

THE MEEK AND LOWLY ONE

NO. 265

A SERMON
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AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS

*“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart:
and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
Matthew 11:28-30*

THE single sentence which I have selected for my text consists of these words—“I am meek and lowly in heart.” These words might be taken to have three distinct bearings upon the context. They may be regarded as being *the lesson to be taught*, “Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” One great lesson of the Gospel is to teach us to be meek, to put away our high and angry spirits, and to make us lowly in heart. Perhaps this is the meaning of the passage—that if we will but come to Christ’s school, He will teach us the hardest of all lessons—how to be meek and lowly in heart.

Again, other expositors might consider this sentence to signify, that is *the only Spirit in which a man can learn of Jesus*—the Spirit which is necessary if we would become Christ’s scholars. We can learn nothing, even of Christ Himself, while we hold our heads up with pride, or exalt ourselves with self-confidence. We must be meek and lowly in heart, otherwise we are totally unfit to be taught by Christ.

Empty vessels may be filled, but vessels that are already full can receive no more. The man who knows his own emptiness can receive abundance of knowledge, and wisdom, and grace, from Christ, but he who glories in himself is not in a fit condition to receive anything from God.

I have no doubt that both of these interpretations are true, and might be borne out by the connection. It is the *lesson* of Christ’s school—it is the *spirit* of Christ’s disciples. But I choose, rather, this morning, to regard these words as being *a commendation of the Teacher Himself*. “Come unto *me* and learn; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” As much as to say, “I can teach, and you will not find it hard to learn of Me.” In fact, the subject of this morning’s discourse is briefly this, the gentle, lovely character of Christ should be a high and powerful inducement to sinners to come to Christ.

I intend so to use it, first of all, noticing *the two qualities* which Christ here claims for Himself. He is “*meek*,” and then He is “*lowly in heart*,” and after we have observed these two things, I shall come to *push the conclusion home*. Come unto him, all ye who are labouring and are heavy laden; come unto him, and take his yoke upon you; for he is meek and lowly in heart.

I. First, then, I am to consider THE FIRST QUALITY WHICH JESUS CHRIST CLAIMS. He declares that He is “MEEK.”

Christ is no egotist, He takes no praise for Himself. If ever He utters a word in self-commendation, it is not with that object, it is with another design, namely, that He may entice souls to come to Him. Here, in order to exhibit this meekness, I shall have to speak of Him in several ways.

1. First, Christ is meek, as opposed to the *ferocity* of spirit manifested by zealots and bigots. Take, for a prominent example of the opposite of meekness, the false prophet Mohammed. The strength of his cause lies in the fact that he is *not* meek. He presents himself before those whom he claims as disciples and says, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am neither meek, nor lowly in heart, I will have no patience with you, there is my creed or there is the scimitar—death or conversion, whichever you please.”

The moment the Mohammedan religion withdrew that very forcible argument of decapitation or impalement, it stayed in its work of conversion and never progressed, for the very strength of the false prophet lays in the absence of any meekness.

How opposite this is to Christ! Although He has a right to demand man's love and man's faith, yet He comes not into the world to demand it with fire and sword. His might is under persuasion, His strength is quiet forbearance and patient endurance, His mightiest force is the sweet attraction of compassion and love. He knows nothing of the ferocious hosts of Mohammed, He bids none of us draw our sword to propagate the faith, but saith, "Put up thy sword into its scabbard; they that take the sword shall perish by the sword." "My kingdom is not of this world, else might my servants fight."

Nay, Mohammed is not the only instance we can bring, but even good men are subject to the like mistakes. They imagine that religion is to be spread by terror and thunder. Look at John himself, the most lovely of all the disciples, he would call fire from heaven on a village of Samaritans because they rejected Christ. Hark to his hot inquiry—"Will thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?"

Christ's disciples were to Him something like the sons of Zeruiah to David, for when Shimei mocked David, the sons of Zeruiah said, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord, the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head." But David meekly said, "What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah?"—and put them aside. He had something of the spirit of his Master, he knew that *his* honor was not then to be defended by sword or spear.

O blessed Jesus! You have no fury in Your spirit, when men rejected You, You did not draw the sword to smite, but on the contrary, You did yield Your eyes to weeping. Behold your Savior, disciples, and see whether He was not meek. He had long preached in Jerusalem without effect, and at last He knew that they were ready to put Him to death, but what said He, as, standing on the top of the hill, He beheld the city that had rejected His Gospel? Did He invoke a curse upon it? Did He suffer one word of anger to leap from His burning heart?

