

SOUL-SATISFYING BREAD

NO. 1112

A SERMON
 DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, MAY 18, 1873
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 AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

*“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life:
 he that cometh to me shall never hunger. and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”
 John 6:35*

OUR Savior used expressions concerning Himself which might be turned to another meaning than He intended. He did not guard His words by saying, “I am like bread, and faith is like eating and drinking,” but He said, “I am the bread of life,” and “Except a man eat my flesh and drink my blood there is no life in him.”

He did this not only because from His own sincerity of heart it was not in Him to be forever fencing around all His speeches, but also with a set purpose, because His speech was so plain that if any man misunderstood Him, it would be the result of his own perversity of mind and not the effect of any obscurity in the Lord's language.

Thus by fixing a low and sensual meaning upon elevated spiritual language, the men of His time would be discovered to be none of the Lord's chosen and the thoughts of many hearts would be revealed. While He was preaching, His words were like a refiner's fire, bringing out the pure metal, but separating it from the dross and making that dross to appear the worthless thing which it really was.

It would clearly appear that men hated the light when they perverted the clearest expressions of the Lord of light into foolishness or mystery. Our Lord's mission was not so much to save all whom He addressed, as to save out of them as many as His Father gave Him. And He used His mode of speaking as a test.

Those who were His, understood Him. Those who were not His and were not taught of the Father, viciously put a literal meaning upon His spiritual words, and so missed His divine teaching. To this day the memorable expressions of our Lord in this chapter remain a stumbling block to some, while they are full of glorious instruction to others.

We see the world every day parting more and more definitely into two camps—the camp of the chosen of God, to whom is made known the mystery of the kingdom, the babes in grace who read the simple teaching of the Gospel and rejoice in it. And on the other side, the carnal host who hear the Word, but look no deeper than its outward letter, to whom it becomes a “savor of death unto death,” because they pervert the Lord's spiritual word to a carnal meaning, and straightway heap unto themselves abounding ceremonies and pierce themselves through with deadly errors.

I scarcely think that the prominence of Sacramentarianism nowadays is to be altogether regretted. It is only a more clear and manifest severing of the precious from the vile. There is a division as marked as between death and life, and as deep as hell, between the spiritual church which believes in Jesus and the carnal church which believes in sacraments. Between the regenerate who look to Christ upon the cross, and the twice-dead who believe in a piece of bread and pay reverence to a wine cup.

The Savior spake in symbols, that the proud might hear in vain, that hearing they might not hear, and seeing they might not perceive, executing upon that self-conceited generation which rejected Him the judicial sentence of the Lord, for their hearts were waxen gross, their ears were dull of hearing, and their eyes had they closed.

But now, speaking to those to whom the Lord has given to understand His meaning, let me say, our Savior uses very simple figures. Think of His calling Himself bread! How condescending, that the

commonest article upon the table should be the fullest type of Christ! Think of His calling our faith an eating and a drinking of Himself! Nothing could be more instructive. At the same time nothing could better set forth His gentleness and humility of spirit, that He does not object to speak thus of our receiving Him. God be thanked for the simplicity of the Gospel.

The longer I live, the more I bless God that we have not received a classical Gospel, or a mathematical Gospel, or a metaphysical Gospel. It is not a Gospel confined to scholars and men of genius, but a poor man's Gospel, a ploughman's Gospel, for that is the kind of Gospel which we can live upon and die upon.

It is to us not the luxury of refinement, but the staple food of life. We want no fine words when the heart is heavy, neither do we need deep problems when we are lying upon the verge of eternity, weak in body and tempted in mind. At such times we magnify the blessed simplicity of the Gospel. Jesus in the flesh made manifest becomes our soul's bread. Jesus bleeding on the cross, a substitute for sinners, is our soul's drink. This is the Gospel for babes—and strong men want no more.

Again, it strikes me as being very noteworthy and especially very worthy of thanks, that our Savior has taken metaphors of a very common character, so that if our hearts are but right, we cannot go anywhere but what we are reminded of Him.

