

BRIGHT PROSPECTS FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS

NO. 3172

A SERMON
 PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1909
 DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
 AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON
 ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 11, 1866

*“But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing
 in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.”
 Malachi 4:2*

[Other sermons by Mr. Spurgeon upon the same text are sermons #1020, “The Sun of Righteousness” and #1463, The Rising Sun]

THIS great promise was fulfilled at the coming of our Lord. There were many waiting for it, like Anna and Simeon, mourning the darkness in which they dwelt and scarcely cheered by a single star, for the voice of prophecy had ceased. Then suddenly Christ came and so the Sun of righteousness arose upon those who feared the Lord.

They went forth into blessed liberty, rejoicing in Him. And their light afterwards was greatly increased in brightness, and their life in happiness as they grew in divine knowledge and holiness. It is difficult for us to conceive the depth of feeling which must have come into the hearts of such patient waiters for the Lord as Anna and Simeon. They must have triumphed exceedingly, magnifying the Lord, with Mary, that at last He had come—the Light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of His people, Israel.

This promise has also had a practical fulfillment in the deathbed experiences of God's people. Tortured with disease, they have been lying in the darkness and gloom of death. Perhaps fears have come in and physical infirmity has been the platform upon which Satan has planted his heavy guns of temptation.

But suddenly, a wondrous light has surprised them—their dying bed has become a throne of glory. They have found themselves arrayed in royal garments as though it were their coronation rather than their departure out of this world. They have been enabled to sit upright in the bed, and to tell others that they had beheld the brightness of the coming glory, and that they had experienced in their souls the foretaste of joys unspeakable and divine even before their bodies were released from infirmity and pain.

Though the body has been bound fast with cords, the soul has mounted up as on the wings of eagles, in sacred rapture and holy bliss. The Sun of righteousness has risen upon them. Before their earthly sun went down, the heavenly Sun lit up their sky with a sacred high, eternal noon. And unto you who fear the name of the Lord, whatever gloom may surround your departure from the earth, the Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings and one day you shall find Him rise even upon your mortal bodies.

*“From beds of dust and silent clay
 To realms of everlasting day,”—*

your very bodies shall wing their flight to dwell—

“Forever with the Lord.”

While the promise in the text has had these two fulfillments, there is no doubt that it awaits another. We are looking for the return of the Lord Jesus. And though, perhaps, we have no right to expect that He

will come today or tomorrow—for there are many prophecies which apparently must be fulfilled before He comes, and which may require long periods of time—yet we are to expect Him and are to be as servants who know that their master will come to call them to account.

Perhaps, just when the Christian church shall become most weary, when the hands of her ministers shall hang down through feebleness, when the warriors shall be “faint, yet pursuing,” when Gog and Magog and the hosts of the enemy shall have gathered themselves together for battle, and everything seems to forebode a long dark night for the church and for the world—perhaps just then Christ will suddenly appear in the clouds of heaven.

Perhaps at such a time as that, the Sun of righteousness will arise with healing in His wings and the triumphant saints shall go forth to meet Him, clothed with His brightness, sharing in His kingdom, and as the next verse solemnly tells us, treading down the wicked who shall be as ashes beneath their feet in the day of their Lord’s appearing. Perhaps this is to be the great fulfillment of the text.

But I do not intend to dwell tonight upon any of these three probable fulfillments of the prophecy. I want rather to talk about matters which more nearly concern us just now and to put a few practical soul-matters before this entire congregation, hoping that God may press them home upon some—so that they may find healing beneath the wings of Christ tonight.

I. The text speaks, you will observe, of a certain class of persons—**THOSE WHO FEAR GOD’S NAME.**

The great multitude of people in the world do not fear the name of God. They do not care whether there is a God or not. If there were no God, their conduct would not be very different from what it is now. God is not in all their thoughts—they live as if they were their own creators and sustainers—and practically join in the language of Pharaoh, “Who is JEHOVAH that I should obey his voice?” Now, for such people, the Bible contains no blessing—how should it when they reject both it and the God who wrote it?

But there are some in the world—thank God, more now, perhaps, than at any former period—who do fear God. Some have not advanced far in this heavenly wisdom—they are like scholars on the first form at school. *They fear God just so much as this, that they would not willfully sin.* They are checked from presumptuous sins by the fear of God and this is well. It is so good a thing that I believe it is like that smoking flax which Christ will not quench. And that man who really fears to sin because God would see him, and who desires to do right because God would have him do right, is not far from the kingdom of God, if indeed he is not actually in the kingdom.

