

GOD ALONE THE SALVATION OF HIS PEOPLE

NO. 80

A SERMON
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“He only is my rock and my salvation.”
Psalm 62:2

HOW noble a title. So sublime, suggestive, and overpowering. “MY ROCK.” It is a figure so divine, that to God alone shall it ever be applied.

Look on yon rocks and wonder at their antiquity, for from their summits a thousand ages look down upon us. When this gigantic city was as yet unfounded, they were grey with age. When our humanity had not yet breathed the air, ’tis said that these were ancient things. They are the children of departed ages.

With awe we look upon these aged rocks, for they are among nature’s first-born. You discover embedded in them the remnants of unknown worlds, of which, the wise may *guess*, but which, nevertheless, they must fail to *know*, unless God Himself should teach them what has been before them. You regard the rock with reverence, for you remember what stories it might tell if it had a voice, of how through igneous and aqueous agency, it has been tortured into the shape it now assumes.

Even so is our God pre-eminently ancient. His head and His hair are white like wool, as white as snow, for He is “the ancient of days,” and we are always taught in Scripture to remember that He is “without beginning of years.” Long ere creation was begotten, “from everlasting to everlasting,” He was God.

“My rock!” What a history the rock might give you of the storms to which it has been exposed. Of the tempests which have raged in the ocean at its base and of the thunders which have disturbed the skies above its head. While it, itself, has stood unscathed by tempests and unmoved by the buffeting of storms. So with our God.

How firm has He stood—how steadfast has He been—though the nations have reviled Him and “the kings of the earth have taken counsel together!” By merely standing still, He has broken the ranks of the enemy without even stretching forth His hand! With motionless grandeur like a rock, He has broken the waves and scattered the armies of His enemies, driving them back in confusion.

Look at the rock, again see how firm and unmoved it stands! It does not stray from place to place, but it abides fast for evermore. Other things have changed, islands have been drowned beneath the sea, and continents have been shaken, but see, the rock stands as steadfast as if it were the very foundation of the whole world, and could not move till the wreck of creation, or the loosening of the bands of nature. So with God, how faithful He is in His promises! How unalterable in His decrees! How unswerving! How unchanging!

The rock is immutable, nought has been worn from it. Yon old granite peak has gleamed in the sun or worn the white veil of winter snow—it has sometimes worshipped God with bare uncovered head and at other times the clouds furnished it with veiling wings, that like a cherub, it might adore its Maker. But yet it itself has stood unchanged. The frosts of winter have not destroyed it, nor have the heats of summer melted it.

It is the same with God. Lo, He is my rock. He is the same and His kingdom shall have no end. Unchangeable He is in His being, firm in His own sufficiency. He keeps Himself immutably the same. And “therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

The ten thousand uses of the rock, moreover, are full of ideas as to what God is. You see the fortress standing on a high rock, up which the clouds themselves can scarcely climb, and up whose precipices the assault cannot be carried, and the armed cannot travel, for the besieged laugh at them from their eminence. So is our God a sure defense and we shall not be moved if He has “set our feet upon a rock, and established our goings.”

Many a giant rock is a source of admiration from its elevation, for on its summit we can see the world outspread below, like some small map. We mark the river or broadly spreading stream, as if it were a vein of silver inlaid in emerald. We discover the nations beneath our feet, “like drops in a bucket,” and the islands are “very little things” in the distance, while the sea itself seems but a basin of water, held in the hand of a mighty giant.

The mighty God is such a rock. We stand on Him and look down on the world, counting it to be a mean thing. We have climbed to Pisgah’s top, from the summit of which we can race across this world of storms and troubles to the bright land of spirits—that world unknown to ear or eye, but which God has revealed to us by the Holy Ghost.

This mighty rock is our refuge and our high observatory, from which we see the unseen, and have the evidence of things which as yet, we have not enjoyed. I need not, however, stop to tell you all about a rock, we might preach for a week upon it, but we give you that for your meditation during the week.