At our tables we are very apt to forget the best things. The indulgence of the appetite is not very promotive of spirituality, yet we cannot sit down to table but what the piece of bread speaks to us and says, "Poor soul, you want even bread to be given you, you are so needy that your bread must be the gift of heavenly charity. Jesus has come down from heaven to keep you from absolute starvation. He has come down to be bread and water to you."

As you take up that loaf, and think of the processes through which it has passed before it has become bread, it preaches a thousand sermons to you concerning the sowing of Jesus as a grain of wheat in the earth, His grinding between the millstones of divine wrath, His passing through the fiery oven. We see the sufferings of Jesus in every crumb we put into our mouths.

Why, the Lord has hung the heavens with His name and made them tell of His love. Yon sun proclaims the Sun of Righteousness and every star speaks of the Star of Bethlehem. You cannot walk your garden, or go into the streets, or open a door, or put on your dress without being reminded of the Lord Jesus.

I remember once visiting a poor Christian in the hospital, who had often attended my ministry, and he said, "Why, sir, you have given us so many illustrations, that as I lie in bed everything I see, or hear, or read of, brings to mind something in your sermons." How much more true is this of our Great Teacher. We are glad that He has hung up the Gospel everywhere, till every dewdrop reflects Him, and every wind whispers His name. Day and night talk to each other of Him, and the hours commune concerning things to come.

With this as a preface, let us come to our subject. Our text in a very simple way tells us, first, that *Jesus Christ is to be received*. That reception is here described—"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." The second doctrine of the text is that *when Jesus Christ is received, he is superlatively satisfying to the soul*—"Shall never hunger"—"Shall never thirst."

I. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS TO BE RECEIVED BY EACH ONE OF US PERSONALLY FOR HIMSELF.

An unappropriated Christ is no Christ to any man. Bread which is not eaten will not stay our hunger. The water in the cup may sparkle like purest crystal, but it cannot slake thirst unless we drink it. To get a personal hold of the Savior is the main thing, and the question is, how is this to be done. How is Jesus Christ to become a Savior to me?

You will observe that in this chapter, and indeed everywhere else, the mode of obtaining an interest in Christ is never mixed up with the idea of fitness, merit, preparation, or worth. The text says, "He that

cometh to me.” It says nothing of preparation before coming, nor of any meritorious actions connected therewith. It is a simple coming, as a beggar for alms or a child for its father’s help.

The other description is, “He that believeth on me.” There is nothing there of merit. In fact, faith stands in direct opposition to meritorious working, and if we read of eating Christ, and drinking Christ, the act is entirely a receptive one, nothing given forth, but everything received—reminding us of that memorable passage, “To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name.”

It is all a matter of receiving, not of bringing to Christ. We come to Him empty-handed, we believe in Him without any deservings of our own, and in that way, and in that way only, Jesus Christ becomes our Savior. Let us dwell on these expressions for a few minutes.

The first is, that *we come to Him*. “He that cometh unto me shall never hunger.” I suppose this represents the first act of faith, by which men enter into spiritual life—we are alienated from Christ, but after hearing the Gospel, we are by the Holy Spirit led to think of Him, to consider Him, to study Him, and to judge that He is the Savior whom we want. Our alienation from Him is turned into desire after Him, and we come to Him beseeching Him to be our Savior.

We come to Him. It is a motion of the heart towards Him, not a motion of the feet, for many came to Jesus in body and yet never came to Him in truth. They were close to Him in the press, but they never touched Him so that virtue came out of Him. The coming here meant is performed by desire, prayer, assent, consent, trust, obedience.

It means that I hear what Christ is and learn what God says He is—that He is God and that He is man, that He came into the world to take the sins of men upon Himself, and to be punished in their stead. I hear all this and assent to it. I believe in Jesus and I say, “If He died for all those who trust Him, I will trust Him. If He has offered so great a sacrifice upon the tree for guilty men, I will rely upon that sacrifice and make it the basis of my hope.”