Others have advanced so far in this fear that *they have been brought into torment by it.* They know that they have already sinned and they dread the thought of the terrible One who has said that He “will by no means clear the guilty.” They have heard the thunder-clap of that dreadful verse, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them”—and they therefore fear God.

It is a fear that brings bondage, but even that is better than no fear at all. They believe God and they tremble—and we are thankful to see them trembling, for now, perhaps, they will begin to say within themselves “We will seek our Father’s face. We will fly to Him and ask Him to save us from His own wrath through His own Son.”

This fear in some, however, has happily advanced still further. *They have come to fear God with a childlike fear.* Their sin has been forgiven, they have put their trust in the Savior, they have heard the voice which says, “I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions: and as a cloud, thy sins.” And now they fear God with a fear with which love is perfectly consistent—they fear Him as a loving, tender-hearted child fears to disobey a gracious, kind, wise, loving father.

God is in their thoughts. Nay, more—God is in their hearts. They love Him. *They could not bear to live without God—they would be orphans—their Father would be gone.* Without God they would be poverty stricken, for their wealth is found in Him.

I know there are some of you here who could do wonderfully well without a God. Indeed, you would be much happier than you now are if it could be proved that there is no God, for the thought of God is a bugbear to some of you, and you try as much as possible to shut the ears of your soul against the cry of conscience when it tells you that there is a God—and a God who will bring you into judgment for all your actions.

Well, the promise in the text is not for you, but it is for those who realize that there is a God and who have respect unto His Word—who tremble before Him and yet who rejoice in Him, having been brought nigh to Him by the precious blood of Jesus—and having been reconciled to Him by Christ Jesus, the Mediator between God and man. Dear friend, if you do but fear God, take you the text and live upon it. It is a precious hive of honey and you may extract the utmost sweetness from it. Let us go to it now, and feed upon it, as it is here given to us as food from heaven for our souls.

II. Having found out the persons to whom the text is addressed, let us next notice that, according to this verse, **SOME OF THOSE WHO FEAR GOD ARE IN THE DARK.**

They fear God, but they have not any happiness. They are doubtful, timid, and possibly they are constitutionally dull and sad. Beside that, they are diseased and need the “healing” of which the text speaks. They are not what they want to be—they have a bad temper to struggle against, or some besetting sin to mourn over.

Now observe the promise that is given to them, that they shall be visited in a remarkable manner by the Lord Jesus, and that, in consequence of this visitation, they shall receive the two things that they specially need, namely, light and healing. They are in the dark, so they shall receive light and comfort. They are sick in soul, but they shall receive healing from Christ.

The great blessing promised is that Christ shall appear to them, but see in what an aspect it is said that He shall appear. He is called, “the Sun of righteousness.” What a title for our blessed Lord! He who did hang upon Calvary in the thickest darkness was the Sun of righteousness. He is sometimes compared to a star, but this figure is more full and more worthy of Him.

Christ is the center of the universe. “Without him was not any thing made that was made.” “By him all things consist.” As the sun, with secret bands, keeps all the planets in their places and is the great regulator of the solar machinery, so is Christ the great center of the world—and especially of His own church.

Forth from the sun, floods of heat and light are continually being scattered. We do not know that the sun borrows anything from any other source. He is himself the source, in his stupendous furnace, of the light and heat which gladden all the worlds of which he is the center and controller. So is it with our Savior—borrowing nothing, but having all fullness dwelling within Himself, He pours forth, out of His own inexhaustible heart of infinite mercy and compassion—floods of light to make glad the ignorant and floods of heat to comfort the sorrowing.

We can scarcely bear to look upon the sun. He is an orb of such surpassing splendor, giving out continually such vast masses of light, if I may use the expression, and oh! who could look upon the unveiled splendor of the Lord Jesus? Perhaps if we could see Him as He now is in heaven, we might feel as if we were not prepared for so great a sight, our eyes not yet being strong enough to be able to bear the burning splendor of the great Sun of righteousness. If you could get any adequate idea of the light and heat that come from the sun, you might then form some faint conception of the—

“Streams of mercy, never ceasing,”—

which flood the universe from Christ, the great central orb of the love of God. Oh, happy are they who bask in His beams! Blessed are they who walk in His light! Best of all and most happy are they who, like Milton’s angel standing in the sun, dwell amid the very fullness of Christ’s glory where He sits upon His Father’s throne.

