

MAN'S RUIN AND GOD'S REMEDY

NO. 285

A SERMON
 DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, NOVEMBER 20, 1859
 BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON
 AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS

*“And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole:
 and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.”*
Numbers 21:8

I DO not propose this morning to explain again the mystery of the brazen serpent. As many of you well remember, not long ago I preached upon that subject, and endeavored to expound it in all its lengths and breadths. I have a somewhat similar object at the present time, the details may indeed be different, but after all the moral will be the same.

Man has very many wants, and he should be grateful whenever the least of them is supplied. But he has one want which overtops every other, it is the want of bread. Give him raiment, house him well, decorate and adorn him, yet if you give him not bread, his body faints, he dies of hunger. Hence it is that while the earth when it is tilled is made to bring forth many things that minister unto the comfort and luxury of men, yet man is wise enough to understand that since bread is his chief want, he must be most careful concerning corn. He therefore sows broad acres with it, and he cultivates more of this, which is the grandest necessary, than he does of anything else in his husbandry.

I feel that this is the only excuse I can offer you for coming back again constantly and continually to the simple doctrine of the salvation of the sinner through Christ Jesus. There are many things which *the soul* wants, it needs instruction, it needs comfort, it needs knowledge of doctrine and enlightenment in its experience, but there is one grand need of the soul, which far surmounts every other, it is the want of salvation, the want of Christ, and I do feel that I am right in repeating again, and again, and again, the simple announcement of the Gospel of Christ for poor perishing sinners.

At any rate, I know I seldom feel more happy than when I am preaching a full Christ to empty sinners. My tongue becomes something like Anacreon's harp. It is said of it, it resounded love alone. And so my tongue longs to resound Christ alone, and give forth no other strain, but Christ and His cross, Christ uplifted, the salvation of a dying world, Christ crucified, the life of poor dead sinners. I pray that this morning many here present, who have no clear views of the plan of salvation, may now see for the first time how men are saved through the lifting up of Christ, just as the poor Israelites in the wilderness were saved from the fiery serpents by lifting up the brazen serpent on the pole.

Solemnly addressing you this morning, I shall need your attention to two things. First—and here, remember, I am about to speak to sinners dead in trespasses and sins—I want your attention to *your ruin*, and next I shall want your faithful consideration of *your remedy*.

I. First of all, oh unregenerate man! you who have heard the Word, but have never felt its power, let me entreat you, lend me your ears while I talk to you of a solemn subject that much concerns you. **MAN, THOU ART RUINED!**

The children of Israel in the wilderness were bitten with fiery serpents, whose venom soon tainted their blood, and after intolerable pain, at last brought on death. You are much in the same condition. You stand there, healthy in body and comfortable in mind, and I come not here to play the part of a mere alarmist, but I do beseech you, listen to me while I tell you, neither more nor less than the simple but dreadful truth concerning your present estate, if you are not a believer in Christ

Oh sinner! there are four things that stare you in the face, and should alarm you. The first thing is *your sin*. I hear you say, “Yes, I know I am a sinner as well as the rest of mankind,” but I am not content

with that confession, nor is God content with it either. There are multitudes of men who make the bare confession of sinnership, the general confession that all men are fallen, but there are few men who know how to take that confession home, and acknowledge it as being applicable to them.

Ah! my hearers, you that are without God and without Christ, remember, not only is the world lost, but you are lost yourself, not only has sin defiled the race, but you yourself are stained by sin. Come now, take the universal charge home to yourself. How many have your sins been! Count them, if you can. Stand here and wonder at them. Like the stars of midnight, or as the sands by the seashore, innumerable are your iniquities. Twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty, perhaps more than fifty years have rolled over your head, and in any one of these years your sins might outcount the drops of the sea. How innumerable then, have they become in ALL your life!

