

CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR HIS PEOPLE

NO. 47

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, OCTOBER 21, 1855,
BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

*“I pray not that You should take them out of the world,
but that You should keep them from the evil one.”
John 17:15.*

THIS prayer of Christ is an ever precious portion to all true believers from the fact that each of them has an inalienable interest in it. Every one of us, beloved, when we listen to the words of Christ, should remember that He is praying for us—that while it is for the great body of His elect He intercedes in this chapter and the one preceding it—yet it is also for each believer in particular that He offers intercession. However weak we are, however poor, however little our faith, or however small our grace may be, our names are still written on His heart! Nor shall we lose our share in Jesus' love.

I will proceed at once to the discussion of the text as my time is limited. First, there is a *negative prayer*—“I pray not that You should take them out of the world.” Second, here is a *positive prayer*—“but that You should keep them from the evil one.”

We have, then, a *negative prayer* in this verse. “I pray not that You should take them out of the world.” Now beloved, when we see persons converted to God—when men are turned from iniquity unto righteousness, from sinners into saints, the thought sometimes strikes us—would it not be good to take them at once to heaven? Would it not be an excellent thing to translate them speedily from the realms of sin to the breast of the Lord who loves them with an everlasting love? Would it not be wiser to take the young plants out of the chilly air of this world where they may possibly be injured and weakened and transplant them at once to the land where they may bloom forever in peace and tranquility? Not so, however, does Jesus pray. When the man had the devils cast out of him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.” But Jesus said to him, “Go to your friends and relations and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you.” Some men, when they are converted, are all for going speedily to heaven. But they have not done with earth yet. They would like to wear the crown without bearing the cross. They desire to win without running and conquer without a battle. But their whim has no countenance from Jesus, for He exclaims, “I pray not that You should take them out of the world.”

I shall first of all speak of *the meanings of this prayer*; secondly, *the reasons for this prayer*; thirdly, *the doctrinal inferences that we may derive from it*, and fourthly, *the practical lessons it teaches*. We will speak briefly on each point.

I. First, THE MEANINGS OF THIS PRAYER. “I pray not that you should take them out of the world.” Now there are two senses in which this prayer may be understood. one is—He prays not that they should, *by retirement and solitude*, be kept entirely separate from the world. And the second—He asks not that they should be taken away *by death*.

First, as regards *retirement from the world and solitude*; some hermits and others have fancied that if we were to shut ourselves out from the world and live alone, we would then be more devoted to God and serve Him better. Many men of old lived in deserts, never coming into the cities, wandering about alone, praying in caves and forests and thinking they were contaminated and rendered impure if once they mingled with mankind. So have we among the Roman Catholics, persons who act the part of hermits living far from the common haunts of men and believing that by so doing they shall abundantly serve God. There are, also, certain orders of monks and nuns who live almost alone, seeing only their fellows and fancying that they are putting honor upon God and winning salvation for themselves. Now it is too

late in the day for any of us to speak against monasticism. It has demonstrated its own fallacy! It was found that some of those men who had separated from society were guilty of more vile and vicious practices and sinned more grossly than men who were in the world. There are not many who can depart from the customs of social life and in solitude maintain their spirit, pure and unsullied. Why, brethren, common sense tells us at once that living alone is not the way to serve God! It may be the way to serve *self* and wrap ourselves in a garment of self-complacency. But it cannot be the way to truly worship God. If it is possible, by this means, to fulfill one part of the great law of God, we cannot possibly carry out the other portion—to love our neighbor as ourselves, for we thus become unable to bind up the broken-hearted, to bring the wanderer back, or to win souls from death and sin! Out of the heart proceeds all evil and if we were in retirement, we would sin because we would carry our hearts with us into whatever solitude we entered. If we could but once get rid of our hearts, if there were some means of rendering our natures perfect—*then we might* be able to live alone! But as we now are, that door must be well enforced so that could keep out the devil. That hell must be much secluded so that sin cannot enter. I have heard of a man who thought he could live without sin if he were to dwell alone. He took a pitcher of water and a store of bread, and provided some wood and shut himself up in a solitary cell, saying “Now I shall live in peace.” But in a moment or two he chanced to kick the pitcher over and he, thereupon, used an angry expression. Then he said, “I see it is possible to lose one’s temper even when alone.” And he at once returned to live among men!

