

MORE ROOM FOR MORE PEOPLE

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A SERMON

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“It is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.”

Luke 14:22

How delightful it is to observe that the wrath of man becomes tributary to the glory of God! See an illustration in the parable of *the marriage supper*. Those persons who were first bidden would not come. In order to do the good man of the house a despatch, they declined his invitation, they refused to grace his board.

Instead of causing his honor to be tarnished, they were, against their own will, the means of increasing his reputation. Had they come, it would only have been said that he made a great feast for his good friends. As they did not avail themselves of his hospitality, he brought in the beggars from the streets, and swept the hedges and the byways to find the poorest of the poor, to all of whom he gave a hearty welcome. So it became the common talk all over the land, and tens of thousands extolled the generosity of the host who had given such a sumptuous banquet to such strange guests.

Let not the haughty, the arrogant, or the scornful of the children of men imagine that their paltry conceit can thwart God's covenant purpose, or bring discredit on the riches of His mercy. Oh! sinner, if you reject a Savior, it shall be your own loss, not His. If you live and die without faith in Christ, upon your own head the fearful recompense will fall. When the self-righteous reject Him, it only causes Jesus to say, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” When the rich men and the rulers refuse the Gospel, then “the poor have the gospel preached to them.” When the wise and prudent put it aside, then it is graciously revealed unto babes.

Thus God is glorified, though the temper of men be never so turbulent. Let us, my brethren, always be patient of heart when we see the rage of men aroused against the Gospel of Christ. They can do it no hurt. His purpose shall stand, He will do all His pleasure. The bit is in their mouths, the hook is in their nostrils. Let them roar as they may, they cannot resist the force by which they are driven as chaff before the wind. He will surely perform His work and His name shall be glorious.

Not less delightful is it to observe how the anger of God, instead of venting itself in rashness, vindicates His goodness. In reading the parable to you just now I noticed to you that because the man who made the feast was angry, he said, “Go out quickly into the highways and hedges, and bring in the blind, and the halt, and the lame to the supper.” So kindly disposed was he that his very anger impelled him to an extraordinary deed of grace.

The Lord was angry with the Jews, and His apostles turned to the Gentiles. The natural branches of the olive were put away in His wrath, but what then? Why, He took us who were of the wild olive, and grafted us in who were heretofore wild and alien, so that even His anger towards Israel hath turned to the benefit of the Gentiles, and we get reconciliation out of their rejection.

May we not regard this as a rule of His government? When a congregation hears the Word and tramples it under foot, what marvel if God takes the candlestick out of the place in His anger? But does He break the candlestick? Nay, He moves it to another place. Others get the benefit of the light which those despised who had it aforetime. Great God of wonders, we bless Thee that even when Thine anger burns, Thy mercy brightly shines. Amidst the thunder and the storm, soft showers are rained in silver drops to make glad the earth.

Our text tells us that the servant said, “It is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.”

I think I see here *a satisfactory announcement*, “It is done as thou hast commanded.” *A remarkable statement*, “yet there is room,” and *an implied consummation*, that the room will eventually be filled.

First, then—

I. A DESIRABLE ANNOUNCEMENT.

He said, “*It is done* as thou hast commanded.” Those who serve God best have generally the least to say about it. When I hear people boast of their religious attainments, I am apt to seriously suspect their deficiencies. A boastful Christian I knew something of, when talking to an earnest man, met with very curt replies. “And pray” said the one, “have not you any grace?” “Yes,” said the other, “but I never had any to boast of.” Disciples who are fullest of grace will be slowest to vaunt. Humility befits a servant. “It is done,” sounds better than, “I have done as thou hast commanded.”

In like manner the man who gained five pounds in one of the parables did not come and say, “Lord, I have gained five pounds,” he said, “*Thy pound hath gained five pounds*” That was the more delicate way to put it, not as an affectation of speech, but with a becoming modesty. So too, with the church of God, when she has done as Christ commands her, she will always feel desirous to wait upon Him as a humble servant, accounting this no more than her duty.

Besides, the declaration appears to have been made in a waiting attitude, with an expectancy of having something more to do. “It is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room,” so that the servant seems to stand ready to do something more to fill the vacant places at the feast. And thus we ought always to stand as Christians when we have done our best—waiting for fresh directions, never saying, “I have done enough, and now I can retire from service.” Rather let God be thanked for what we have been enabled to do, but strengthened and encouraged by success, let us resolve to do more, and entreat Him to show us what still remains to be done, and what more we can have the pleasure of doing.

