to judgment! Come to judgment! Come to judgment!"

There sits the Judge, the Crucified, whose sorrows surpassed all sorrows, but whose glory then shall surpass all glory as He shall divide the saints on the right from the graceless on the left, and from His mouth shall come the final sentence which shall settle the doom of believers and unbelievers.

God bless you, dear friends, every one of you. Henceforth and forever may you be the Lord's. Amen and amen.

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—PSALM 22

Among the Hymns sung was the following by the late Frances Havergal:

"I could not do without Him!
Jesus is more to me
Than all the richest treasures
Of earth could ever be.
The more I find Him precious—
The more I find Him true—
The more I long to witness
The selfsame bliss in you.

"You need not do without Him,
For He is passing by;
He's waiting to be gracious,
Waiting to hear your cry;
He's waiting to receive you—
To make you all His own!
Why will you do without Him,
And wander on alone?

"Why should you do without Him?
It is not yet too late;
He has not ceased His pleading,
He has not shut the gate.
He calls you!—hush! He calls you!
He would not have you go
Another step without Him,
Because He loves you so."

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.