And what if you should say they are but little ones, yet since they are so many, how great has the mountain become. Though they were but as grains of sand, yet are they so many that they might make a mountain that would soar above the stars. Pause, I beseech you, and let your conscience have play for a moment. Count over your iniquities, turn over the pages of your history, and tell the blots, if you can, and count the mistakes. But no, you are committing fresh sins while you are recounting these, and the denial of your innumerable sins were but the multiplication of them. You are increasing them, perhaps even while you are counting them.

And then, think how aggravated they have been. I will not venture to mention the grosser sins into which some of you have fallen. It may be that I have here those who have cursed God to His face, who have asked Him to blast their limbs and to destroy their souls. I may have those here who have ventured even to deny God's existence, though they have been walking all their lives in the midst of His works, and have even received the breath in their nostrils from Him. I may have some who have despised His Word, laughed at everything sacred, made a jest of the Bible, made a mockery of God's ministers and of His servants.

Call, I beseech you, these things to your remembrance, for though you have forgotten them, God has not. You have written them in the sand, but He has engraved them as in eternal brass, and there they stand against you. Every crime that you have done is as fresh in the memory of the Most High as though it were committed yesterday, and though you think that the repentance of your grey old age might almost suffice to blot out the enormities of your youth, yet be not deceived. Sin is not so easily put away, it needs a greater ransom than a few expressions of regret or a few empty tears.

Oh call, you great sinners, call to your recollection, the enormities you have committed against God. Let your chambers speak, let your beds bear witness against you, and let the days of your feasting, and your hours of midnight rioting—let these things rise up to your remembrance. Let your oaths roll back from the sky against which they have smitten, and let them return into your bosom, to awake your conscience and bestir you to repentance.

But what am I saying? I have been talking of *some* men who have committed great iniquity. Ah! sinner, be you whosoe'er you may, I charge you with *great* sin. Brought up in the midst of holy influences, nurtured in God's house, it may be that some of my unregenerate hearers this morning may not be able to remember a single instance of blasphemy against God. It may be that you have never outwardly done despite to any sacred thing.

Ah, my hearer, think you, your sin may be even greater than that of the profligate, or the debauchee, for *you* have sinned against light and against knowledge, you have sinned against a mother's prayers and against a father's tears, *you* have rebelled against God's law, knowing the law. When *you* were sinning, conscience pricked you, and yet you did sin. You knew that hell was the portion of the ungodly, and yet you are ungodly still. You know the Gospel of Christ, you are no ignoramus. Your mother took you in her arms to the house of God, and here you are even now. Every sin you have committed receives a greater aggravation on account of the light you have received, and the privileges you have enjoyed.

Oh, my hearer, think not that you can escape in this thing, your sin has bitten you with a terrible bite. 'Tis no flesh wound as you dream, but the venom has entered into your veins. 'Tis no mere scurf upon

the surface, but the leprosy lies deep within. You have sinned. You have sinned continually. You have sinned with many aggravations. Oh, may God convict you of this charge, and help you to plead guilty to it. Can you not some of you, if you are honest to yourselves, call to remembrance peculiar sins that you have committed? You remember your sick bed, and your vow you made to God—where is it now? You have returned like the dog to its vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

You remember that prayer that you offered in the time of your distress, you remember too, that God graciously delivered you, but where is the thanksgiving that you promised to Him? You said you would give Him your heart, but where is it? In the black hand of the devil still! You have been a liar to God, you have deceived Him, or you have pretended at least that you would give Him your soul, and you have not done so.

And think too of certain special sins you have committed after receiving special warning. Do you not remember going out from the house of God with a tender conscience, and then running into sin to harden it again? Do you not remember, some of you, how after being alarmed and startled, you have gone your way, and gone to your evil companions and laughed away the impressions that you have received? This is no mean sin—to strive against the striving Spirit, and to resist the influence that was drawing you to the right path.

I beseech you, call to recollection your sins. Come, don't be cowards. Don't shut up the book, open it. Look and see what you have been, and if you have been that which you are ashamed of, I beseech you look it in the face, and make acknowledgment and confess it. There is nothing to be gotten by hiding your sins. They'll spring up, man, if you dig deep as hell to hide them, they'll spring up.