“Oh! my Lord, I have grown gray in Thy service, fulfill to me Thy promise, ‘Thou shalt bring forth fruit in old age to show that the LORD is upright.’ Do not put me away from your loved employ. Honor me with some other task. Delight my willing soul with some fresh command. Bid me do or suffer Thy will, but pass me not by, leave me not to be a laggard, not unhonored and uninterested in fulfilling my Lord’s behests.”

So let the church of God always feel that she has never come to the place where she can say, “Rest, and be thankful.” “Higher, higher, higher, higher,” must still be her motto. If her missions have conquered one continent, they must invade another. If half the world had been converted, there would be no rest to us till the other half were converted likewise. “It is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room—room for more work, because there is room for more guests at Thy feast.”

Did I not say that this was a desirable announcement? I am afraid these servants said what we would, some of us, hesitate to affirm. “It is done *as thou hast commanded*.” Alas! how few churches could say this! And where the church might collectively affirm it, many members of the church must shrink from professing individually to have done as the host commanded. For what was that thy Lord enjoined? “Go out quickly.” How little there has been of going out after sinners. We have been content to preach to those who came to hear us. Of course, if the people will come to hear us in such numbers, and throng this Tabernacle so constantly, we have no reason to go away from them.

But alas! there are places of worship which I could indicate without difficulty that are not filled, that never were filled, that never will be filled, where there are, probably, as many spiders as there are persons under ordinary circumstances—where there are certainly more pews than sitters, and yet it does not seem to have ever occurred to the preacher that he should go out after the people. Small congregations will continue to worship in places not one-fourth occupied, when they might go across to the theater or the music hall, or to some other large building into which the people might come, and where they might be met with.

It would be a strange thing for the supply of fish, if our fishermen only sat at the window and caught what came beneath it, but never went forth to sea after the fish. There would be little game, I warrant

you, upon his lordship's table if he sat at the drawing room window to shoot only that which came there to be shot. For it does not come that way. The moors must be trodden, and the covers must be beaten.

So if we are to have many sinners saved, we must go out of our own quiet haunts, and go forth into frequented places. We must preach in the street, or at the market place, or on the village green. We must take the Word to the people, if they will not come to the Word. "Go out, go out," says the Savior. This is a word that should ring loudly in the ears of many Christians. You have heard almost sermons enough, go out and teach yourself. While you have been eating the fat and drinking the sweet, multitudes are perishing for lack of the heavenly bread. Go out and break it to them.

Oh! that there might come a holy impulse upon many here present to begin some good work for Christ! Break up some soil hitherto uncultivated, make an irruption and an invasion into Satan's territory. There is no land that yields so well as that which is newly broken up. The virgin soil that has long been given up to the forest, the brier and the thorn—let but the plough go through this, and there shall be sevenfold harvests.

No preaching is half so successful as that which carries the Gospel to the dissolute classes—those that never have been hardened by hearing and rejecting the tidings of mercy—those who, albeit they may have their faces stained with immorality, certainly have not any affectation in their mien. To these it comes like a new thing, it strikes them as sweet music, and hearing the joyful sound, they full often turn to God and live. To this day is it true, as our Savior said in His day, that publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven before Pharisees. This is a sphere of labor that remunerates the laborer. The lowest of the low, when hearing the Word, often accept what the so-called respectable despise. Go out, therefore.

Know this, likewise, that *the matter is urgent*, for the Master said, "Go out quickly." Here, again, I am afraid we cannot say we have done this. "Go out quickly," go out in haste, go out with the utmost speed, go out as one that runs on an errand, anxious to fulfill his mission, go out, not listlessly, as if you had to wait for an opportunity, but eagerly, knowing that this is the opportune time. Hurry yourself to have it done at once. Go out quickly.

The world goes by steam nowadays, while the church jogs on by the broad-wheeled wagon still. I know some churches that crawl like a snail upon a small leaf, making much ado to accomplish nothing. If half a dozen converts are added in twelve months, they think it is rather too many to be safe, and they are half afraid that they cannot be all genuine Christians. They would fain "summer them and winter them," as they say, and try them in half a dozen modes. In fact, it seems to them as if God never sent a new-born convert into their church except for them to worry it—not for them to accept it as a benison from heaven, and to train it, and nurse it—but to worry it. This will never do. We are to look after something more rapidly than the progress which these churches will ever make.