“*He is my rock.*” How glorious a thought! How safe am I and how secure, and how may I rejoice in the fact that when I wade through Jordan’s stream, He will be my rock! I shall not walk upon a slippery foundation, but I shall tread on Him who cannot betray my feet. And I may sing, when I am dying, “He is my rock and there is no unrighteousness in him.”

We now leave the thought of the rock and proceed to the subject of our discourse, which is this, that God alone is the salvation of His people

“He ONLY is my rock and my salvation.”

We shall notice, first, *the great doctrine, that God only is our salvation.* Secondly, *the great experience, to know and to learn that, “He only is my rock and my salvation.”* And, thirdly, *the great duty, which you may guess at, which is to give all the glory, and all the honor, and place all our faith on Him who “only is our rock and our salvation.”*

I. The first thing is THE GREAT DOCTRINE—that God “only is our rock and our salvation.”

If anyone should ask us what we would choose for our motto, as preachers of the Gospel, we think we would reply, “God only is our salvation.” The late lamented Mr. Denham has put at the foot of his portrait a most admirable text, “Salvation is of the LORD.” Now that is just an epitome of Calvinism. It is the sum and the substance of it. If anyone should ask you what you mean by a Calvinist, you may reply, “He is one who says, *salvation is of the Lord.*” I cannot find in Scripture any other doctrine than this. It is the essence of the Bible. “He *only* is my rock and my salvation.”

Tell me anything that departs from this and it will be a heresy. Tell me a heresy and I shall find its essence here, that it has departed from this great, this fundamental, this rocky truth, “God is my rock and my salvation.”

What is the heresy of Rome, but the addition of something to the perfect merits of Jesus Christ—the bringing in of the works of the flesh to assist in our justification? And what is that heresy of Arminianism but the secret addition of something to the complete work of the Redeemer? You will find that every heresy, if brought to the touchstone, will discover itself here, it departs from this, “He only is my rock and my salvation.”

Let us now explain this doctrine fully. By the term “salvation” here, I understand not simply regeneration and conversion, but something more. I do not reckon that to be salvation which regenerates me and then puts me in such a position that I may fall out of the covenant and be lost. I cannot call that a bridge which only goes half-way over the stream. I cannot call that salvation which does not carry me all

the way to heaven, wash me perfectly clean, and put me among the glorified who sing constant hosannas around the throne. By salvation then, if I may divide it into parts, I understand deliverance, preservation continually through life, sustentation, and the gathering up of the whole in the perfecting of the saints in the person of Jesus Christ at last.

1. By, salvation, I understand *deliverance* from the house of bondage, wherein by nature I am born, and being brought out into the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free, together with a putting “on a rock, and establishing my goings.” This I understand to be wholly of God. And I think I am right in that conclusion, because I find in Scripture that man is dead. And how can a dead man assist in his own resurrection?

I find that man is utterly depraved and hates the divine change. How can a man, then, work that change which he himself hates? I find man to be ignorant of what it is to be born again, and like Nicodemus, asking the foolish question, “How can a man enter again into his mother’s womb, and be born?” I cannot conceive that a man can do that which he does not understand, and if he does not know what it is to be born again, he cannot make himself to be born again.

No, I believe man to be utterly powerless in the first work of his salvation. He cannot break his chains, for though they are not chains of iron, but chains of his own flesh and blood. He must first break his own heart before he can break the fetters that bind him. And how should man break his own heart? What hammer is that which I can use upon my own soul to break it, or what fire can I kindle which can dissolve it?

Nay, deliverance is of God alone. The doctrine is affirmed continually in Scripture and he who does not believe it, does not receive God’s truth. Deliverance is of God alone, “Salvation is of the LORD.”

2. And if we are delivered and made alive in Christ, still *preservation* is of the Lord alone. If I am prayerful, God makes me prayerful. If I have graces, God gives me graces. If I have fruits, God gives me fruits. If I hold on in a consistent life, God holds me on in a consistent life. I do nothing whatever towards my own preservation, except what God Himself first does in me.

Whatever I have, all my goodness is of the Lord alone, Wherein I sin, that is my own, but wherein I act rightly, that is of God, wholly and completely. If I have repulsed an enemy, His strength nerved my arm. Did I strike a foeman to the ground? His strength sharpened my sword and gave me courage to strike the blow.