Why not now be honest and look at them today, for they'll look at you by and by, when Christ shall come in the clouds of judgment. If you look not at them, they'll stare you in the face with a look that will wither your soul and blast it into infinite torment and unutterable woe. Your sin, your sin, should make you tremble and feel alarmed.

But I go further. Sinner, you have not only your sin to trouble you, but there is a second thing, there is *the sentence of condemnation gone out against you*. I have heard some ministers talk of men being in a state of probation. No such thing, no man has a state of probation at all. You are condemned already. You are not today, my unregenerate hearers, prisoners at the bar about to be tried for your lives. No, your trial is over, your sentence is past already, and you are now this day condemned. What though no officer has arrested you, though death has not laid his cold hand upon you, yet Scripture says, "He that believeth not is condemned already because he believeth not on the Son of God."

Man, the black cap is on the judge's head. He even now declares you lost, nay, more than this, if you would rightly know your own estate, you are standing—mark that, my careless hearer—you are standing under the gallows, with the rope on your neck, and you have but to be cast off from the ladder by the hand of death and you are swinging in eternity lost and ruined. If you only knew your position, you would discover that you are criminals with your necks on the block this morning, and the bright axe of justice is gleaming in this morning's sunlight, and God alone knows how long it is ere it shall fall, or rather how soon you shall feel its keen edge, and its edge shall be stained with your blood.

You are condemned *already*. Take that home, man. Your sentence is signed in heaven and sealed and stamped, and the only reason why it is not carried out is because God in mercy respites you. But you are condemned, and this world is your condemned cell from which you shall soon be taken to a terrible execution.

Now, you do not believe this. You think that God is putting you on your trial, and that if you behave as well as you can, you will get off. You think that in some future day you may yet blot out your sin. But when the criminal is condemned, there is no room left for good behavior to alter the sentence. When a capital sentence is passed upon him, that sentence is not to be moved by anything that he can do. And your sentence is passed, passed by the judge of all the earth, and nothing you can do can alter that sentence.

The law of leaves no room for repentance. Condemned you are and condemned you must be, unless that one way of escape, that I am forthwith about to explain, shall be opened to you by God's rich grace—you are condemned *already*.

Now let me ask you one question ere I leave this point. Sinner, you are condemned today. I ask you this, whether you do not deserve it? If you are what you should be, and what I hope the Lord will make you, you will say, "Deserve it, ay, that I do! If I never committed another sin, my past sins would fully justify the Lord in permitting me to go down alive into the pit."

The first sin you ever committed condemned you beyond all hope of self-salvation, but all the sins you have committed since then have aggravated your guilt, and surely now the sentence is not only just, but more than just. You will have one day, if you repent not, to put your finger on your lips and stand in solemn silence, when God shall ask you whether you have anything to plead, why the sentence should not be carried into execution. You will be compelled to feel that God condemns you to nothing more than you deserve, that His sentence is just—a proper one on such a sinner as you have been.

Now, these two things are enough to make any man tremble, if he did but feel them—his sin and his condemnation. But I have a third to mention. Sinner, there is this to aggravate your case and increase your alarm—*your helplessness*, your utter inability to do anything to save yourself, *even* if God should offer you the chance. You are today, sinner, not only condemned, but you are dead in trespasses and sins.

Talk of performing good works—why, man, you cannot. It is as impossible for you to do a good work while you are what you are, as it would be for a horse to fly up to the stars. But you say, "I will repent." Nay, you cannot. Repentance is not possible to you as you are, unless God gives it to you. You might force a few tears, but what are those? Judas might do that and yet go out and hang himself, and go to his own place. You cannot repent of yourself. Nay, if I had to preach this morning, salvation by faith apart from the person of Christ, you would be in as bad a condition as if there were no Gospel whatever.

Recollect, sinner, you are so lost, so ruined, so undone, that you can do nothing to save yourself. Your wound is so bad that it cannot be cured by any mortal hand. Your inability is so great, that unless God pulls you up out of the pit into which you have fallen, you must lie there and rot for all eternity. You are so undone that you can neither stir hand, nor foot, nor lips, nor heart, unless grace help you.