Ah! no, there were flames, but they were those of love. There were scalding drops, but they were those of grief. He beheld the city, and wept over it and said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

And for a further proof of the absence of all uncharitableness, observe that even when they drove the nails into His blessed hands, yet He had no curse to breathe upon them, but His dying exclamation was, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

O sinners! see what a Christ it is that we bid you serve? No angry bigot, no fierce warrior claiming your unwilling faith, He is a tender Jesus. Your rejection of Him has made His bowels yearn over you, and though you abhor His Gospel, He has pleaded for you, saying, "Let him alone yet another year, till I dig about him; peradventure he may yet bring forth fruit." What a patient master is He! Oh! will you not serve Him!

2. But the idea is not brought out fully unless we take another sense. There *is* a sternness which cannot be condemned. A Christian man will often feel himself called to bear most solemn and stern witness against the error of his times, but Christ's mission, although it certainly did testify against the sin of His times, yet had a far greater reference to the salvation of the souls of men.

To show the idea that I have in my own mind, which I have not yet brought out, I must picture Elijah. What a man was he! His mission was to be the bold unflinching advocate of the right, and to bear a constant testimony against the wickedness of his age. And how boldly did he speak! Look at him, how grand the picture! Can you not conceive him on that memorable day, when he met Ahab, and Ahab said, "Hast thou found me, O my enemy?" Do you mark that mighty answer which Elijah gave him, while the king trembles at his words.

Or better still, can you picture the scene when Elijah said, "Take you two bullocks, ye priests, and build an altar, and see this day, whether God be God or Baal be God." Do you see him as he mocks the worshippers of Baal, and with a biting irony says to them, "Cry aloud, for he is a god." And do you see

him in the last grand scene, when the fire has come down from heaven, and consumed the sacrifice, and licked up the water, and burned the altar? Do you hear him cry, “Take the prophets of Baal; let not one escape”? Can you see him in his might hewing them in pieces by the brook, and making their flesh a feast for the fowls of heaven?

Now, you cannot picture Christ in the same position. He had the stern qualities of Elijah, but He kept them, as it were, behind, like sleeping thunder that must not as yet waken and lift up its voice. There were some rumblings of the tempest, it is true, when He spoke so sternly to the Sadducees, and scribes, and Pharisees, those woes were like murmurings of a distant storm, but it *was* a distant storm, whereas Elijah lived in the midst of the whirlwind itself, and was no still small voice, but was as the very fire of God, and like the chariot in which he mounted to heaven—fit chariot for such a fiery man!

Christ here stands in marked contrast. Picture Him in somewhat a like position to Elijah with Ahab. There is Jesus left alone with an adulterous woman. She has been taken in the very act. Her accusers are present, ready to bear witness against her. By a simple sentence He emptied the room of every witness, convicted by their conscience they all retire.

And now what does Christ say? The woman might have lifted her eyes, and have looked at Him and said, “Hast thou found me, O my enemy?”—for she might have regarded Christ as the enemy of so base a sin as that which she had committed against her marriage bed. But instead thereof Jesus said, “Doth no man condemn thee? Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.”

Oh, how different from the sternness of Elijah! Sinners! if I had to preach Elijah as your Savior I should feel that I had a hard task, for you might throw it in my teeth—“Shall we come to Elijah? He will call fire from heaven on us, as he did upon the captains and their fifties. Shall we come to Elijah? Surely he will slay us, for we have been like the prophets of Baal?”

Nay, sinners, I bid you come to Christ. Come to Him, who, although He hated sin more than Elijah could do, yet nevertheless, loved the sinner—who, though He would not spare iniquity, yet spares the transgressors, and has no words but those of love, and mercy, and peace and comfort, for those of you who will now come and put your trust in Him.

I must put in a word here by way of caveat. I am very far from imputing, for a single moment, any blame to Elijah. He was quite right. None but Elijah could have fulfilled the mission which his Master gave him. He needed to be all he was, and certainly not less stern, but Elijah was not sent to be a Savior, he was quite unfit for that. He was sent to administer a stern rebuke. He was God’s iron tongue of threatening, not God’s silver tongue of mercy.