That is coming to Jesus Christ. The term is very simple, yet it is not so very easily explained to others because of its being so simple. If you are taught of the Father, you will know full well what it is, but if not, I fear that the plainest words will not make you understand. Perhaps I may illustrate coming to Jesus by an incident connected with the hymn which we sang just now.

I think I have read somewhere that Mr. Wesley was one morning dressing. His window looked out towards the sea, and there was a heavy wind blowing, the waves were very boisterous, and the rain was falling heavily. Just then a little bird, overtaken by the tempest, flew in at the open window and nestled in his bosom. Of course he cherished it there and then bade it go on its way when the storm was over.

Impressed by the interesting occurrence, he sat down and wrote the verse—

*“Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is high.
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide me
Till the storm of life be past.”*

Imitate that poor little bird if you would have Christ—fly away from the wrath of God, fly away from your own convictions of sin, fly away from your dark forebodings of judgment to come—right into the bosom of Jesus, which is warm with His love to sinners.

*“Come, guilty souls, and flee away,
Like doves to Jesus’ wounds;
This is the accepted Gospel day
Wherein free grace abounds.”*

The second description given us of the way in which Christ becomes ours is by *believing on Him*. Here again I have to explain a word which needs no explanation except one flash of light from the Holy Ghost, and I question whether any other light was ever sufficient to make it clear, and that not because of any real obscurity, but because of the willful blindness of unrenewed nature.

To believe on Christ means to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of men. But it includes far more than that. You may be very orthodox in your notions about Christ, in fact, you may believe what the Bible states about Him, and yet you may not have saving faith in Him.

“He that believeth on me.” What if I put the word “*trusts*” instead? “He that trusteth in me.” Or he who leans all his weight on Me, who, knowing such and such things to be true, acts as if they were true and shows the reality of his belief by the simplicity of his reliance.

Knowing that Christ came to save sinners, the believer says, “Then I depend upon Him to save me.” Knowing that Jesus was the substitute for human guilt, he says, “He is the substitute for my guilt. If He came and took sin upon Himself, then I trust Him, and therefore know that He took my sin, that He ‘bore, that I might never bear, His Father’s righteous ire.’”

And is Christ really a man’s Savior the moment he believes? Yes, the moment he believes. But suppose his former life has been scandalous? It is forgiven him for Christ’s sake. But suppose that the moment before he so trusted Christ, there was no good thing in him whatever? Jesus Christ died for the ungodly and He is “able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him.”

But suppose he should be imperfect afterwards? It is no supposition, he will be so. But “The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s dear Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” A very blessed text assures us that, “There is a fountain opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.”

It is not a fountain merely for common sinners, but for those who are God’s people and yet sin. They still find cleansing where they found it at the first. “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.” Faith is an act of reliance upon Christ’s great sacrifice, and wherever the Holy Ghost works it in men, it makes Christ to be theirs—so that they shall never hunger and shall never thirst.

But I pass on to the third way in which we are said to receive Christ. It is not in the text in so many words, but we must consider it, because though not there literally, it is there spiritually. It is *eating and drinking*. We are to eat Christ, and to drink Christ.

Oh, it is monstrous, it is monstrous that out of Bedlam there should live men who should dream that Jesus taught us to literally eat His flesh and to drink His blood! I am more and more astounded at this nineteenth century. I have heard it praised for its enlightenment and progress till I am sick to death of the nineteenth century, and I am right glad that it is nearing its close. And I hope the twentieth century will be something better.

Surely no period of time has been more given to superstition. Even the age of witchcraft bids fair to be outdone by the age of Ritualists. Here you have idiots in high places—absolute, stark, staring idiots—who preach to men that they are to turn cannibals in order to be saved. Surely such an act, if it could be perpetrated, must rather be the nearest way to be damned. What greater crime could there be than for men literally to eat the flesh of their own Savior?

I cannot speak too strongly against so extraordinary, so monstrous a perversion of the teaching of our Lord. What He meant by our eating His flesh and blood is just this—we believingly receive Him into our hearts, and our minds feed upon Him. We hear of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and as the Substitute for sinners—we believe it and so receive the truth as men receive bread into the mouth.