Christ, then, is the Sun of righteousness. Now, sinner. Now, trembler. If you fear God, Christ will be a sun to you. You will have no want of knowledge, then, depend upon it, for He shall teach you all things. If Christ shall arise upon you, you shall see your sins clearly enough, but you shall also see God, and therefore you shall see hope, you shall see pardon, you shall see peace, you shall see heaven.

What will not the sun reveal? Everything is in darkness till he appears—but when he rises, everything is discovered. And oh, poor troubled soul, you see nothing and you know but little, until Christ comes to you. But if He shall arise upon you, as the Sun of righteousness, you shall know all that you need to know and perceive everything that is delightful and comforting—and so your heart shall be glad.

But the figure employed in the text is a double one. It is said that, sometimes, in the East, after a long time of calm, the very air gets putrid and the glowing sand reflects the burning heat, till, presently, a refreshing land breeze comes up with the sunrise. So Christ is here pictured as a sun—His beams being like the wings of some gigantic golden eagle—and those wings, like refreshing winds, bringing health to the poor sickly inhabitants of earth who are ready to die.

Certainly when Christ comes in all His splendor of light, for He is “the Light of the world,” He comes also with health to sick souls. Do not believe, soul, that your sickness is incurable, though Satan may tell you a thousand times that it is. If Christ comes to deal with you, man, though your disease should be the deadly cancer of blasphemy, He can cure it. Though you should have the fever of drunkenness within your soul, Christ can heal you of that fiery malady. I ventured to say, this morning, that there is now no hospital for incurable souls now [See sermon #720, The Gospel’s Healing Power] because Christ can cure all manner of spiritual diseases.

You perceive that the text does not say that they who fear the name of the Lord shall be cured of their spiritual maladies by what they do themselves. No, but that Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shall arise upon them and in His light they shall obtain the health they lack. Get Jesus, poor soul, and you need not trouble yourself about much else. There is everything that a sinner requires in the person of the appointed Savior. Arise, O You blessed Jesus Christ, like the sun upon the darkness, that some who are in this place may now leave their sins and rejoice in Your power to save!

You perceive also that the way in which those who fear the Lord get light is *not by their raising the sun*—that would be impossible, but it is *through the sun itself rising upon them*. Some sinners seem to think that they are to get comfort and light for themselves—but it is not so—Christ must bring it all to you. You are not to bring anything to Jesus, but to come to His fullness to receive everything.

Do you understand me, man? Supposing that you are full of sin, full of hardness of heart, and of everything that is bad and contrary to the mind of God, yet if you are saved, it will be by Christ appearing to your mind’s eye—and that mind’s eye seeing Him—and your soul trusting in Him. And if you do so, you are saved.

“What!” say you, “is there nothing for me to do?” There is nothing for you to do, in order that you may be saved, but believe in Jesus. You shall do many things after you are saved—I shall go on to tell you of them directly—but the work of saving your soul does not rest with you. Christ is the Savior and He will do it all. You are not to help in that work.

*“It is not your tears of repentance or prayers,
But the blood that atones for the soul:
On Him, then, who shed it, believing at once
Your weight of iniquities roll.*

*We are healed by His stripes—wouldst thou add to the Word?
And He is our righteousness made:
The best robe of heaven He bids thee put on:
Oh! couldst thou be better array’d?*

*Then doubt not thy welcome, since God has declared
There remaineth no more to be done;
That once in the end of the world He appear'd;
And completed the work He begun."*

Imagine people lighting their candles after the sun has risen! "Oh!" say they, "but we may as well add to the light." But do your candles add to the light when you have the sunlight? Do they not rather mock the light? Are they not an impertinence in the presence of the great orb of day? And sinner, do not light your candles to add to the light of the Sun of righteousness. Do not bring your nothingness and your emptiness to add to the perfection of Christ's finished work. You cannot help Him to save you, so do not insult Him by attempting to do so. But just take the text and from your heart, pray, "O God, let the Sun of righteousness arise upon me with healing in His wings, for I do, I trust, fear Your name!"

I hope this truth will not pass away from your memories. I feel so concerned lest any of you should miss the blessing that God is giving us just now. I know I have with me the opinion of hundreds who fear the Lord, that God is very marvelously present with us as a church and that He has been so for some little time. But I fear lest the cloud should pass away before the heavenly rain falls upon more of you. I trust that it will not, but that you may receive the blessing in your souls.