Now, Jesus is the silver tongue of grace. Sinners! hear the sweet bells ringing, as Jesus now invites you to come unto Him, “‘Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden,’ for I am not stern, I am not harsh, I am no fire-killing Elijah, I am the meek, tender, lowly-hearted Jesus.”

3. Christ is meek in heart. To exhibit this quality in another light, call to your minds Moses. Moses was the meekest of men, and yet Christ far excels Moses in his meekness. Around Moses there seems to be a hedge, a ring of fire. The character of Moses is like Mount Sinai, it has boundaries set about it, so that one cannot draw near to him. Moses was not an approachable person, he was quiet and meek, and tender, but there was a sacred majesty about the King in Jeshurun that hedged his path, so that we cannot imagine the people making themselves familiar with him.

Whoever read of Moses sitting down upon a well and talking to a harlot like the woman of Samaria? Whoever heard a story of a Magdalene washing the feet of Moses? Can you conceive Moses eating bread with a sinner, or passing under a sycamore tree and calling Zaccheus, the thievish publican, and bidding him come down?

There is a kind of stately majesty in Moses, no mere affectation of standing alone, but a loneliness of superior worth. Men looked up to him as to some cloud-capped mountain, and despaired of being able to enter into the lofty circle, within which they might have communed with him. Moses always had in spirit what he once had in visible token, he had a glory about his brow, and before he could converse with men he must wear a veil, for they could not bear to look upon the face of Moses.

But how different is Jesus! He is a man among men, wherever He goes, no one is afraid to speak to Him. You scarcely meet with any one who dares not approach Him. There is a poor woman, it is true, who has the flux, and she fears to come near Him, because she is ceremonially unclean, but even she can come behind Him in the press and touch the hem of His garment, and virtue goes out of Him.

Nobody was afraid of Jesus. The mothers brought their little babes to Him, whoever heard of their doing that to Moses? Did ever babe get a blessing of Moses? But Jesus was all meekness—the approachable man, feasting with the wedding guests, sitting down with sinners, conversing with the unholly and the unclean, touching the leper, and making Himself at home with all men.

Sinners! this is the one we invite you to—this homely man, Christ. Not to Moses, for you might say, “He hath horns of light, and how shall I draw near to his majesty! he is bright perfection—the very lightnings of Sinai rest upon his brow.” But sinners, ye cannot say that of Christ. He is as holy as Moses—as great, and far greater, but He is still so homely that ye may come to Him.

Little children, ye may put your trust in Him. You may say your little prayer,

*“Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look on me, a little child;
Pity my simplicity,
Allow me to come to Thee.”*

He will not cast you away, or think you have intruded on Him. You harlots, you drunkards, you feasters, you wedding guests, you may all come, “This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.” He is “meek and lowly in heart.” That gives, I think, a still fuller and broader sense to the term, “meek.”

4. But yet, to push the term a little further. Christ on earth was a king, but there was nothing about Him of the exclusive pomp of kings, which excludes the common people from their society.

Look at the Eastern king Ahasuerus, sitting on his throne. He is considered by his people as a superior being. None may come in unto the king unless he is called for. Should he venture to pass the circle, the guards will slay him, unless the king stretches out the golden scepter. Even Esther, his beloved wife, is afraid to draw near, and must put her life in her hand, if she comes into the presence of the king uncalled.

Christ is a king, but where is His pomp? Where is the janitor that keeps His door, and thrusts away the poor? Where are the soldiers that ride on either side of His chariot to screen the monarch from the gaze of poverty? See your King, O Sion! He comes. He comes in royal pomp! Behold, Judah, behold your King cometh!

But how comes He? “Meek and lowly, riding upon an ass and upon a colt, the foal of an ass.” And who are His attendants? See, the young children, boys and girls! They cry, “Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!” And who are they who wait upon Him? His poor disciples. They pull the branches from the trees, they cast their garments in the street, and there He rides on—Judah’s royal King. His courtiers are the poor. His pomp is that tribute which grateful hearts delight to offer.

O sinners, will you not come to Christ? There is nothing in Him to keep you back. You need not say, like Esther did of old, “I will go in unto the king, if I perish, I perish.” Come and welcome! Come and welcome! Christ is more ready to receive you than you are to come to Him. Come to the King! “What is thy petition, and what is thy request? It shall be done unto thee.”