Now, in eating we first put the food into our mouths. As a whole it goes into the mouth, and even thus, as a whole, Christ Jesus is received into our belief and trust. The food being in the mouth, we proceed to masticate it. It is broken up, it is dissolved, our taste finds out its secret essence and flavor—and even in this way the believing mind thinks of Jesus, contemplates Him, meditates upon Him, and discovers His preciousness.

We see far more of our Lord after conversion than we did at first. We have believed in Him, knowing but little of Him. But by and by we comprehend with all the saints what are the heights and depths, and know the love of Christ which passes knowledge. Jesus becomes more comforting and more delightful, as we comprehend more clearly who and what He is.

Our faith, which we placed implicitly upon Him, now sees a thousand reasons for a yet fuller confidence and so is strengthened. For instance, the ordinary believer believes in Jesus Christ because He is a divine Savior. But the instructed believer sees in Jesus Christ fitness, fullness, variety of offices, glory of character, completeness of work, immutability, and a thousand other things which endear Him.

In this way the truth concerning the Lord is, as it were, masticated and enjoyed. But the process of eating goes further. The food descends into the inward parts to be digested, and there is a further breaking up and dissolving of it. So the great truths of incarnation and sacrifice are made to dwell in the memory, to lie upon the heart, to rest in the affections, till their essence, comfort, and force are fully drawn forth. Oh, it is beyond degree refreshing to let these grand truths dwell in us richly, to be inwardly digested!

Have you ever chewed the cud with the truths of the Gospel, turning them over, and over, and over again as delicious morsels for your spiritual taste? Can you say with David, "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God"? If so, you know what spiritual eating is.

When that is done, the food is next assimilated and taken into the substance of the body. It passes from the digesting organs to those which assimilate it. Each portion of the body draws forth its own proper nutriment from the food and so the whole man is built up.

It is just so with the great truths, that Christ became man and died in man's stead—these are inwardly received by us till our whole nature draws from them a satisfying and strengthening influence. By a sort of mystic sympathy, the truth being fitted to the mind, and the mind requiring just such truth, our whole nature drinks in Christ. And His person and work become our mind's joy, delight, strength, and life. As a man thinks in his heart so is he, and therefore our thoughts of Jesus and faith in Him, build us up into Him in all things.

Now, as a man who has feasted well and is no more hungry, rises from the table satisfied, so we feel that in Jesus our entire nature has all that it wants. Christ is all and we are filled in Him, complete in Him. This is to receive Christ.

Now beloved, if you want to have Christ altogether your own, you must receive Him by this process. Merely to trust Him gives you Christ as food in your mouth. To contemplate, to meditate, to commune with Him, this is to understand Him, even as food is digested and is ours. Further prayer, and fellowship, and meditation, assimilate Christ so that He becomes part and parcel of our very selves. Christ lives in us and we in Him.

We ought not to forget, as we are dwelling upon this, that the two points about Jesus Christ, which He says are to us meat and drink, are His flesh and his blood. We understand by His flesh, His humanity—our soul feeds upon the literal, real, historical fact, that, "God was in Christ." That, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," and men beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

My soul's main comfort today is not a doctrine. I get a great deal of comfort out of many doctrines, but the bottom comfort of my soul is not a doctrine but a fact. And it is this fact—that He who made the heavens and the earth, and without whom was not anything made that was made, was born of the Virgin Mary at Bethlehem, and for thirty years and more did actually, not in fiction or romance, but in very deed, dwell as a man among men.

That fact is my soul's food. The historical fact that Christ Jesus was flesh and blood, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, a man like ourselves—this I say is nourishment to our spirits and believing it we feel an unutterable joy, for we know that He who sits upon the throne of God is a man. Man was made "a little lower than the angels," but now in the person of Christ he is crowned with glory and honor.