Go out *quickly*. Men are dying. There is no time for us to be quibbling among ourselves. It behooves us to show our zeal rather than waste our energies. Men are perishing. We must preach the Gospel to them now, tell them that it is "now or never" with some of them, make known to them a present Savior, and cry to them, "If God is God, serve him; if Baal be God, serve him. How long halt ye between two opinions! For the Holy Ghost saith, Today, if ye will hear his voice." There wants to be promptness, quickness, speed, avidity, eagerness after souls, in the preachers of the Gospel. "Go out quickly."

And have we not failed again in another point? "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and *bring in the blind, and the halt, and the maimed*, and compel them to come in." There are certain missions now established for which we have reason greatly to bless God. There are works going on in London which are the glory of Christendom. God speed them all!

Such beloved friends as Miss MacPherson, Dr. Bernardo, our brother Orsman, and many others, deserve our love and esteem, for they have given themselves up to work among the poorest of the poor and the lowest of the low, bearing a great deal which some of us might shrink from, rejoicing to show their diligence among a people much neglected, and reaping a good harvest of comfort to themselves in the salvation of souls.

But dear friends, where there is one of such works there ought to be fifty, and with this population of London, verging now upon four millions, when we have added all these works of faith and labors of love together, we might well say of them, “What are they among so many?” May God touch many of your hearts, my brethren and sisters, and make you feel the soft touch of sympathy for the perishing, while you hear the Master’s words spoken to you! “Go out yourselves quickly, and lay hold on the blind, and the halt, and the maimed, and bring them in to the supper”

Yes, bring them to Jesus. You cannot do it of yourself, but His Spirit dwells in you. Do not forget that. You are not an ordinary man, you are not an ordinary woman. “Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?” God dwelleth in you, and with God in you, what can you not do? Have but faith in the indwelling Deity, and attempt difficulties, nay, attempt what some think impossibilities, and you shall find that with God all things are possible. Weak as you are, yet, through His strength, you all things shall perform.

I pray God for this church, that she may not be found guilty at the coming of Christ of not having gone out after the poor. Do encourage them to come to this house at all times, whenever you can. I do not know where we are to put any more, but there is Thursday evening, and there is Monday evening, and there is room then. Oh! bring in whomsoever you can, for perhaps when the Gospel is preached God may bless it to them. Let us not be deficient in this.

In the next place we proposed to draw your attention to—

II. A REMARKABLE STATEMENT.

They had fished up all the poor people in the city, and they had brought in the four characters—the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind—and after that it was alleged “yet there is room.”

Well, well, that is a very encouraging piece of information for ungodly people here. For those that have not come to Jesus this is welcome information, “Yet there is room.” Now we know there is room for sinners still, from several considerations.

We may infer it, to begin with, from the doctrine of election. God has chosen unto Himself a people. We are told that their number is a number that no man can number. Well now, those who are saved are not so very many. They are a great many more than some bigots would like to believe, but they are a great many fewer than some enthusiasts would imagine. I am sure God has not saved enough yet to accomplish the number that He has proposed to save, by a very long way.

It is my own belief, as it is my earnest hope, that in all things Christ will have the pre-eminence. As in other things, so also in this, He will have more souls than Satan, that He may have the pre-eminence over the old serpent. It does not look to me likely that there should be at the last more lost than saved. We cannot answer the question to a certainty, but surely the Lord’s mercy will triumph over human sin, and God will get to Himself the victory.

A good divine used to say that he hoped and thought that, at the last, there would be no more persons lost, in proportion, than there might be found of persons in prison, in any well-ordered State, in proportion to the number of those who were citizens at large. I only trust it may be so. But the lines of God’s election do not encompass a mere handful. There is a great and vast number chosen by Him, and there is no such great and vast number gathered in yet. Therefore, we are persuaded that yet there is room.

Next, *the efficacy of the atonement leads us to believe this.* The atonement that Christ offered on the cross was no small matter. It was the sacrifice of Himself as an infinite being—as God and as man, and I dare set no limit to it in its efficacy, itself considered. The death of so august a Personage, in circumstances of such dishonor, amid agonies so inconceivable, must have about it an amount of virtue utterly beyond all reckoning.

Jesus Christ is to see of the travail of His soul and to be satisfied, and the travail of His soul does not mean the few Christian people that are now in the world or have been, and His satisfaction will not be consummated by the few millions that have hitherto been saved. Why, it does not satisfy us, yet our hearts are narrow compared with His. He will not be satisfied unless myriads are His. The jewels of His

crown must be countless as the stars of heaven by night, and as the sands upon the seashore by day. By that bottomless, fathomless, atonement, I do believe that yet there is, and must be, room.