If you stay away, it is not because He shuts the door, it is because you will not come. Come, filthy, naked, ragged, poor, lost, ruined, come, just as you are. Here He stands, like a fountain freely opened for all comers. “Whosoever will, let him come and take of the waters of life freely.”

5. I will give you but one more picture to set forth the meekness of Christ, and I think I shall not have completed the story without it. The absence of all selfishness from the character of Christ makes one ingredient of this precious quality of His meekness.

You remember the history of Jonah. Jonah is sent to prophecy against Nineveh, but he is selfish. He will not go for he shall get no honor by it. He does not want to go so long a journey for so small a price. He will not go. He will take a ship and go to Tarshish. He is thrown out into the sea, swallowed by a fish, and vomited by it upon dry land. He goes away to Nineveh, and not wanting courage, he goes through its streets, crying, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

That one man's earnest cry moves the city from one end to the other. The king proclaims a fast, the people mourn in sackcloth and confess their sins. God sends them tidings of mercy, and they are spared. But what will Jonah do? Oh, tell it not, you heavens, let none hear it—that ever a prophet of God could do the like! He sits himself down, and he is angry with God. But why his anger? Because, says he, "God has not destroyed that city." If God had destroyed the city, he would have shouted over the ruins, because his reputation would have been safe, but now that the city is saved, and his own reputation for a prophet tarnished, he must needs sit down in anger.

But Christ is the very reverse of this. Sinners! Christ does thunder at you sometimes, but it is always that He may bring you to repentance. He does take Jonah's cry, and utter it far more mightily than Jonah could, He does warn you that there is a fire that never can be quenched, and a worm that dies not, but if you turn to Him, will He sit down and be angry? Oh! no, I think I see Him. There you come, poor prodigals, your father falls upon your neck and kisses you, and you are accepted, and a feast is made.

Here comes the elder brother, Jesus. What does He say? Is He angry because you are saved? Ah! no! "My Father," saith He, "my younger brothers have all come home and I love them, they shall share My honors, they shall sit upon My throne, they shall share My heaven." "Where I am, there they shall be also." I will take them into union with Myself, and as they have wasted *their* inheritance, all that I have shall be theirs forever.

Oh! come home, prodigal, there is no angry brother and no angry father. Come back, come back, my brother, my wandering brother, I invite you, for Jesus is rejoiced to receive you. Do you not see then, that the meekness of Christ is a sweet and blessed reason why we should come to Him?

II. The second virtue which Christ claims for Himself is LOWLINESS OF HEART.

When I looked this passage out in the original, I half wondered how it was that Christ found such a sweet word for the expression of His meaning, for the Greeks do not know much about humility, and they have not a very good word to set forth this idea of lowliness of heart. I find that if this passage stood in another connection, the word might even be interpreted "degraded, debased," for the Greeks thought that if a man were humble, he degraded himself—that if he stooped, he debased himself right out.

"Well," says Christ, "if you think so, so be it," and He takes the word. The word means, "near the ground." So is Christ's heart. We cannot be so low that He will not stoop to reach us. I would just set out the lowliness of Christ's heart in this way. Christ is "lowly in heart," that is, He is willing to receive *the poorest* sinner in the world. The Pharisee thought that the keeper of the gate of heaven would admit only the rich and not the poor.

Mark Christ's teaching. There were two came to the gate once upon a time, one was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, he knocked, and thought that full sure he must enter, but "in hell he lift up his eyes being in torments." There came another, borne on angel's wings. It was a beggar, whose many sores the dogs had licked, and he had not so much as to knock at the gate, for the angels carried him straight away into the very center of paradise, and laid him in Abraham's bosom.

Jesus Christ is willing to receive beggars into His bosom. Kings, you know, condescend when they permit even the rich to be presented to them, and the kissing of a monarch's hand is something very wonderful indeed, but to have the kisses of *His* lips who is the King of kings, is no uncommon thing for men that are shivering in rags, or that are sick upon miserable beds, in dingy attics.

Christ is "lowly in heart," He goes with what men call the vulgar herd, He has nothing of affected royalty about Him—He has a nobler royalty than that, the royalty that is too proud to think anything of a

stoop, that can only measure itself by its own intrinsic excellence, and not by its official standing. He receives the lowest, the meanest, the vilest, for He is “lowly in heart.”