Do I preach His Word? It is not I, but grace that is in me. Do I live to God a holy life? It is not I, but Christ that lives in me. Am I sanctified? I did not sanctify myself. God’s Holy Spirit sanctifies me. Am I weaned from the world? I am weaned by *God’s* chastisements. Do I grow in knowledge? The great Instructor teaches me. I find in God all I want, but I find in myself nothing. “He only is my rock and my salvation.”

3. And again *sustentation* also is absolutely requisite. We need sustentation in providence for our bodies and sustentation in grace for our souls. Providential mercies are wholly from the Lord. It is true the rain falls from heaven and waters the earth, and “makes it bring forth and bud, that there may be seed for the sower, and bread for the eater.” But out of whose hand comes the rain and from whose fingers do the dew drops distil?

It is true, the sun shines and makes the plants grow, and bud, and bring forth the blossom, and its heat ripens the fruit upon the tree, but who gives the sun his light and who scatters the genial heat from him? It is true, I work and toil, this brow sweats. These hands are weary. I cast myself upon my bed and there I rest, but I do not ascribe my preservation to my own might. Who makes these sinews strong? Who makes these lungs like iron and who makes these nerves of steel? “God only is the rock of my salvation.”

He only is the salvation of my body and the salvation of my soul. Do I feed on the Word? That Word would be no food for me unless the Lord made it food for my soul and helped me to feed upon it. Do I live on the manna which comes down from heaven? What is that manna, but Jesus Christ Himself incarnate, whose body and whose blood I eat and drink?

Am I continually receiving fresh increase of might? Where do I gather my might? My salvation is of Him, without Him I can do nothing. As a branch cannot bring forth fruit except it abide in the vine, no more can I except I abide in Him.

4. Then if we gather the three thoughts in one. *The perfection* we shall soon have, when we shall stand yonder, near God's throne, will be wholly of the Lord. That bright crown which shall sparkle on our brow, like a constellation of brilliant stars, shall have been fashioned only by our God. I go to a land, but it is a land which the plough of earth has never upturned, though it be greener than earth's best pastures, and though it be richer than all her harvests ever saw.

I go to a building of more gorgeous architecture than man has builded. It is not of mortal architecture. It is "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." All I shall know in heaven will be given by the Lord. And I shall say, when at last I appear before Him,

*"Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."*

II. And now, beloved, we come to THE GREAT EXPERIENCE.

The greatest of all experience, I take it, is to know that, "He only is our rock and our salvation." We have been insisting upon a doctrine, but doctrine is nothing unless proved in our experience. Most of God's doctrines are only to be learned by practice—by taking them out into the world and letting them bear the wear and tear of life. If I ask any Christian in this place whether this doctrine is true, if he has had any deep experience, he will reply, "True! ay, that it is. Not one word in God's Bible is more true than that, for indeed salvation is of God alone." "He only is my rock and my salvation."

But beloved, it is very hard to have such an experiential knowledge of the doctrine that we never depart from it. It is very hard to believe that "salvation is of the LORD." There are times when we put our confidence in something else but God, and sin by linking hand-in-hand with God—something besides Him. Let me now dwell a little upon the experience which will bring us to know that salvation is of God alone.

The true Christian will confess that salvation is of God alone *effectively*, that is, that "He works in him to will and to do of his own pleasure." Looking back on my past life, I can see that the dawning of it all was of God, of God effectively. I took no torch with which to light the sun, but the sun did light me. I did not commence my spiritual life—no, I rather kicked and struggled against the things of the Spirit.

When He drew me, for a time I did not run after Him. There was a natural hatred in my soul for everything holy and good. Woings were lost upon me—warnings were cast to the wind—thunders were despised. And as for the whispers of His love, they were rejected as being less than nothing and vanity.