But it may be understood in a second sense. “I pray not that You should take them out of this world”—*by death*. That is a sweet and blessed mode of taking us out of the world which will happen to us all, by-and-by. In a few more years the chariot of fire and the horses of fire will take away the Lord’s soldiers. But Jesus does not pray that *one* of His chosen people should be too soon removed—He does not desire to see His newly-begotten souls plume their wings and fly aloft to heaven until their time shall come. How frequently does the wearied pilgrim put up the prayer, “O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest.” But Christ does not pray like that. He leaves us to His Father, until, like shocks of corn fully ripe, we shall, each of us, be gathered into our Master’s garner! Jesus does not plead for our immediate removal by death. He asks that we may do well in the world, but He never asks for us to be gathered in before we are ripe. Thus I have explained the two meanings of the words, “I pray not that You should take them out of the world”—either by living retired from men, or being taken away by death.

II. Now the second point was THE REASONS FOR THIS PETITION. These reasons are threefold. Christ does not pray that we should be taken out of the world because our abode here is for our own good, for the world’s benefit and for His glory!

1. First, *it would not be for our own good to be taken out of this world*. I leave out the first idea of the text and only speak of it concerning death. We conceive that the greatest blessing we shall ever receive of God is to die. But doubtless it would not be for our good to withdraw from this world as soon as we had escaped from sin. It is better for us to tarry a little while—far better. And the reasons for this are—first, because *a little stay on earth will make heaven all the sweeter*. Nothing makes rest so sweet as toil! Nothing can render security so pleasant as a long exposure to alarms and fears and battles. No heaven will be as sweet as a heaven which has been preceded by torments and pains! I think the deeper draughts of woe we drink here below, the sweeter will be those draughts of eternal glory which we shall receive from the golden bowls of bliss! The more we are battered and scarred on earth, the more glorious will be our victory above when the shouts of a thousand times ten thousand angels welcome us to our Father’s palace! The more trials—the more bliss; the more sufferings—the more ecstasies; the more depression—the higher the exaltation. Thus we shall gain more of heaven by the sufferings we shall pass through here below. Let us not, then, my brethren, fear to advance through our trials—they are for our good. To stop here awhile is for our benefit. Why? We would not know how to converse in heaven if we had not a few trials and hardships to tell of and some tales of delivering grace to repeat with joy. An old sailor likes to have passed through a few shipwrecks and storms, however hazardous they may have

been, for if he anchors in Greenwich Hospital, he will there tell his companions, with great pleasure, of his hair-raising escapes! There will be some old soldiers in heaven, too, who will recount their fights—how their Master delivered them and how He won the victory and kept off all their foes.

Again, *we would not have fellowship with Christ if we did not stop here*. Fellowship with Christ is so honorable a thing that it is worth while to suffer that we may thereby enjoy it. You have sometimes heard me express a desire that I might be in the number of those who shall be alive and remain and so shall escape death. But a dear friend of mine says he had rather die, in order that he might thus have fellowship with Christ in His sufferings—and I think the thought finds an echo in my own breast! To die with Jesus makes death a perfect treasure. To be a follower in the grave with Him makes death a pleasure. Moreover, you and I might be taken for cowards, although we may have fellowship with Him in His glory, if we had no scars to prove the sufferings we had passed through and the wounds we had received for His name! Thus, again, you see it is for our good to be here—we would not have known fellowship with the Savior if we had not tarried here a little while. I would never have known the Savior's love half as much if I had not been in the storms of affliction. How sweet it is to learn the Savior's love when nobody else loves us! When friends flee away, what a blessed thing it is to see that the Savior does not forsake us but still keeps us and holds fast by us and clings to us and will not let us go! O beloved brethren, believe that your remaining here on earth is for your eternal benefit and, therefore, Jesus said, "I pray not that You should take them out of the world."