We now know that God cannot hate manhood, because Christ is a man. Christ has reconciled God to manhood, because He represented manhood, and the thoughts of God towards man are, for Christ's sake, thoughts of love and not of evil.

The other point in which Jesus is food to our mind is His blood. This most clearly refers to His sufferings and to His vicarious death. Bread and wine are put upon the communion table as separate symbols—not bread and wine mixed together—that would destroy the teaching. The wine is distinct from the bread, because when the blood is separated from the flesh, there is before you the sure evidence of death.

Now the true drink of a thirsty sinner is the fact that Christ died in his stead. I will repeat what I said—my great hope as a sinner does not lie in a doctrine, and my consolation as a trembling criminal before the bar of God is not founded in any opinion or doctrinal statement—but in a fact. He who is very God of very God, did hang upon a cross of wood, upon the little mount of Calvary just outside the gates of Jerusalem, and there in agonies unutterable beneath the wrath of God made expiation for the sins of all who believe in Him.

There is my hope. There is yours, my brother. Yes, there is all our hope. Very well, then, do you not see that the way to obtain the benefits of the Lord Jesus Christ is to believe in His being God and man, to believe in His dying as the God-man, and to rest upon this, and to contemplate this, and to turn to it again and again and again, so that, having marked and learned, you may also inwardly digest those unspeakably glorious mysteries of incarnation and of sacrifice?

I have set the Gospel before you now, for if any man among you will do this, Christ is yours. Here is Christ to be had for nothing, Christ to be had simply by trusting Him, by coming to Him. As the vessel obtains its fullness by its emptiness being placed under the flowing stream, as the beggar's wants are relieved by putting out his empty hand to accept an alms, so you are to obtain Christ by coming to Him as empty sinners.

He is given to you for nothing—freely given to you of God—and whosoever will may have Him. And if you have Him not, it is not because *He* has rejected you, for He has never rejected one that has come to Him, but because *you* have rejected Him. Dear fellow sinners, may God the Holy Spirit grant you grace to receive Jesus and to be saved by Him.

II. The second part of our subject is this. WHERE JESUS IS RECEIVED HE IS SUPREMELY SATISFYING.

He is supremely satisfying, mark you, to our highest and deepest wants, not to mere fancies and whims. Christ compares the wants of men to hungering and thirsting. Now hungering is no sham. Those who have ever felt it know what a real want it indicates and what bitter pangs it brings. Thirst also is not a sentimental matter. It is a trial indeed. What pain can be worse beneath the skies than thirst?

Now Jesus has come to meet the deep, real, pressing, vital wants, and pains of your nature. Your fear of hell, your terror of death, your sense of sin, all these Jesus has come to meet, and all these He does meet in the case of all who come to Him, as every one who has tried Him will bear witness.

Jesus Christ meets the hungering of conscience. Every man with an awakened conscience feels that God must punish him for sin. But as soon as he perceives that the Son of God was punished instead of him, his conscience is perfectly appeased and will never hunger again. Until men know the truth of the substitution of Jesus, you may preach to them what you will, and they may go through all the sacraments, and they may suffer much bodily mortification, but their conscience will still hunger.

My God, whom I offended, became a man and for my sake He suffered what I ought to have suffered. Therefore my conscience rests gratefully contented with so divinely gracious a way of satisfying justice.

Men, when once awakened, have a hunger of fear. They look forward to the future, and they scarcely know why, but they feel a dread of something indefinable, but full of terror. And especially if they are near to death, horror takes hold upon them, for they know not what is yet to come. But when they find

that Jesus Christ, who is God, became man and died for men, that whosoever trusts Him might be saved, then fear expires, and love takes its place.

The dove in the cleft of the rock feels no more rude alarms. Terror cannot live beneath the cross, for there hope reigns supreme. Nor shall fear ever return, for the work of Jesus is finished, and therefore, no hiding place for fear is left.

The heart also has its hunger, for almost unknown to itself it cries, "O that someone loved me and that I could love someone whose love would fill my nature to the brim." Men's hearts are gluttons after love, yea, like death and the grave they are insatiable. They hunt hither and thither, but are bitterly disappointed. For earth holds not an object worthy of all the love of a human heart.