Oh, what a fearful thing it is to be charged, tried, condemned, and then moreover, to be bereft of all power. You are today as much in the hand of God's justice as a little moth beneath your own finger. He can save you if He will, He can destroy you if He pleases, but you yourself are unable to escape from Him.

There is no door of mercy left for you by the law, and even by the Gospel there is no door of mercy which you have power to enter, apart from the help which Christ affords you. If you think you can do anything, you have yet to unlearn that foolish conceit. If you fancy that you have some strength left, you have not yet come where the Spirit will bring you, for He will empty you of all creature pretension, and lay you low and dash you in pieces, and bring you in a mortar and pound you till you feel that you are weak and without strength and can do nothing.

Now have I not indeed described a horrible position for a sinner to be in—but there is something more remaining, a fourth thing. Sinner, you are not only guilty of past sin, and condemned for it, you are not only unable, but if you were able, you are so bad that you would *never be willing* to do anything that could save yourself. And even if you had no sins in the past, yet you are lost, man, for you would go on to commit sin in the future.

For this know—your nature is totally depraved. You love that which is evil, and not that which is good. "Nay," says one, "I love that which is good." Then you love it for a bad motive. "I love honesty," says one. Yes, because it is the best policy. But do you love God? Do you love your neighbor as yourself? No, and you cannot do this, for your nature is too vile. Why, man, you would be as bad as the devil, if God were to withdraw all restraint and let you alone. Were He but to take the bit out of your mouth, and the bridle from your jaws, there is no sin that you would not commit.

Do you deny this? Do you say, "I am willing, I am willing to be holy and to be saved." Then God has you so, for if not, you would never be so by nature. If you should go out of this hall and say, "I hate such preaching as that," I should but reply, "I knew you did." Though one should say, "I will never believe that I am so lost as that," I should say, "I did not think you ever would—you are too bad to believe the truth," and if you should say, "I will never be saved by Christ, I will never bow so low as to sue for mercy and accept grace through Him," I should not be surprised, for I know your nature.

You are so desperately bad that you hate your own mercy. You do despise the grace that is offered to you—you do hate the Savior who died for you, for if not, why do not you turn now, man. If you are not so bad as I say you are, why not now down on your knees and cry for pardon? Why not now believe in Christ? Why not now surrender yourself to Him? But if you should do this, then I would say, "This is God's work, He has made you do it, for if He had not done it, you would not have been humble enough to bow yourself to Christ."

Let Arminianism go to the winds, let it be scattered forever from off the face of the earth, man is totally unable to feel his misery or seek relief, if he were able, he is totally unwilling. The sinner could not help the Holy Ghost, even if the Holy Ghost wanted the help of man to perfect His own operations. What! can it be possible that any man will say the creature is to help the Creator—that an insect of an hour is to be yoked with the Ancient of Days—the Eternal—that the clay is to help the potter in its own formation? Why, even if we grant the power, where would be the sympathy or the willing hand?

Man hates to be saved. He loves darkness, and if he has the light, it is because the light thrusts itself upon him. He loves death with a fatal infatuation, and if he be made alive, it is because the Spirit of God quickens him, converts his wicked heart, makes him willing in the day of His power, and turns him unto God.

Have I not now this morning made a most awful indictment against you? Mark, I mean it for every living man, woman, and child in this hall who has not faith in Christ. You may be fine gentlemen or grand ladies, you may be respectable tradesmen and very upright in your business, but I charge you before Almighty God with being sinners, condemned sinners, sinners that cannot save yourselves, and sinners, moreover, that would not save yourselves if you could, unless grace made you willing, you are sinners unwilling to be saved.

What a fearful indictment is this read in the face of high heaven! May some sinner as he hears it be compelled to say, "It is true, it is true, it is true of me, O Lord, have mercy upon me!"