But sure I am, I can say now, speaking on behalf of myself and of all who know the Lord, "He only is my salvation and your salvation too." It was He who turned your heart and brought you down on your knees. You can say in very deed, then,

*"Grace taught my soul to pray,
Grace made my eyes o'erflow."*

And coming to this moment, you can say,

*"Tis grace has kept me to this day,
And will not let me go."*

I remember when I was coming to the Lord, I thought I was doing it all myself, and though I sought the Lord earnestly, I had no idea the Lord was seeking me. I do not think the young convert is at first aware of this. One day when I was sitting in the house of God, I was not thinking much about the man's sermon, for I did not believe it.

The thought struck me, "*How did you come to be a Christian?*" I sought the Lord. "*But how did you come to seek the Lord?*" The thought flashed across my mind in a moment—I should not have sought Him unless there had been some previous influence in my mind to *make me* seek Him. I am sure you will not be many weeks a Christian, certainly not many months, before you will say, "I ascribe my change wholly to God." I desire to make this my constant confession.

I know there are some who preach one Gospel in the morning and another at night—who preach a good sound Gospel in the morning, because they are preaching to saints, but preach falsehood in the evening, because they are preaching to sinners. But there is no necessity to preach truth at one time and falsehood at another.

"The word of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul." There is no need to put anything else in it, in order to bring sinners to the Savior. But my brothers, you must confess that "Salvation is of the LORD." When you turn back to the past, you must say, "My Lord, whatever I have, You gave it to me. Have I the wings of faith? I was a wingless creature once. Have I the eyes of faith? I was a blind creature once. I was dead till You made me alive, blind till You opened my eyes. My heart was a loathsome dunghill, but You put pearls there, if pearls there be, for pearls are not the produce of dunghills. You have given me all I have."

And so, if you look at the present, if your experience be that of a child of God, you will trace all to Him. Not only all you have had in the past, but all you have now. Here you are, sitting in your pew this morning. Now I just want you to review where you stand. Beloved, do you think you would be where you are now if it were not for divine grace?

Only think what a strong temptation you had yesterday. They did "consult to cast you down from your excellency." Perhaps you were served like I am sometimes. The devil sometimes seems to drag me right to the edge of a precipice of sin by a kind of enchantment, making me forget the danger by the sweetness which surrounds it.

And just when he would push me down, I see the yawning gulf beneath me, and some strong hand put out, and I hear a voice, saying, "I will preserve him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom." Do you not feel that, ere this sun goes down you will be damned, if grace does not keep you? Have you anything good in your heart that grace did not give you?

If I thought I had a grace that did not come from God, I would trample it beneath my feet, as not being a godly virtue. I would guess it to be but a counterfeit, for it could not be right if it did not come from the mint of glory. It may look ever so much like the right thing, but it is certainly bad unless it came from God. Christian! can you say, of all things past and present, "He only is my rock and my salvation?"

And now look forward to the future. Man! think how many enemies you have. How many rivers you have to cross, how many mountains to climb, how many dragons to fight, how many lions' teeth to escape, how many fires to pass through, how many floods to wade. What think you, man? Can your salvation be of anything except of God!

Oh! if I had not that everlasting arm to lean upon, I would cry, "Death! hurl me anywhere. Anywhere out of the world." If I had not that one hope, that one trust, bury me ten thousand fathoms deep beneath creation, where my being might be forgotten! Oh! put me far away, for I am miserable if I have not God to help me all my journey through.

Are you strong enough to fight with one of your enemies without your God? I think not. A little silly maid may cast a Peter down, and cast you down too, if God do not keep you. I beseech you, remember this. I hope you know it by experience in the past, but try to remember it in the future wherever you go, "Salvation is of the LORD." Do not get to looking at your heart, do not get to examining to see whether

you have anything to recommend you, but remember, “Salvation is of the LORD.” “He only is my rock and my salvation.”

Effectively, it all comes of God, and I am sure we must add, *meritoriously*. We have experienced that salvation is wholly of Him. What merits have I? If I were to scrape together all I ever had, and then come to you and beg all you have got, I should not collect the value of a farthing among you all.

We have heard of some Catholic who said that there was a balance struck in his favor between his good works and his bad ones, and therefore he went heaven. But there is nothing of the sort here. I have seen many people, many kinds of Christians, and many odd Christians, but I never yet met with one who said he had any merits of his own when he came to close quarters.