But when they hear that Jesus Christ loved them before the world was and died for them, their roving affections find rest. Like as Ruth found rest in the house of a husband, so do we come to peace in Jesus. The love of Jesus casts out all hankering for other loves and fills the soul. He becomes the Bridegroom of our heart, our best Beloved, and we bid the meaner things depart.

In the love of the Father and the Son, we dwell in sweet content, hungering and thirsting no more. If the ocean of divine love cannot fill us, what can? What more can a man need or wish for?

*"My God, I am Thine;
What a comfort divine,
What a blessing to know
That my Saviour is mine!
In the Heavenly Lamb
Thrice happy I am,
And my heart, it doth dance
At the sound of His name."*

The heart's hunger is removed eternally by Jesus.

Then there are vast *desires* in us all, and when we are quickened those desires expand and enlarge. Man feels that he is not in his element and is not what he was intended to be. He is like a bird in the shell, he feels a life within too great to be forever confined within such narrow bounds. Do you not, dear friends, feel great longings? Does not your soul seethe with high ambitions? Our immortal nature frets beneath the burden of mortality, its spiritual nature is weary of the chains of materialism.

That hungering will never be hushed into content till we receive Christ. But when we have Him, we learn that we are the sons of God, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ, and that it does not yet appear what we shall be, but when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. This opens up before us a splendid future of unfading glory, and bliss unbounded, and we feel that we want no more.

Since we are Christ's and Christ is God's, all things are ours and our hunger is over forever. The only contented man in the whole world is he who has believed in Jesus and he is contented just because he has obtained all that his nature needs.

*"Let others stretch their arms like seas,
And grasp in all the shore,
Grant me the blessings of Thy grace,
And I desire no more."*

Because I could not desire more than all, and Christ is all.

My beloved, this perfect satisfying of our nature is to be found nowhere else but in Christ. Some have tried to be satisfied with themselves and their own doings. They have despised the bread of heaven, for they dreamed that they could live without bread—they would be self-contained men, they would make themselves happy with themselves. But it is a wretched failure.

The poor Bushmen, when they have nothing to eat, tie a girdle around them and call it the hunger belt, and when they have gone a few days, they pull it tighter still, and tighter still, in order to enable them to bear hunger. So any man who has to live upon himself will have to draw the hunger belt very tight indeed.

A soul cannot be persuaded by philosophy to content itself without its necessary food. Eloquence may try all its charms to that end, but it will be in vain. Who can convince a hungry man that he needs not eat? Some have gone to Moses for bread, and mark you, the two greatest bread-givers in the world are Moses and Christ.

Moses fed the tribes in the wilderness for forty years and Jesus always feeds His people. But Moses' bread never satisfies, those who eat it ere long call it light bread. And if they have been satisfied with it for a time, yet there is the mournful reflection that their fathers did eat it and are dead. There is no life in the bread of the law, but he who gets Christ has bread whereof he shall eat forever and ever, and shall never die.

I am told that there is a country—I think it is Patagonia—where men in times of want eat clay in great lumps and fill themselves with it, so as to deaden their hunger. I know that many people in England do the same. There is a kind of yellow clay which is much cried up for staying spiritual hunger—heavy stuff it is, but many have a vast appetite for it.

They prefer it to the choicest dainties. When a man fills his heart with it, it presses him down to the very earth and prevents his rising into life. Some have tried to stay their hunger by the narcotics of skepticism and have dosed themselves into torpor. And others have endeavored to get ease through the drugs of fatalism.

Many stave off hunger by indifference, like the bears in winter, which are not hungry because they are asleep. Such persons come to the house of God asleep. They would not like to be aroused, for if they were to be so, they would wake up to an awful hunger. I wish they could be awakened, for that hunger which they dread would drive them to a soul-satisfying Savior. But, depend upon it, the only way to meet hunger is to eat bread, and the only way to meet your soul's want is to get Christ, in whom there is enough and to spare, but nowhere else.