2. And again, *it is for the good of other people*. I think we should all be willing to remain on earth for the good of others. Why may not saints die as soon as they are converted? For this reason—because God meant that they should be the means of the salvation of their brethren. You would not, surely, wish to go out of the world if there were a soul to be saved by you! I think if I could go to glory before I had converted all the souls allotted to me, I would not be happy. But that would be impossible, for God will not shut His saints in till they have been spiritual fathers to those appointed. We do not wish to enter heaven till our work is done—it would make us uneasy on our beds if there were one single soul left to be saved by our means! Tarry, then, Christian. There is a brand to be plucked out of the fire, a sinner to be saved from his sins, a rebel to be turned from the error of his ways—and maybe that sinner is one of your relatives! Maybe, poor widow, you are spared in this world because there is a wayward son of yours not yet saved. Perhaps God has designed to make you the favored instrument of bringing him to glory. And you gray-headed Christian, it may be that though, "the grasshopper is a burden to you" and you long to go, you are kept here because one of your offspring, by your instrumentality is yet to be saved. Tarry, then, for your son's sake, who came from your loins. I know how deeply you love him and for his sake, surely, you are content to be left here a little—counting it for the best that you may bring in your son to glory with you!

3. But the third reason is because *it is for God's glory*. A tried saint brings more glory to God than an untried one. I do verily think in my own soul that a believer in a dungeon reflects more glory on his Master than a believer in paradise! I believe that a child of God in the burning fiery furnace, whose hair is yet unscorched and upon whom the smell of the fire has not passed, displays more of the glory of the Godhead than even he who stands with a crown upon his head, perpetually singing praises before the eternal throne. Nothing reflects as much honor on a workman as a trial of his work and its endurance of it. It is the same with God. It honors Him when His saints preserve their integrity. Peter honored Christ more when he walked upon the water than when he stood upon the land. There was no glory given to God by his walking on the solid shore, but there was glory reflected when he trod upon the water. Peter saw the Lord coming on the water and he said to Him, "Lord, if it is You, bid me come unto You on the water. And He said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus." What may we not go through, Christians, at His command? O I think we could rise and cut Agag to pieces and hew Satan, himself, and break his head through the power of Jesus! It is, then, for the glory of Jesus that we yet tarry. If my lying in the dust would elevate Christ one inch higher, I would say, "O let me remain, for it is sweet to be here for the Lord." And if to live here forever would make

Christ more glorious, I would prefer to live here eternally. If we could but add more jewels to the crown of Christ by remaining here, why should we wish to be taken out of the world? We would say, "It is blessed to be anywhere where we can glorify Him."

III. The third point is THE DOCTRINAL INFERENCE WE MAY DERIVE FROM THIS PRAYER.

The first inference—*death is God taking the people out of the world and when we die we are removed by God*. Death is not an independent being that comes at his own will to carry us away when he pleases. In fact, it is not true that death takes away the Christian at all—God, alone, can remove His children from this world—whether the humble peasant, or the reigning monarch—only one hand lifts them to the sky. You will see this by referring to the Revelation where the vintage of the wicked is gathered by an angel but the harvest of the righteous is reaped by Christ, Himself. "And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he, also, having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over the fire and cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the cluster of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God." These were the wicked. But if you go to the preceding passage, it says, "And I looked and behold a white cloud and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Your sickle and reap—for the time is come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And *He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle* on the earth, and the earth was reaped." Christ is the reaper who cuts His own corn! He will not trust an angel to do it. God alone has the issues of life in His hand.

The next thing is that *dying is not of one-half so much importance as living to Christ*. "I pray not that You should take them out of the world." He does not make their dying an object of prayer, "but that You should keep them from the evil one." He prays that they should be preserved in life knowing that their death would assuredly follow rightly, as a matter of course. Many say, one to the other, "Have you heard that So-and-So is dead?" "How did he die?" They should say, "How did he live?" It may be an important question—how does a man die? But the more important one is, how does a man live? What curious notions people get about death! The question they ask is not whether a man dies in the Lord Jesus, but, "Has he had a very easy death? Did he die gently?" If so, they conclude that all is well. If I ask, "Had he any affection to trust in Christ?" the reply probably will be, "Well, at all events, I thought he had. He had a very easy death." People think so much of an easy death—if there are no pains in death, if they are not in trouble and not plagued like others—they falsely conclude all to be well. But though like sheep they are laid in the grave, they may awaken to destruction in the morning! It is not a sign of grace that our dying is easy. It is natural for persons in the decay of strength to die easily. Many of the most vicious men who have destroyed the power of their bodies have an easy, painless death from the fact that there is nothing to struggle against death. But then, though they die like lambs, they wake up in sorrow! Do not put any confidence in deathbeds, my dear friends. Do not look on them as evidences of Christianity. The great evidence is not how a man dies—but how he lives!