We have heard of perfect men and we have heard of men perfectly foolish, and we have thought the characters perfectly alike. Have we any merits of our own? I am sure we have not, if we have been taught of God. Once we thought we had, but there came a man called Conviction into our house one night and took away our gloryings. Ah! we are vile still.

I don’t know whether Cowper said quite right, when he said,

*“Since the dear hour that brought me to Thy foot
And cut up all my follies by the root,
I never trusted in an arm but Thine—
Nor hoped but in Thy righteousness divine!”*

I think he made a mistake, for most Christians get to trusting in self at times, but we are forced to own that “Salvation is of the LORD,” if we consider it meritoriously.

My dear friends, have you experienced this in your own hearts? Can you say “amen” to that, as it goes round? Can you say, “I know that God is my helper?” I dare say you can, most of you, but you will not say it so well as you will by and by, if God teach you. We *believe* it when we commence the Christian life, we *know* it afterwards. And the longer we live, the more we find it to be the truth, “Cursed is he that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm, but blessed is he who trusteth in the LORD and whose hope the LORD is.”

In fact, the crown of Christian experience is to be delivered from all trust in self or man, and to be brought to rely wholly and simply on Jesus Christ. I say, Christian, your highest and noblest experience is not to be groaning about your corruption, is not to be crying about your wanderings, but is to say,

*“With all my sin, and care, and woe,
His Spirit will not let me go.”*

“Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.” I like what Luther says, “I would run into Christ’s arms if He had a drawn sword in His hands.” That is called venturesome believing, but as an old divine says, there is no such thing as venturesome believing. We cannot venture on Christ, it is no venture at all. There is no hap-hazard in the least degree.

It is a holy and heavenly experience when we can go to Christ, amid the storm, and say, “Oh! Jesus, I believe I am covered by Your blood,” when we can feel ourselves to be all over rags and yet can say, “Lord, I believe that through Christ Jesus, ragged though I am, I am fully absolved.” A saint’s faith is little faith when he believes as a saint, but a sinner’s faith is true faith when he believes as a sinner. The faith, not of a sinless being, but the faith of a sinful creature—that is the faith which delights God.

Go, then, Christian. Ask that this may be your experience, to learn each day, “He only is my rock and my salvation.”

III. And now, in the third place, we speak of THE GREAT DUTY. We have had the great experience, now we must have the great duty.

The great duty is—if God only be our rock, and we know it, are we not bound to put all our trust *in* God, to give all our love *to* God, to set all our hope *upon* God, to spend all our life *for* God, and to

devote our whole being *to* God? If God is all I have, sure, all I have shall be God's. If God alone is my hope, sure, I will put all my hope upon God. If the love of God is alone that which saves, sure, He shall have my love alone.

Come, let me talk to you, Christian, for a little while. I want to warn you not to have two Gods, two Christs, two friends, two husbands, two great fathers, not to have two fountains, two rivers, two suns, or two heavens, but to have only one. I want to bid you now, as God has put all salvation in Himself, to bring all yourself to God. Come, let me talk to you!

In the first place, Christian, *never join anything with Christ*. Would you stitch your old rags into the new garment He gives? Would you put new wine into old bottles? Would you put Christ and self together? You might as well yoke an elephant and an ant. They could never plough together. What! Would you put an archangel in the same harness with a worm and hope that they would drag you through the sky! *How inconsistent!* How foolish! What! Yourself and Christ?

Sure, Christ would smile, nay, Christ would weep to think of such a thing! Christ and man together? CHRIST AND COMPANY? No, it never shall be, He will have nothing of the sort. He must be all. Note how inconsistent it would be to put anything else with Him. And note, again, *how wrong* it would be. Christ will never bear to have anything else placed with Him.

He calls them adulterers and fornicators that love anything else but Him. He will have your whole heart to trust in Him, your whole soul to love Him, and your whole life to honor Him. He will not come into your house till you put all the keys at His girdle. He will not allow you to give Him all the keys but one. He will not come till you give Him attic, parlor, drawing-room, and cellar, too.