II. Having thus set before you the hard part of the subject—THE SINNER'S RUIN—I now come to preach of HIS REMEDY.

A certain school of physicians tells us that "*Like cures like.*" Whether it be true or not in medicine, I know it is true enough in theology—like cures like. When the Israelites were bitten with the fiery serpents, it was a serpent that made them whole. And so you lost and ruined creatures are bidden now to look to Christ suffering and dying, and you will see in Him the counterpart of what you see in yourselves.

While you are looking to Him, may God fulfill His promise and give you life. A remedy to be worth anything must reach the entire disease. Now Christ on the cross comes to man as man is, not as he may be made, but as he is. And it does this in the four several respects which I have already described.

I charge you with sin. Now in Christ Jesus behold the sinner's substitute—the sin-offering. Do you see yonder man hanging on the cross, He dies an awful death. In Him prophecy receives a terrible accomplishment, of Him Almighty vengeance makes a tremendous example. JEHOVAH has cast off and abhorred, He has been wroth with His Anointed. The terrors of the Lord are heavy on His soul. And why does that man Christ Jesus, die?—not as Himself a sinner, but as numbered with transgressors.

O soul, if you would know the terrors of the law, behold Him who was made the curse of the law. If you would see the venom of the fiery serpent's bite, look to yonder brazen serpent, and if you would see sin in all its deadliness look to a dying Savior. What makes Christ die? Sin! though not His own. What

makes His body sweat drops of blood? Sin! What nails His hands? What opens His side? Sin! Sin does it all. And if you are saved it must be through yonder sin-offering, yon dying, bleeding Lamb.

“But,” saith one, “my sins are too many to be forgiven.” Stop awhile, turn your eye to Christ. Sometimes when I think of my sin I think it is too great to be washed away, but when I think of Christ's blood, oh I think there can be no sin great enough for that to fail in cleansing it every whit. I seem to think, when I see the costly price, Christ paid a very heavy ransom. When I look at myself I think it would need much to redeem me, but when I see Christ dying I think He could redeem me if I were a million times as bad as I am.

Now remember Christ not only paid barely enough for us, He paid more than enough. The apostle Paul says, “His grace abounded—“superabounded,” says the Greek. It ran over, there was enough to fill the empty vessel, and there was enough to flood the world besides. Christ's redemption was so plenteous, that had God willed it, if all the stars of heaven had been peopled with sinners, Christ need not have suffered another pang to redeem them all—there was a boundless value in His precious blood. And sinner, if there were so much as this, surely there is enough for you.

And then again, if you are not satisfied with Christ's sin-offering, just think a moment, God is satisfied, God the Father is content, and must not you be? The Judge says, “I am satisfied, let the sinner go free, for I have punished the Surety in his stead,” and if the Judge is satisfied, surely the criminal may be.

Oh! come, poor sinner, come and see, if there is enough to appease the wrath of God there must be enough to answer all the requirements of man. “Nay, nay,” saith one, “my sin is such a terrible one that I cannot see in the substitution of Christ that which is *like* to meet it.” What is your sin? “Blasphemy.” Why, Christ died for blasphemy, this was the very charge which man imputed to Him, and therefore you may be quite sure that God laid it on Him if men did.

“Nay, nay,” saith one, “but I have been worse than that, I have been a liar.” It is just what men said of Him. They declared that He lied when He said, “If this temple be destroyed I will build it in three days.” See in Christ a liar's Savior as well as a blasphemer's Savior.

“But,” says one, “I have been in league with Beelzebub.” Just what they said of Christ. They said that He cast out devils through Beelzebub. So man laid that sin on Him, and man did unwittingly what God would have him do. I tell you, even that sin was laid on Christ. Come, sinner, there is not a sin in the world with one exception which Jesus did not bear in His own body on the tree.

“Ah, but,” says one, “when I sinned, I sinned very greedily. I did it with all my might. I took a delight in it.” Ah! soul, and so did Christ take a delight in being your substitute. He said, “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!” Let Christ's willingness respond to the suggestion that your greediness in sin can make it too heinous to be forgiven.