If I have among my congregation some of the poorest of the poor, let them come away to Christ, and let them not imagine that their poverty need keep them back. I am always delighted when I see a number of women here from the neighboring workhouse. I bless God that there are some in the workhouse who are willing to come, and though they have sometimes been put to a little inconvenience by so doing, yet I have known them sooner give up their dinner than give up coming to hear the Word. God bless the workhouse women, and may they be led to Christ, for He is meek and lowly in heart, and will not reject them.

I must confess also, I like to see a smock frock here and there in the midst of the congregation. Oh! what a mercy, that in the palace of the Great King there shall be found these workmen, these blouses. They shall be made partakers of the kingdom of God. He makes no difference between prince and pauper, He takes men to heaven just as readily from the workhouse as from the palace.

Further, this lowliness of heart in Christ leads Him to receive the most *ignorant* as well as the learned to Himself. I know that sometimes poor ignorant people get a notion in their heads that they cannot be saved, because they cannot read and do not know much. I have sometimes, especially in country villages, received this answer when I have been asking anything about personal religion. “Well, you know sir, I never had any learning.” Oh! but you unlearned, is this a reason why you should stay away from Him who is lowly in heart?

It was said of an old Greek philosopher that he wrote over his door, “None but the learned may enter here.” But Christ, on the contrary, writes over His door, “He that is simple let him turn in hither.” There are many great men with long handles to their names who know little of the Gospel, while some of the poor unlettered ones spell out the whole secret, and become perfect masters in divinity.

If they had degrees who deserve them, diplomas should often be transferred, and given to those who hold the plough handle or work at the carpenter’s bench, for there is often more divinity in the little finger of a ploughman than there is in the whole body of some of our modern divines. “Don’t they understand divinity?” you say. Yes, in the letter of it, but as to the spirit and life of it, D.D. often means DOUBLY DESTITUTE.

The lowliness of Christ may be clearly seen in yet another point of view. He is not only willing to receive the poor and to receive the ignorant, but He is also ever ready to receive men, despite the vileness of their characters. Some teachers can stoop, and freely too, to both poor and ignorant, but they cannot stoop to the wicked. I think we have all felt a difficulty here. “However poor a man may be, or however little he knows,” you say, “I don’t mind talking with him and trying to do him good, but I cannot talk with a man who is a rogue or a vagabond, or with a woman who has lost her character.” I know you cannot, there are a great many things Christ did which we cannot do.

We, who are the servants of Christ, have attempted to draw a line where duty has its bound. Like the domestic servant in some lordly mansion who stoops not to menial employment. We are above our work. We are so fastidious that we cannot go after the chief of sinners and the vilest of the vile. Not so, Christ. “He receives sinners and *eateth* with them.” He, in the days of His flesh, became familiar with the outcasts. He sought them out that He might save them, He entered their homes, He found His way into the slums, like some diligent officer of the police, He was willing to lodge where they lodged, eat at their table, and associate with their class to find them out.

His mission was to *seek* as well as to save. Oh, see Him stand with arms wide open! Will that thief, who is justly executed for his crimes, be recognized by Him? Yes, he will. There, with His arms outstretched He hangs, the thief flies as it were to His bosom, and Jesus gives him a most blessed embrace. “Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.” Christ has received the thief with open heart and open arms too.

And there is Mary. Do you see her? She is washing the feet of Jesus. Why, she is a bad character, one of the worst women on the town. What will Christ say? Say? Why, hear how He speaks to Simon,

the pious, reputable Pharisee. Saith He, after putting the parable concerning the two debtors, “Which of them shall love him most?”—and then he explains that this woman has had much forgiven, and therefore she loves Him much. “Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven,” saith He, and she goes her way in peace.

There are many men you and I would not demean ourselves to notice, who Christ will take to heaven at last, for He is “lowly in heart.” He takes the base, the vilest, the scum, the offscouring, the filth, the garbage of the world, and out of such stuff and matter as that, He builds up a holy temple, and gathereth to Himself trophies for His honor and praise.

And further, while I speak of the lowliness of Christ’s heart, I must remark another thing. Perhaps one is saying here, “Oh! sir, it is not what I have been, as to my conduct, that keeps me back from Christ, but I feel that what I am as to my nature restrains me, I am such a dolt, I shall never learn in His school. I am such a hard-hearted one, He will never melt me, and if He does save me, I shall never be worth His having.” Yes, but Christ is “lowly in heart.”