He will make you sing,

*“Yet if I might make some reserve,
And duty did not call,
I love my God with zeal so great,
That I should give Him all.”*

Mark you, Christian, it is a sin to keep anything from God.

Again, *Christ is very grieved* if you do it. Assuredly you do not desire to grieve Him who shed His blood for you. Surely there is not one child of God here who would like to vex his blessed elder Brother? There cannot be one soul redeemed by blood who would like to see those sweet blessed eyes of our best beloved bedewed with tears. I know you will not grieve your Lord, will you?

But I tell you, you will vex His noble spirit if you love aught but Him, for He is so fond of you that He is jealous of your love. It is said, concerning His Father, that He is “a jealous God” and He is a jealous Christ you have to deal with. Therefore, put not your trust in chariots, stay not yourselves in horses, but say, “He only is my rock and my salvation.”

I beg you, mark also one reason why you should not look at anything else, and that is if you look at anything else, *you cannot see Christ as well*. “Oh!” you say, “I can see Christ in His mercies.” But you cannot see Him so well there, as if you viewed His person. No man can look at two objects at the same time and see both distinctly. You may afford a wink for the world and a wink for Christ, but you cannot give Christ a whole look and a whole eye, and the world half an eye, too.

I beseech you, Christian, do not try it. If you look on the world, it will be a speck in your eye. If you trust in anything but Him, betwixt two stools you will come to the ground, and a fearful fall you will have. Therefore, Christian, look you only on Him. “He only is my rock and my salvation.”

Mark you, again, Christian I would bid you never put anything else with Christ. For as sure as ever you do, *you will have the whip for it*. There never was a child of God who harbored one of the Lord's traitors in his heart, but he always had a charge laid against him. God has sent out a search warrant against all of us and do you know what He has told His officers to search for? He has told them to search for all our lovers, all our treasures, and all our helpers.

God cares less about our sins as sins, than He does about our sins, or even our virtues, as usurpers of His throne. I tell you, there is nothing in the world you set your heart upon that shall not be hung upon a gallows higher than Haman's. If you love anything but Christ, He will make it to do penance. If you love your house better than Christ, He will make it a prison to you. If you love your child better than Christ, He will make it an adder in your breast to sting you. If you love your daily provisions better than Christ, He will make your drink bitter and your food like gravel in your mouth, till you come to live wholly on Him. There is nothing which you have which He cannot turn into a rod, if you love it better than Him, and rest assured He will do so, if you make it anything to rob you Christ.

And mark you once again, if you look at anything save God, *you will soon go into sin*. There was never a man who kept his eye on anything save Christ, who did not go wrong. If the mariner will steer by the polestar, he shall go to the north, but if he steers sometimes by the polestar and sometimes by another constellation, he knows not where he shall go.

If you do not keep your eye wholly on Christ you will soon be wrong. If you ever do give up the secret of your strength, namely, your trust in Christ, if you ever dally with the Delilah of the world and love yourself more than Christ, the Philistines will be upon you, and shear your locks, and take you out to grind at the mill, till your God gives you deliverance by means of your hair growing once more, and bringing you to trust wholly in the Savior.

Keep your eye, then, fixed on Jesus. For if you do turn away from Him, how ill will you fare! I bid you, Christian, beware of your graces. Beware of your virtues. Beware of your experience, beware of your prayers. Beware of your hope. Beware of your humility. There is not one of your graces which may not damn you, if they are left alone to themselves.

Old Brooks says, when a woman has a husband and that husband gives her some choice rings, she puts them on her fingers. And if she should be so foolish as to love the rings better than her husband, if she should care only for the jewels and forget him who gave them, how angry would the husband be, and how foolish she would be herself! Christian! I warn you, beware of your graces, for they may prove more dangerous to you than your sins.

I warn you of everything in this world. For everything has this tendency, especially a high estate. If we have a comfortable maintenance, we are most likely not to look so much to God. Ah! Christian, with an independent fortune, take care of your money, beware of your gold and silver. It will curse you if it comes between you and your God. Always keep your eye to the cloud and not to the rain—to the river and not to the ship that floats on its bosom. Look you not to the sunbeam, but to the sun. Trace your mercies to God and say perpetually, "He only is my rock and my salvation."