“Ah!” cries another, “but sir, I acted ever with such a bad heart, my heart was worse than my actions. If I could have been worse I would. Among all my companions in vice there was not one who was so greedy of it and black in it as I.” Well, but my dear hearer, if you have sinned in your heart, remember, Christ suffered in His heart. His heart-sufferings were the heart and soul of His sufferings. Look and see that heart all pierced, and the blood and water flowing therefrom, and believe that He is able to take away even your heart of sin, however black it may be.

“Yes,” I hear another self-condemned one exclaim, “but I sinned without any temptation. I did it deliberately in cold blood. I had become such a wicked, beastly sinner, that I used to sit down and gloat over my sin before I committed it.” Ah, but sinner, remember before Christ died He thought of it, ay, from all eternity He meditated on becoming your substitute. It was a matter of premeditation with Him, and therefore, let His forethought put aside your forethought. Let the greatness of His previous thought upon His sacrifice, put away the grievousness of your sin, on account of its having been committed in cold blood.

Does there yet come up some sobbing voice—“I have been worse than all the rest, for I did my sin by reason of a covenant which I made with Satan. I said, ‘If I could have a short life and a merry one, I

would be content.' I made a covenant with death, and I made a league with hell." And what if I am commissioned to tell you that even this *bite* is not incurable? Remember, Jesus, the Son of God made a covenant on your account. It was a greater covenant than yours, not made with death and hell, but made with His Father on the behalf of sinners.

I want, if I can, to bring out the fact, that whatever there is in your sins there is its counterpart in Christ. Just as when the serpent bit the people, it was a serpent that healed them, so if you are bitten by sin, it is, as it were, your sin's substitute, it is your sin laid on Christ that heals you. Oh, turn your eyes then to Calvary, and see the guilt of sin laid upon Christ's shoulders, and say, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," and looking to Him you shall live.

Secondly, here is a remedy for *the condemnation*. I said, you were not only sinners, but condemned sinners. Yes, and Christ is not only your substitute for sin, but He is your condemned substitute too. See Him. He stands at Pilate's bar, is condemned before Herod and Caiaphas, and is found guilty. Nay, He stands before the awful bar of God, and though there is no sin of His own put upon Him, yet inasmuch as His people's sins were laid on Him, justice views Him as a sinner, and it cries, "Let the sword be bathed in His blood." Christ was condemned for sinners that they might not be condemned.

Look up, look away from the sentence that has gone out against you, to the sentence that went out against Him. Are you cursed?—so was He. "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Are you condemned?—so was He, and there was one point in which He excelled you, He was executed, and that you never shall be, if you look to Him now and believe that He is able to save you, and put your trust in Him.

In regard to the third particular. Our utter helplessness is such, that as I told you, we are unable to do anything. Yes, and I want you to look at Christ, was not He unable too? You, in your father Adam, were once strong, but you lost your strength. Christ too was strong, but He laid aside all His omnipotence. See Him. The hand that poises the world hang on a nail. See Him. The shoulders that supported the skies are drooping over the cross. Look at Him. The eyes whose glances light up the sun are sealed in darkness. Look at Him. The feet that trod the billows and that shaped the spheres are nailed with rude iron to the accursed tree.

Look away from your own weakness to His weakness, and remember that in His weakness He is strong, and in His weakness you are strong too. Go see His hands, they are weak, but in their weakness they are stretched out to save you. Come view His heart, it is rent, but in its cleft you may hide yourself. Look at His eyes, they are closing in death, but from them comes the ray of light that shall kindle your dark spirit. Unable though you are, go to Him who Himself was crucified through weakness, and remember that now, "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him."

I told you you could not repent, but if you go to Christ He can melt your heart into contrition, though it be as hard as iron. I said you could not believe, but if you sit down and look at Christ, a sight of Christ will make you believe, for He is exalted on high to give repentance and remission of sins.

And then the fourth thing. "Oh," cries one, "you said we were too estranged to be even willing to come to Christ." I know you were, and therefore it is He who came down to you. You would not come to Him, but He comes to you this morning, and though you are very evil, He comes with sacred magic in His arm, to change your heart.