*“Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more.”*

The end has not been reached. The virtue of the blood has not been stayed. The ransomed church has not been all gathered in. So yet there is room.

Again, when I consider *the greatness of the adorable Persons who entered into covenant* to devise the wondrous plan and accomplish the mighty work of salvation, I feel persuaded that yet there is room. Who is it that saves me? It is God that made heaven and earth. He devised the magnificent purpose according to the good counsel of His will. Think you that the Architect of yonder heavens has designed a little church for the display of His glory? Think you that He who spread the stars abroad in all their countless hosts to adorn His universe has limited the number, with causeless thrift, of brilliant diadems who shall celebrate the everlasting song of His praise? We think not so.

It was Jesus who wrought salvation, and thinkest thou that such a Savior, of such unrivalled dignity, came to effect a petty salvation for a petty few whom you might count upon your fingers? Incredible! Impossible! God forbid! And what shall I say of the Holy Spirit, whose majesty awes us, whose mystery baffles us, whose mercy enlivens us—the Spirit of God who works in us that salvation which the Christ of God has worked for us—think ye that He has come to dwell on earth with any small or insignificant intent? What small sect will contribute to His satisfaction? Nay, glory be to His name, He brought three thousand in on the Pentecostal day, and He will cause nations to be born in a day yet, and the church shall cry, “Who hath begotten me these? These—whence came they?”

If I go to Gethsemane and see the bloody sweat, I expect a wondrous harvest from that matchless sowing. If I stand on Calvary and mark the flowing wounds, I expect a marvelous reward for those tremendous griefs. If we are not to be pitifully disappointed, there must be something greater yet in reserve than the world has ever seen. The history of Christendom is far more grand than any chapter that has yet been written. There is room, there must be room at the feast of mercy—much room still to be occupied. It is not half filled yet. Scant at present is the array of guests, compared with the complement of those who must be brought in.

“Yet there is room.” With a mysterious spiritual consciousness, with an eager, sympathetic anxiety, *the church feels and knows that there is room*. The individual yearnings of our Lord’s disciples attest it. Do I not myself daily feel as if there were room, places that want peopling, as well as people that wanted placing at the feast? Brethren, our churches prove that the fresh converts introduced into their fellowship are like fresh blood poured into their veins. A church cannot long be happy and healthy without recruiting, renewing, reviving, and we are always needing fresh workers with the dew of the morning upon their souls.

We are wanting preachers powerfully impressed with their own call to proclaim the Gospel. Many pulpits want them! We need evangelists, men who have just welcomed the news, the good news, the heavenly tidings, and hasten to tell it at the corners of the streets, to the passengers along our thoroughfares. Lovers of souls, seekers of souls, oh! how much we require them! Many a Sunday school wants teachers. Many a ragged school wants self-denying assistants. Everywhere there is a want—a real want—for more helpers in the church, for more laborers in the harvest. So there must be room to store the fruits they want to reap.

As the benches of the feast seem to groan for guests, so does the church long after fresh accessions to her community. Were you here sometimes at the Monday night prayer meeting, you would feel there was room. Some of our brethren pray as if they had room in their hearts for hundreds and thousands that

must be reclaimed. When the church gets into the spirit of prayer, her cries and groans give proof of secret tears and private wrestling. Her earnest members, by the instant entreaties made to God, prove that the church feels that the guest chamber is not yet full. Her tent is not filled with children, she is crying out, like Rachel of old, "Give me children, or I die." She needs to see her converts multiplied, she longs to stretch forth the curtains of her habitations. There is, there must be room.

Judging by my own experience, I should say that the minister can generally feel when God is saving the souls of his hearers. The efforts and anxieties of his labor are accompanied with such pangs and throes within his own soul that he is well content with the pain and travail for the joy he has in prospect.

When last week I had some conversation with the candidates for church fellowship my heart rejoiced, as I found out how many of you had lately found the Savior. After being half-dubious whether a blessing had attended the sermons I recently preached, as I listened to the stories of conversion that so many told me, it made my heart to leap for joy. The fact was no tidings had come to me of the expectations I had fostered.

There is an interval between the sowing time and the reaping time. But I am encouraged. No doubt there are more of you coming. All but decided now, you will be altogether decided soon. God is at work with you, He means to bring you in, that His grace may have honor. Well, those desires and prayers, those longings and hopings, those wishes and expectations of the church all show that she does not feel thorough satisfaction with present results, and certainly she feels no misgiving as to the accommodation ready for all comers.