Lastly, I bid you once more to keep your eye wholly on God and on nothing in yourself, *because what are you now, and what were you ever, but a poor damned sinner if you were out of Christ!* I had been preaching the other day all the former part of the sermon as a minister. Presently I thought I was a poor sinner and then, how differently I began to speak! The best sermons I ever preach are those I preach not in my ministerial capacity, but as a poor sinner preaching to sinners. I find there is nothing like a minister recollecting that he is nothing but a poor sinner, after all.

It is said of the peacock that although he has fine feathers, he is ashamed of his black feet. I am sure that we ought to be ashamed of ours. However gay our feathers may appear at times, we ought to think of what we should be if grace did not help us.

Oh! Christian, keep your eye on Christ, for out of Him you are no better than the damned in hell. There is not a demon in the pit but might put you to the blush, if you are out of Christ. Oh that you would be humble! Remember what an evil heart you have within you, even when grace is there. You have grace—God loves you, but recollect, you have a foul cancer in your heart still. God has removed much of your sin, but still the corruption remains.

We feel that though the old man is somewhat choked and the fire somewhat dampened by the sweet waters of the Holy Spirit's influence, yet it would blaze up worse than before if God did not keep it

under. Let us not glory in ourselves, then. The slave need not be proud of his descent, he has the brand-mark upon his hand. Out upon pride! Away with it! Let us rest wholly and solely upon Jesus Christ.

Now, just one word to the ungodly—you who do not know Christ. You have heard what I have told you, that salvation is of Christ alone. Is not that a good doctrine for you? For you have not got anything, have you? You are a poor, lost, ruined sinner. Hear this, then, sinner—you have nothing and you do not want anything, for Christ has all.

“Oh!” say you, “I am a bond slave.” Ah! but He has got the redemption. “Nay,” say you, “I am a black sinner .” Ay, but He has got the bath that can wash you white. Say you, “I am leprous.” Yes, but the good Physician can take your leprosy away. Say you, “I am condemned.” Ay, but He has got the acquittal warrant signed and sealed, if you believe in Him.

Say you, “But I am dead.” Ay, but Christ has life and He can give you life. You want nothing of your own—nothing to rely on but Christ. And if there be a man, woman, or child here, who is prepared to say solemnly after me, with his or her heart, “I take Christ to be my Savior, with no powers and no merits of my own to trust in. I see my sins, but I see that Christ is higher than my sins. I see my guilt, but I believe that Christ is mightier than my guilt”—I say, if any of you can say that, you may go away and rejoice, for you are heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

I must tell you a singular story which was related at our church meeting, because there may be some very poor people here who may understand the way of salvation by it. One of the friends had been to see a person who was about to join the church, and he said to him, “Can you tell me what you would say to a poor sinner who came to ask you the way of salvation?” “Well,” said he, “I do not know—I think I can hardly tell you, but it so happened that a case of this sort did occur yesterday. A poor woman came into my shop and I told her the way, but it was in such a homely manner that I don’t like to tell you.” “Oh! yes, tell me. I should like to hear it.”

“Well, she is a poor woman, who is always pawning her things, and by and by she redeems them again. I did not know how to tell her better than this. I said to her, ‘Look here. Your soul is in pawn to the devil. Christ has paid the redemption money. You take faith for your ticket and so you will get your soul out of pawn.’”

Now, that was the most simple, but the most excellent way of imparting a knowledge of salvation to this woman. It is true, our souls were pawned to Almighty vengeance. We were poor and could not pay the redemption money, but Christ came and paid it all, and faith is the ticket which we use to get our souls out of pawn.

We need not take a single penny with us. We have only to say, “Here, Lord, I believe in Jesus Christ. I have brought no money to pay for my soul, for here is the ticket, the money has been paid long ago. This is written in Your Word, ‘The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.’” If you take that ticket you will get your soul out of pawn, and you will say, “I’m forgiven, I’m forgiven, I’m a miracle of grace.”

May God bless you, my friends, for Christ’s sake.

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.