III. Now I must go on to observe THAT WHICH IS TO FOLLOW IN THE CASE OF THOSE UPON WHOM THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ARISES. The promise to them in the text is, "Ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall."

It is a subject of great anxiety to earnest church officers as to what will become of our young converts. Many are added to our numbers who know but little of the doctrines of grace. Now you perceive that here is the blessing for them which may remove our anxiety—may all of you who have lately been converted share in that blessing!

The promise is that they "shall go forth." Of course, this means that *they shall enjoy spiritual liberty*. When Christ comes into the heart, whatever bondage there may have been there before, it all disappears in His presence. Where Jesus comes, He is the true Liberator. No chains are worn in the court of King Jesus. The moment He enters the heart, He proclaims perfect emancipation and—

"The prisoner leaps to lose his chains."

Yet the realization of this emancipation may be gradual, and a true convert may be saying, "I wish I could enjoy the promises, and go forth and walk at liberty in the green pastures." Well do I recollect when I heard some believers singing,

*"Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given;
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven;"*

and I thought then, "Ah! I shall never be able to sing that. It is too high a note for me." But I can sing it now, and sing it truthfully too—and so will you, who have but just seen Christ, be able to do—ye shall go forth in the liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free.

You shall go forth, too, in *Christian ordinances*. Perhaps you say, "I should be afraid to be baptized—it is such a solemn thing to profess death, burial, and resurrection with Christ—I do not think I could dare to do that. And as to going before a Christian church and avowing my faith in Jesus, I am afraid I could not do that—my lips would be tightly closed through fear. And I should not feel at liberty to come to the Master's table. I should be so afraid of eating and drinking condemnation to myself not discerning the Lord's body."

Ah, poor trembler, I know just how you feel. But when the Sun of righteousness arises upon your soul, you will get liberty in all these matters and will go forth in obedience to your Lord's commands. If a stranger were to come to your house, he would stand at the door, or wait in the hall. If he were a person of any sense, he would not think of walking into your parlor, or your drawing room, or your bedroom, for he would not be at home there. But your child makes himself free in your house because he is at home. So is it with the child of God, for a child may come where a stranger may not venture to go. When the Holy Ghost has become to you the Spirit of adoption, you will go forth to Christian ordinances without fear.

So will it be with *the Christian's inward privileges*. I know you think, poor seeker, that you never may "rejoice with unspeakable joy and full of glory." If you may but just get inside Christ's door, or sit at the bottom of His table, you think you will be well content. Ah! but you shall not have any less privileges than the greatest of God's children.

God makes no differences between His children as far as their privileges are concerned. He will not make us His hired servants, but we, even we, shall feast upon the fatted calf, and shall have the music and the dancing as much as if we had never gone astray. Yes, young Christian, ye shall go forth,. You do not know what is before you. There is the goodly land and it is all yours. Do not imagine that you are always to be a babe in grace—you shall grow and become, I hope, a full-grown man in Christ Jesus—yea, a father in Israel.

Imagine not that you are always to be like that little green blade which is just peeping up above the cold sod—you shall one day be like the corn in the ear—yea, more, you shall one day be like the golden corn which bends its head through its ripeness and the glad harvest home shall be shouted over you. You shall not always be weak and feeble and afraid to enjoy your Christian privileges.

You would not know yourself if you could see what you will yet be. The songs you are yet to sing, the grapes of Eshcol you are yet to pluck, the fair days of joy you are yet to spend, the feasts and banquets, the real enjoyments which you are yet to know on this side of the grave might well make you happy if you could but get a foretaste of them. Yes, ye shall go forth,—only have Christ as your Savior and there shall be no end to your happiness. Let the Sun of righteousness but rise upon you and your light shall never be put out.

But that is not all, for the text also says, "Ye shall grow up as calves of the stall." That is to say, *these very people who are so timid now, shall advance in the divine life at the fastest rate*. The calf grows very rapidly and it ought to do so when it is put into the stall on purpose to help it to grow. The reference is to the calves that are stalled for fattening—those that are fatted regularly, fatted abundantly, by those whose aim it is to make them grow.

So the text tells the young Christian that he shall grow like the calf in the stall. God's ministers shall feed him, God's Word shall be the granary out of which his food shall come, and God's Spirit shall enable him to feed upon that food and make him grow thereby. Christ Himself shall be that poor trembler's daily bread, his meat and his drink.