"Yet there is room." Yes, God be praised, there is. That mother says, "Ah! that my child were brought in!" Blessed be God, there is room for him. And the father says, "Oh! that my sons were saved!" Well, there is room for them. There have been thousands who have gone to heaven of late, but yet there is room. There are thousands that have come to Christ of late, but yet there is room. Prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, saints, have gone into glory, but yet there is room. In this church hundreds have pressed in to know the Lord, but yet there is room. There is room, there is room yet, and there is room for you. Blessed be God for that! Oh! that you may occupy that room!

My third point is this, that there is implied in the text—

III. A MOST BLESSED CONSUMMATION, that the room will be filled.

It is an old saying of the natural philosopher that nature abhors a vacuum. It is true, I doubt not. But here is another axiom, grace abhors a vacuum. The good man of the house could not bear to see a vacant seat at his table. All things were ready, but there were empty places, and he did not like it. The glory of the feast is to be found not merely in the provisions, but in the guests, so he must have the chairs occupied, as well as the table covered. With reverence be it said, the glory of Christ lies not only in His sacrifice, but in the sinners that that sacrifice saves.

A king is no king who has not any subjects. A head is no head if it has not any body. And so Jesus Christ would be a King without subjects if there were none saved. He would be a Head without members, and that is a ghastly thought. He must have a people, and what is more, He must have all His people. In our natural bodies, if but a little finger be missing, the body is not perfect. So also in Christ, if all His members are not saved, there would not be a perfect Christ. The apostle tells us that the church is the fullness of Christ. Hence if a part of the church were lost, a part of Christ's fullness would be lost. Therefore, He must cause all to come in the unity of the faith unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, for grace abhors a vacuum.

When at last the end shall come, and the dispensation of grace shall be wound up, it will be seen that at the table of mercy here below there was not a seat left empty. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; and whom he did predestinate them he also called." So it shall be. Satan shall not be able to point to a single empty place and say, "There should a certain soul have been seated, God appointed it, I frustrated His purpose." That cannot, shall not be. The wedding must and shall be furnished with guests.

In like manner the table of glory. Like the table of grace, while the board is richly spread, the seats shall be amply filled. There at that table, blessed be God, there is a place for me, and none of you can occupy it. It will be only occupied by him for whom it was designed. If you believe in Christ, dear friend, there is a place for you, a freehold, a vested right of which thou canst not be deprived. There is a crown that will fit no other head than yours. There is a harp that will yield music to no other hands than thine. There is a mansion among the many, many mansions in our Father's house for your residence. There will be no mansions in heaven at last untenanted.

In some streets of London, "To let" is written on half the houses. Cheerless is the lookout. But when at last the King shall bring His children home, there will not be one prepared mansion that has lost its prepared tenant. The reserved inheritance shall revert to the reserved people, the purchased inheritance shall inherit the purchased possession. This gives me hope in preaching. It convinces me that I do not preach in vain.

There must and there shall be some saved. God has declared it. God has made ready for it on earth, and He has made ready in heaven for it. Therefore, they shall be brought in. His preparation shall not be in vain. His wedding shall be furnished with guests. This certainty fortifies me against an apparent contingency. It inspires me with hope about some of you, my dear hearers, who look hesitant, that you ere long will be resolute. If you come to God, there are preparations made to receive, to welcome you, to lodge you, to feed you, to supply all your needs. Do you desire to come, you shall not be cast away. Why should not you wear one of those crowns? Why should not you tenant one of those mansions? "Yet there is room."

But who will help to fill that room? Who out of this dense throng of people will help to fill the vacant places at the gospel supper? I cannot call you one by one, as I would, but I do call to you with all my heart. Come to Jesus. Should you say, "How shall I come?" Well, it is not a motion of the body, it is a motion of the mind. "What sort of motion of the mind?" do you ask. It is trust—trust—simple conviction and unquestioning faith.

If you commit your case to Him, He will be concerned for you. Follow Christ, you shall have fellowship with Him. Your resolution will be evidence of your redemption. Your plea will procure a sense of His pardon. By your acquiescence you will learn that you are "accepted in the Beloved." May God dispose you, by the mighty operation of His Spirit, to come to Jesus. So shall my prayers be answered. So shall your souls be blessed forever. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

LUKE 8:41-56

Verses 41-42. *And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: for he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.*

Notice the word "behold," for this was a wonder that a man so high in position to come to Christ at all, especially one who was in an ecclesiastical position, for he "was a ruler of the synagogue." Usually those who had to do with the synagogue were great despisers of our Lord Jesus, God works great wonders, however, and sometimes the camel does go through the eye of the needle.