There are some great goldsmiths that of course can only think of preparing and polishing the choicest diamonds, but Jesus Christ polishes a common pebble, and makes a jewel of it. Goldsmiths make their precious treasures out of precious materials, Christ makes His precious things out of dross. He begins always with bad material.

The palace of our king is not made of cedar wood, as Solomon’s, or if it is made of wood, certainly He has chosen the knottiest trees and the knottiest planks wherewith to build His habitation. He has taken those to be His scholars who were the greatest dunces, so amazing is the lowliness of Christ’s heart. He sits down on the form with us to teach us the A, B, C of repentance, and if we are slow to learn it He begins again, and takes us through our alphabet again, and if we forget it He will often teach us our letters over again, for though He is able to teach the angels, yet He condescends to instruct babes, and as we go step by step in heavenly literature, Christ is not above teaching the elements.

He teaches not only in the University and the grammar school, where high attainments are valued, but He teaches in the day school, where the elements and first principles are to be instilled. It is He who teaches the sinner, what *sinner* means in deep conviction, and what faith means in holy assurance. It is not only He who takes us to Pisgah, and bids us view the promised land, but it is He also who takes us to Calvary, and makes us learn that simplest of all things, the sacred writing of the cross.

He, if I may use such a phrase, will not only teach us how to write the highly ornamental writing of the Eden Paradise, the richly gilded, illuminated letters of communion and fellowship, but He teaches us how to make the pot hooks amid hangers of repentance and faith.

He begins at the beginning, for He is “meek and lowly in heart.” Come then, ye dolts, ye fools, come ye sinners, ye vile ones, come, ye dullest of all scholars, ye poor, ye illiterate, ye who are rejected and despised of men, come to Him who was rejected and despised as well as you. Come and welcome! Christ bids you come!

*“Let not conscience make you linger;
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requireth,
Is to feel your need of Him:
This He gives you;
'Tis His Spirit’s rising beam.”*

Come, poor sinners! come to a gentle Savior! and you shall never regret that you came to Him.

III. Having thus spoken on the two marks of our Lord’s character, I propose to conclude, if God shall help me, by knocking home the nail, by driving in the wedge, and pressing upon you a conclusion from these arguments. The conclusion of the whole matter is this, since Christ is “meek and lowly in heart,” sinners come to Him.

Come to Him then, first, whoever you may be, for He is “meek and lowly in heart.” When a man has done anything wrong, and wants a help through his difficulty, if about to employ some counsel to plead for him in a court of law, he might say, “Oh! don’t engage Mr. So-and-so for me, I hear he is a very hard-hearted man, I should not like to tell him what I have done, and entrust my case in his hands. Send for Mr. So-and-so, I have heard that he is very kind and gentle, let him come and hear my case, and let him conduct the pleadings for me.”

Sinner! you are sinful, but Christ is very tender-hearted. Speed your way to Christ’s private chamber—your own closet of prayer. Tell Him all you have done, He will not upbraid you, confess all your sins, He will not chide you. Tell Him all your follies, He will not be angry with you. Commit your case to Him, and with a sweet smile He will say, “I have cast thy sins behind My back, thou hast come to reason with Me, I will discover to thee a matter of faith which excels all reason, ‘Though thy sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool; though they be red like crimson, they shall be whiter than snow.’” Come to Christ then, sinful ones, because He is “meek and lowly in heart,” and He can bear with the narrative of your offenses.

“But sir, I am very timid, and I dare not go.” Ah, but however timid you may be, you need not be afraid of Him. He knows your timidity, and He will meet you with a smile and say, “Fear not. Be of good cheer. Tell Me your sin, put your trust in Me, and you shall even yet rejoice to know My power to save. Come now,” saith He, “come to Me at once. Linger no longer. *I do not strive nor cry, nor cause My voice to be heard in the streets. A bruised reed I will not break, the smoking flax I will not quench, but I will bring forth judgment unto victory.*” Come then, ye timid ones to Christ, for He is meek and lowly in heart.