I shall close by saying that all believers bear witness that Jesus Christ is satisfying bread to them. When do you get most satisfied on a Sunday, beloved? I do not know whom you may happen to hear, but what Sabbath days are the best to you?

When your minister rides the high horse, and gives you a splendid oration, and you say, "Dear me, it is wonderful"—have you ever felt satisfied to think it over on the Monday? Have you ever felt satisfied with sermons composed of politics and morality, or very nice essays which would suit the *Saturday Review* if they were a little more caustic? Do you enjoy such meat?

I will tell you when I enjoy a Sunday most—when I preach Christ most, or when I can sit and hear a humble village preacher exalt the Lord Jesus. It does not matter if the grammar is spoilt so long as Jesus is there. What some call platitudes, are dainties to me if they glorify my Lord Jesus Christ. Anything about Him is satisfying to a renewed spirit—cannot you bear witness to that?

When I have preached up Jesus Christ—and I think I generally do so, for the fact is I do not know anything but Him, and I am determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified—I know you go away and say, "After all, that is what we want—Christ crucified, Christ the sinner's substitutionary sacrifice, no sham Christ, no mere talk about Christ as an example, but His flesh and blood, a dying, bleeding, suffering Christ—that is what we want."

Now I have the witness of every Christian here to that! You are never satisfied with anything but that—are you? No matter how cleverly the doctrine might be analyzed or however orthodox it might be, you cannot be content with it, you must have the person of Christ, the flesh and the blood of Christ—or else you are not content.

And beloved, those who have once eaten and drunk Christ never seek additional ground of trust beyond Christ. They never say, "I am resting upon Christ, but still I would like to be able to depend a little on my baptism." I never heard a Christian talk in that fashion in my life.

I never heard a man say, "I rest in the blood of Jesus, but still I wish that I could have a bishop's hands put upon my head, so as to give me a confirmation of my faith." I never heard that in my life and I do not expect I ever shall.

We are perfectly satisfied without priests and without sacraments. Jesus Christ is the one sole foundation upon which we build. Again, I have never found those who rest in Christ wanting to shift their confidence. Those who want something new every Sunday are those who know not the Savior. Truly, if you have not the bread from heaven, you may well cry out for all manner of dishes, for each one will soon cloy.

But if you have the bread of heaven, you want Christ on the first of January and every day till the last of December. I have never heard a Christian assert that Christ did not satisfy them in the days of sickness or in the hour of death.

I came to you this morning fresh from the sick bed of a venerable Christian man, close upon his eightieth year of age, and I said to him, "Now, dear sir, here are three or four young people around your bed. We are going forth on our pilgrimage relying on Christ, believing that He is faithful and true. You have gone a great deal further than we have. Will you, therefore, kindly undeceive us if we are under a mistake? Have you found that the Lord has not fulfilled His Word, have you found that He has not been true?"

It was a blessed sight to see the man of God and hear him say, "Not one good thing hath failed of all that the Lord God hath promised," and then he added, "I will sing of mercy, for it has been mercy, all mercy, all the way through."

"Do you feel any fear about departure?" I said to him. "Oh! dear, no," he said. "I am willing to wait or willing to go. But I am full of the expectation of beholding Him who loved me and gave Himself for me."

Ah! the bridge of grace will bear your weight, brother. Thousands of big sinners have gone across that bridge, yea, tens of thousands have gone over it. I can hear their trampings now as they traverse the great arches of the bridge of salvation. They come by the thousands, by the myriads, e'er since the day when Christ first entered into His glory, they have come, and yet never a stone has sprung in that mighty bridge.

Some have been the chief of sinners, and some have come at the very last of their days, but the arch has never yielded beneath their weight. I will go with them trusting to the same support, it will bear me over as it has borne them. They who have eaten Christ and drunk Christ shall not hunger or thirst in their last hour, trying as it will be.

Saints have died saying, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table for me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

God grant us grace to live upon Christ evermore. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—JOHN 6:26-63

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.