IV. The practical lesson we learn from this part of the text—"I pray not that You should take them out of the world," is this—*that we never have any encouragement to peevishly ask God to let us die*. Christians always want to die when they have any trouble or trial. You ask them, "Why?" "Because we want to be with the Lord." O yes, they want to be with the Lord when troubles and temptations come upon them! But it is not because they are "panting to be with the Lord"—it is because they desire to get rid of their troubles—otherwise they would not want to die at all times when a little vexation is upon them! They want to get home, not so much for the Savior's company, as to get out of the little hard work! They did not wish to go away when they were in quiet and prosperity. Like lazy fellows, as most of us are, when we get into a little labor we beg to go home. It is quite right, sometimes, that you should desire to depart because you would not prove yourself to be a true Israelite if you did not want to go to

Jerusalem. You may pray to be taken home out of the world, but Christ will not take up the petition. When your prayers come to the Lord, this little one may try to get among them, but Christ will say, "I do not know anything about you, 'I pray not that You should take them out of the world.'" You may wish it sincerely and really desire it, but you will not, at present, get your Master to pray with you. Instead of crying, or wishing to be away from the battle, brace yourself up in the name of the Lord! Think every wish to escape the fight is but a desertion of your Master. Do not so much as think of rest, but remember that though you may cry, "Let me retire into the tent," you will not be admitted until you return a victor! Therefore stop here and work and labor.

My dear friends, I had intended to preach from the other half of the verse, but that is quite impossible. The time is so far gone and I can only manage the first part. So I must depart from my original intention. And I will restrict myself to some thoughts which occur to me upon the first portion of our text.

"I pray not that You should take them out of the world." Perhaps tomorrow you will be saying, "I am very sorry Sunday is over. I am obliged to go to business again. I wish it were always Sunday, that I might attend to my preaching, or to the schools, or to the prayer meeting, or to the tract-distributing. No obstructions of the world afflict me there, no vexations of the spirit occur there. I am sick of the world; oh, if I could never go into it again." Let me jog your elbow a bit. Does Jesus think so? Hear Him! "I pray not that You should take them out of the world." There is no remedy for the ill, if it is an ill—therefore endure it with becoming fortitude! Yes, rather seek to improve the opportunity thus afforded you of conferring a blessing upon your race and of gaining advantages for yourselves.

The pious mind will know how to improve the very sight of sin to its own sanctification. It will learn humility when it remembers that restraining grace, alone, prevents a similar fault in itself. It will gather subjects for gratitude and admiration from the fact that grace, alone, has made it to differ. Never shall we value divine grace so much as when we see the evil from which it delivers us! Never shall we more abhor sin than when we discern its visible deformity! Bad society is, in itself, like the poisonous cassava shrub—but if baked in the fire of grace, it may even be rendered useful! True grace casts salt into the poisonous stream and then, when forced to ford it, the filth is destroyed. Abide, then, O soldier, in the trenches of labor and battle, for the hardness of service is beneficial to you.

But remember while here that you lose no opportunity of attacking the foe. Never miss an opportunity of having a shot at the devil! Be ready on all occasions to do mischief to the enemy. In business, drop a word of savor and unction. In company, turn the conversation heavenward; in private, wrestle at the throne. I do not advise you to intrude religion at unseasonable hours. I do not conceive it to be your duty, when a customer calls to pay a bill, to ask him into your office and spend half an hour in prayer with him. Nor would I think it necessary to sanctify your ribbons and shawls by exhorting the purchasers across the counter! Some have not been quite innocent of the charge of cant who make as much use of religion to attract customers as they do of their plate glass window. Do not talk of religion to be heard of men but when a fair opportunity offers, out with your rifle and take a steady aim! Cromwell's singular advice to his soldiers was, "Trust in God, my friends, and keep your powder dry." In a better sense this is mine—more than all keep up a continual fire on the Enemy by a holy life! Nothing will more reprove sin than your holiness. If you cannot tell the stick it is crooked, you can prove it to be so by laying a straight one side by side with it. So put your purity before the impure and they will be effectually reformed!