“Oh,” says one, “but I am despairing, I have been so long under a sense of sin, I cannot go to Christ.” Poor soul! He is so meek and lowly, that despairing though you may be, take courage now, though it be like a forlorn hope to you, yet go to Him. Say, in the words of the hymn—

*“I’ll to the gracious King approach,
Whose scepter pardon gives;
Perhaps He may command my touch,
And then the suppliant lives.*

*“I can but perish if I go;
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know
I must forever die.”*

And you may add this comfortable reflection—

*“But if I die with mercy sought,
When I the King have tried,
This were to die (delightful thought!)
As sinner never died.”*

Come to Him then, timid and despairing, for He is “meek and lowly in heart.” First, He bids you confess. What a sweet confessor! Put your lip to His ear, and tell Him all. He is “meek and lowly in heart.” Fear not. None of your sins can move Him to anger, if you do but confess them. If you keep them in your heart, they shall be like a slumbering volcano, and a furnace of destruction you shall find even to the uttermost by and by. But confess your sins, tell them all, He is “meek and lowly in heart.” Happy confession! when we have such a confessor.

Again, He bids you trust Him, and can you not trust Him? He is “meek and lowly in heart.” Sinner! put confidence in Christ. There never was such a tender heart as His, never such a compassionate face.

Look Him in the face, poor soul, as you see Him dying on the tree and say, is not that a face that any man might trust! Look at Him! Can you doubt Him? Will you withhold your cause from such a Redeemer as this? No, Jesus! You are so generous, so good, so kind. Take my cause in hand. Just as I am, I come to You. Save me, I beseech You, for I put my trust in You.

And then, Jesus not only bids you confess and believe, but He bids you afterwards serve Him. And sure, sinners, this should be a reason why you should do it, that He is so “meek and lowly in heart.” It is said, “Good masters make good servants.” What good servants you and I ought to be, for what a good Master we have! Never an ill word does He say to us. If sometimes He points out anything we have done amiss, it is only for our good. Not for His profit does He chasten, but for ours.

Sinner! I ask you not to serve the god of this world—that foul fiend who shall destroy you after all your service. The devil is your master now, and you have heard the wages He bestows. But come and serve Christ, the meek and lowly one, who will give you good cheer while you are serving Him, and give you a blessed reward when your work is done.

And now, best of all, sinners! come to Christ. Come to Him in all His offices, for He is “meek and lowly in heart.” Sinner! you are sick—Christ is a physician. If men have broken a bone, and they are about to have a surgeon fetched, they say, “Oh! is he a feeling tender hearted man?” For there are many an army surgeon that takes off a leg, and never thinks of the pain he is giving. “Is he a kind man?” says the poor sufferer, when he is about to be strapped down upon the table.

Ah! poor sufferer, Christ will heal your broken bones, and He will do it with downy fingers. Never was there so light a touch as this heavenly surgeon has. ‘Tis pleasure even to be wounded by Him, much more to be healed. Oh! what balm is that He gives to the poor bleeding heart! Fear not, there was never such a physician as this. If He give you now and then a bitter pill and a sour draught, yet He will give you such honeyed words and such sweet promises therewith, that you shall swallow it all up without murmuring. Nay, if He be with you, you can even swallow up death in victory, and never know that you have died because victory has taken the bitter taste away.

Sinner! you are not only sick, and therefore bidden to come to Him, but you are moreover in debt, and He offers to pay your debts, and to discharge them in full. Come, come to Him, for He is not harsh. Some men, when they do mean to let a debtor off, first have him in their office, and give him as much as they can of the most severe rebukes—“You rogue, you! how dare you get in my debt, when you knew you could not pay? You have brought a deal of trouble on yourself, you have ruined your family,” and so forth, and the good man gives him some very sound admonition, and very right too, till at length he says, “I’ll let you off this time, come now, I forgive you, and I hope you will never do so again.”

But Christ is even better than this. “There is all your debt,” He says, “I have nailed it to the cross, sinner, I forgive you all,” and not one accusing word comes from His lips. Come then to Him.

I fear I have spoilt My master in the painting, something like the artist who had to depict some fair damsel, and he so misrepresented her features that she lost her reputation for beauty. I have sometimes feared lest I should do the same, and so distort the face of Christ, and so fail of giving the true likeness of His character that you would not love Him.

Oh! could you see Him! If He could stand here for one moment, and tell you that He was meek and lowly in heart. Oh, I think you would run to Him and say, “Jesus, we come, You meek and lowly Messiah, be You our all!” Nay, you would not come, I am mistaken. If sovereign grace draw you not under the sound of the Gospel, neither would you be converted though Christ should appear before you. But hear now the message of that Gospel—“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved; for he that believeth on him, and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not, must be damned.”

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.