This man's name was Jairus, a common Jewish name, and you will find it was the name of one of the judges recorded in the book of Judges. Note this man's humility, "He fell down at Jesus' feet." The greatest of men must humble themselves before they can obtain mercy. Jesus Christ is always ready to receive, to accept, and bless all those who fall down at His feet, but those who lift up themselves shall find Him to be their sure and swift enemy, and the day shall come when He shall abase them to the dust.

"He besought him that he would come into his house, for he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a-dying." She seems to have been not only the darling of the house, but of all

the neighbors too, for we find that all the neighbors came together to weep and to lament her. You find Matthew says that this daughter was already dead. It seems that some delay arose, so that the child died, but the father, with triumphant faith, still besought Him to come and raise her, even from the very jaws of death.

43-44. *And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchèd.*

This disease laughs at the physicians, and whenever a cure has been effected it has always been a slow one. Hence the supernatural character of this cure, "Immediately her issue of blood stanchèd." This is the glory of our blessed religion, that it heals sin-sick souls at once and upon the spot. The moment a man believes in Jesus, his nature is changed, he becomes a new creature, in that moment all his sins are gone, in that same hour he becomes heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ. "Immediately."

45. *And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?*

What impudence on their part! Doubtless there are many things we say of our Lord, and even to Him in prayer, that are very far from such words as He should have from His disciples. There were many who touched Him out of curiosity, and doubtless some out of want of respect to His person came too close to Him, but there was only one who touched Him with the finger of faith, which was the only true touch.

46-48. *And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.*

Faith crowns Christ, and therefore, Christ takes the crown off His own head and puts it upon the head of faith. "Thy faith hath saved thee." Christ's virtue would not have saved her without her faith, and certainly her faith could not have saved her without Christ's virtue. We ought to note how vital faith is to true salvation, and what a high degree of importance is attached to it. Let us, therefore, if we have some degree of faith, pray for more, "Lord, increase our faith, for if a little of it may heal, what may not a great faith do?"

49. *While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.*

Be resigned, and say, "The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away," and expect not the blessing back again. Do as David did, who, while the child was yet alive, fasted and prayed, saying, "Peradventure, God will spare him," but when he was dead, fasted no more. Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master." Ah! but this man knew that He who can stay the soul at the gates of death can also bring it back *from* the gates of death if He wills. He that can get it from the paw of the lion can get it from the jaw of the bear. He can deliver His people at all times and at all seasons, and even death is a conquered foe.

50. *But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.*

"Believe only." What a depth lies in those two words! Believe only! Ah! Lord, it ought to be the easiest thing in the world to believe Thee, for Thou art so truthful, Thou keepest every promise to us, and yet sometimes when we are in the dark, and when circumstances go contrary to us, it is hard to believe, but is it not the hardness in our own hearts? Believe only! Christian, what is your trouble this morning, what is your trial? Believe only, and let your humble faith cast your burdens upon your God. "Believe only, and she shall be made whole."

51-52. *And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.*

They were so sure she was dead that they had actually hired the minstrels for her funeral—so Mark tells us—and the pipers, and the women that made those strange, Oriental lamentations were there, ready to inter her.

53-54. *And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.*

But Christ put them all out. They laughed Him to scorn, and therefore, He would not work the miracle in their presence. It is not meet to cast pearls before swine.

55. *And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.*

Do note here the word “straightway.” Just now we had the word immediately, and now we have *straightway*. It is one of the distinguishing features of the Gospel, both of Mark and of Luke, that both evangelists use the word “*eutheos*,” “straightway.” Christ’s miracles do not take a long time to do, they are done straightway.

If there is a distressed soul here now, your salvation need not take months and years, it may be done today, and in a moment thou mayest be able to rejoice that thy sins are forgiven, and that thou art a child of God. “She arose straightway, and he commanded to give her meat.” There are no unnecessary miracles. It wanted a miracle to give her life, but meat could sustain it, and therefore, there is no further miracle performed.

56. *And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.*

But we know from another evangelist that the fame thereof went abroad everywhere, and indeed, the healing of a soul is not a thing to be kept secret, but when any are raised from the dead the world must know it.

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