Well then, again, *do not be afraid to go out into the world to do good*. Christ is keeping you in the world for the advantage of your fellow men. I am sometimes wicked enough to think that I would rather go anywhere than stand up again and preach my Master's gospel. Like Jonah, I have thought I would really pay my fare to be carried away to Tarshish, instead of coming back to Nineveh. So would some of you who have tried to preach and found you could not succeed as you desired. But do not be down-hearted, my brothers! A Christian should never get so. If you have but one listener, today, perhaps the next time the number will be doubled, and so on, till they cannot be counted! Never say, "I wish to go out of this world." Do not murmur, "My life is prolonged beyond my joys." Do what you can! Do not go

among people with fear. Do not be ashamed to look duty in the face. If you are not successful, at first, do not be cowards and run away from your guns! We should do all we can to bring our guns into line with our Brothers and take good aim at our foes. Never desert your work, though you come home distressed in spirit, though you see no gleam of success and nothing is gained. Remember you cannot run out of the battle, but you must go on. And you cannot escape the service. On, then, and glory shall be yours, by God's grace!

Now, my brethren, what bearing has this text upon the ungodly? There are some here, my dear friends, of whom I have sometimes thought that I could almost pray that God would take them out of the world! I can tell you why—they are so wicked—so dreadfully wicked! They are such hardened reprobates, with such iron souls, that they seem as if they never would be turned to God! There are some here whose portion it would appear to be damned and to lead others to the same condition. I know a village where there is a man so vicious, so abandoned, that I could almost pray for him to be removed out of the world. He is so awfully wicked that many of those I thought hopeful Christians, have been poisoned by his example. Indeed, he seems to be depraving the entire population! He stands like a deadly Upas tree, with outspread branches, over-shadowing the whole place. He is consuming all around him. And instead of it being a mercy for him to be here, it would be like a mercy if he were gone! Are not some of you like that man? Are you not so bad that you are doing all the mischief in the world you can? You never do anything for the cause of Christ. You are always trying to do your utmost against it. You never sow a little blade of God's grass where none grew before. You are of no service and yet you are spared because Jesus says, "I pray not that You should take them out of the world." He prays that you may be in the world a little longer! And what has He preserved you from? First, fever comes and bows you down. But Christ says, "Let him not depart yet. O spare him now." And you are spared. The second time disease comes near you and great pains bow you down. Again He prays, "Spare him!" And you are yet safe. The third time you are fast approaching your end. Now the angel of death is lifting up the glittering steel and his axe is almost fallen on you. Yet Christ says, "Spare him, angel! Spare him—perhaps he may yet turn to Me with full purpose of heart." He whom you hate, loved you so much that He interceded for you and, therefore, you were spared till now. Remember, however, that this reprieve will not continue forever. At last Justice will cry, "Cut him down, he cumberes the ground." Some of you have been cumbering the ground for 60 or 70 years—old sinners—of no use in this world. Is it so? There you are! Occupying the ground, keeping other trees from growing and of no use! Your family is being damned by your example. The whole neighborhood is tainted by you. Do not tell me I should not speak so roughly. I tell you as long as I have a tongue in my head you shall have no mincemeat from me! If you are lost, it shall not be for want of plain speaking and honest warning. Oh, you cumber-grounds! How much digging and dunging have you received at the Lord's hand and yet you are fruitless? The axe will soon be at your root and oh, the fire into which you shall be cast! Ungodly man, you are spared until your overflowing cup of sin is dropping like oil upon the flame of vengeance and the increasing fire will presently reach you. The longer the archer draws the bow, the mightier is the force of the arrow. What though vengeance tarries, it is that its sword may be sharpened and its arm nerved for direr execution. Oh, you gray-heads! A little more delay and the stroke shall fall—tremble and kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little!