Sinner, you unwilling, but guilty sinner, Christ stands before you this morning, He who was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, a man and a brother born for adversity. And He puts His hand today in your hand, and He says, "Sinner, will you be saved? Then trust in Me."

Ah! if I preach the Gospel, you will reject it, but if *He* preaches it you cannot. I think I see the crucified one finding His way in that thick crowd under the gallery, and going between the ranks seated here, and above, and everywhere, and as He goes along, He stops at each broken-hearted sinner and says, "Sinner, will you trust *Me*? see here I am, the Son of God, yet I am man. Look at My wounds, see still the nail marks, and the prints of the thorn-crown. Sinner, will you trust *Me*?"

And while He says it, He graciously works in you the grace of faith. But are there any who looking Him in the face, can reply, "You crucified one we cannot trust You, our sins are too great to be forgiven"? Oh, nothing can grieve Him so much as to tell Him that. You think that you are humble, you are proud, despising Christ while you think you are despising yourself.

And is there one in all this great assembly who says, "This is all twaddle, I care not to hear such preaching as this"? Nay, I do not ask you to care for what I speak, but Jesus the Crucified One is standing by your side, and He asks you, "Sinner, have I ever done anything to offend you, have I ever done you a displeasure? What hurt have you ever suffered at My hands? Then why do you persecute your wife for loving Me—then why hate your child for loving one that did you no hurt? Besides," saith He, and He takes the veil from His face, "did you ever see a face like this? It was marred by suffering for men—for men who hate Me too, but whom I love. I need not have suffered. I was in My Father's house, happy and glorious, love made Me come down and die. Love nailed Me to the tree, and now will you spit in My face after that?"

"No," said a young man to me this last week, "I found it hard to love Christ, but," said he, "once upon a time I thought 'Well, if Christ never died for me and never loved me, yet I must love Him for His goodness in dying for other people.'" And I think if you did but know Christ, you must love Him.

You would say to Him, "You dear, You suffering man, did You endure all this for those who did hate You? did You die for those that murdered You? did You shed Your blood for those who drew it from Your veins with cursed iron? did You dive into the depths of the grave that You might lift out rebellious ones who scorned You and would have none of You? Then, dissolved by Your goodness I fall before Your feet and I weep. My soul repents of sin—I weep—Lord accept me, Lord have mercy upon me."

Did you think I have run away from my point? So I had, but I have brought you back to it. You know I was to show that Christ could overcome our depravity. And He has done it in some of you while I have been speaking. You hated Him, but you do not hate Him now. It may be, you said you would never trust Him, but you do trust Him now. And if God has done this in your heart, this is the true end of preaching, the best way of keeping to the subject is for the subject to be brought home to the heart.

Ah! dear hearers, I wish I had a better voice this morning. I wish I had more earnest tones and a more loving heart, for I do feel when I am preaching about Christ, that I am a poor dauber. When I want to paint Him so beautifully, I am afraid you will say of Him, He is not lovely! No, no, it is my bad picture of Him, but He is lovely.

Oh! He is a loving Lord. He has bowels of compassion, He has a heart brimful of tenderest affection, and He bids me tell you—and I do tell you that—He bids me say, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." And He bids me add His kind invitation, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls."

Do not believe what the devil tells you. He says that Christ is not ready to forgive, oh! He is more willing to forgive than you are to be forgiven. Do not believe your heart when it says, that Christ will shut you out, and will not pardon you, come and try Him, come and try Him, and the first one that is shut out, I will agree to be shut out with him. The first soul that Christ rejects after it has put its trust in Him—I risk my soul's salvation with that man. It cannot be. He never was hard-hearted yet, and He never will be.

Only believe, and may He Himself help you to believe. Only look to Him, and may He Himself open your eyes and enable you to look, and this shall be a happy morning, for though I may have spoken feebly, as I am too conscious I have, God will have worked powerfully, and unto Him shall be the glory for ever and ever. 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.

END OF VOLUME 5