And yet, I think some of you who have cumbered the ground do most heartily desire to serve God. Poor sinner! I rejoice that you feel that you have been a cumber-ground. Do you confess that you have been a poor thorn and briar until now? Do you acknowledge that the Lord had been just to you if He had damned you? Then come as you are and cast yourself on Jesus—without works, without merit! Will you ask the Lord to turn you into a good fig tree? If you will, He will do it, for He declares that He hears prayer!

There was once a poor man in a small country town that had not all the sense people usually have, but he had sense enough to be a great drunkard and swearer! As God would have it, he once listened to a poor woman who was singing—

***“I’m a poor sinner and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all-in-all.”***

Home he went, repeating these words—he put his trust in a crucified Savior, and was really converted. Well, he soon came to church, and although he was a peddler and always traveling about, he said, “I want to join your church.” They, remembering his sinful way of life, required some great evidence of a change before they received him, “Oh” he said, “I must come in.” “But you have been such a great sinner and you are unconverted,” added the elders. “Well,” said poor Jack, “I don’t know if I’m unconverted, and I confess I am a *great* sinner—but—

***“I’m a poor sinner and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all-in-all.”***

They could not get from him any other testimony save this. He would only say—

***“I’m a poor sinner and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all-in-all.”***

They could not refuse him, and therefore accepted him for fellowship. After this he was always happy. One day a Christian said to him, “You always seem so happy and pleased, Jack; how is it?” “Well” he said, “I ought to be happy, for—

***“I’m a poor sinner and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all-in-all.”***

“Well but,” said the gentleman, “I can’t see how you can be always so happy and sure. I sometimes lose my evidences.” “I don’t,” said Jack,

***“I’m a poor sinner and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is in my all-in-all.”***

“Ah,” said a friend, “I am at times miserable because I remember my sad sinfulness even since conversion.” “Ah,” said Jack, “You have not begun to sing—

***“I’m a poor sinner and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all-in-all.”***

“Oh,” said the friend, “How do you get rid of your doubts and fears? My faith frequently fails, and I miss my sure hope in Christ. My frames are so variable and feelings so contrary, what do you think of that?” “Think?” said poor Jack, “Why Master, I have no good things to care about—

***“I’m a poor sinner and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all-in-all.”***

Well, then, if there is anyone here who is “a poor sinner and nothing at all”—where is he? In the gallery, or sitting down below? If he cannot say all that poor man said; if he can say the first line, he need not fear to say the second! Never mind if he can’t say—

“Jesus Christ is my all-in-all.”

If he can say—

“I’m a poor sinner and nothing at all,”

he is most assuredly on the right road!

“Oh, but,” says one, “I am sinful, vile, worthless.” All right! You’re “a poor sinner and nothing at all,” and Jesus Christ is willing to be your “all-in-all.” “But I have blasphemed God, departed from His ways and grievous! I transgressed!” Well, I believe all that and a great deal more, and am very glad to hear it, or thus I see you are—

“A poor sinner and nothing at all.”

I am very glad if you will hold that opinion of yourself. “Ah! but I am afraid I have sinned too much. When I try, I cannot do anything! When I try to mend my ways; when I try to believe in Christ, I cannot.” We are glad, very glad of it Brother, that you are—

“A poor sinner and nothing at all.”

If you had a single particle of goodness; if you had a little bit—not big enough to cover the top of your little finger—we would not be glad. But if you are—

***“A poor sinner and nothing at all,
Jesus Christ is your all-in-all.”***

Come! Will you have Him? You are “nothing at all.” Will you have Christ? Here He stands. Ask—it is all He wants, for you are the object of His regard. There are only three steps. One is to step out of self. The second is to step upon Jesus. The third is to step into heaven. You have taken one step. I am sure you will take the others. God never makes you feel you are, “A poor sinner and nothing at all,” but, sooner or later, He gives—

“Jesus Christ as your all-in-all.”

O poor sinner, do not be doubtful of my Master's power! Do but touch the hem of His garment, and you shall be made whole! Like the poor woman in the crowd, do but get at it, and touch it, and He will surely say unto you, “You are saved.”

If you will go to Him with this cry—

*“I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all,
And Jesus Christ is my all-in-all.”*

Then you will see the blessed reason why Jesus interceded thus—“I pray not that You should take them out of the world.”

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