He who feeds upon Christ must grow. It is no cause for wonder if the saints are fat and flourishing—and bring forth fruit in old age, when they feed upon Christ. Whenever a Christian has to say, "My leanness, my leanness, woe is unto me," it cannot be because suitable food has not been supplied—it must be because he has not fed upon it—for if we have fed upon Christ Jesus, how can we help growing in faith, and knowledge, and holiness, and every spiritual gift?

I am hopeful, therefore, for our young members, that God will take care of them and that they will surprise us by the advance which they will make. I only hope that they will surpass all who have ever gone before them. Ah, dear young friends, never take us as an example in stopping short of the Christian ideal. Follow us as far as we follow Christ, but go beyond the very best of us where you see that we come short of what we ought to be.

I hope you will be more earnest, more prayerful, more conscientious, more diligent than any of us have been. May the next generation of Christians outshine the present one and so may it continue to be until Christ Himself comes and His church shall be in her glory!

Do you recollect that passage in the Revelation about the woman clothed with the sun? How bright she must be! But that is the Christian church—and it is you also in your measure, for you are to be clothed with the sun. Your brightness and holiness are to be such that men shall know that the Sun of righteousness has risen upon you. You have not any light in yourselves, but when you receive the light from Christ, take care that you reflect it. How bright should those be who shine in the beams of Jesus Christ Himself!

There is one translation of the last clause of the text which I should like to mention. It is thought by some eminent divines that the word rendered “stall” bears also the meaning of “yoke.” If it be so, then the genuine Christian grows up like the heifers that wear the yoke. That is to say, he is a worker as well as a feeder. He grows, but he is willing to bear the yoke and serve his Lord.

I would not thank God for the addition to this church of a man who would be idle, captious, selfish. I would deprecate such a diminution of our strength, even though it might be an augmentation of our numbers. The church members we want are those who are willing to consecrate themselves wholly to the Lord and to whom religion is a reality. With many it is a sham, a mere pretence, a thing to make them appear respectable, but not a matter which eats up their life and takes away their energy, bearing them onward in service as in a chariot of fire.

May you who are converted grow up as heifers that wear the yoke! May you plow to the end of your field and back again, and on, and on, ploughing in the Master’s service till the time shall come for the yoke to be taken from your necks! The crest and the motto of the American Baptist Missionary Union should be ours—the crest is an ox standing between a plough and an altar, and the motto is, “Ready for either.” May we be ready to be offered up in death or to serve God in life!

Now I have to say this to you who fear the Lord and who are seeking to have Christ in your hearts—seek to get Him as the Sun of righteousness shining within you. Do ask, after you have Christ, that you may be helped to grow in grace—that you may not be dull and heavy as some have been, that you may not be cumberers of the ground, that you may not be the mere baggage of Christ’s army impeding the march of His heroes—but that you may be men who shall be swifter than eagles and bolder than lions, consecrated men, to whom work shall be pleasure and loss shall be gain. Men who, as the arrow speeds from the archer’s bow, turning neither to the right nor to the left, shall speed onward to the prize of your high calling, thinking of nothing except winning Christ and being found in Him.

May God grant us this blessing now! Let the prayer be breathed, “Arise upon us, Sun of righteousness,” and then let the other prayer follow, “Make us to go forth, and to grow up like calves of the stall, and may we serve You, O God, and receive Your blessing, world without end! Amen.”

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

LUKE 10:25-42

Verses 25-28. *And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.*

Do any of you want to live by the law? There is the law. Does any man here pretend that he has kept it? Let me ask any man here who would justify himself by his own works—have you thought of God today? How much time have you spent with God? Or yesterday, how much of your time did you give Him—how many minutes?

Would you venture to say that you spent a quarter of an hour in prayer? No, perhaps, if it comes to the truth, you did not spend five minutes. Now, if you loved God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your strength, and all your mind, do you think that five minutes would satisfy such a love as that? Oh, no, sirs, you that are unconverted give God no love at all—and how can you think, therefore, that you are keeping His law which puts it so strongly, “Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself”? Have you ever done that? Neither the first nor the second table have you kept intact.

29. *But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?*

The Savior then related this incident, which I have no doubt was really a fact.

30. *And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.*

It was a very dangerous road, a very lonely part, and robberies were very frequent there.

31. *And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.*

He did not like the look of wounds and blood. It is a very convenient thing not to recollect the miseries of your fellow men. Do not think about their poverty—it might spoil your digestion. Do not think about their drunkenness—you might have to become a teetotaler. Do not think about their sin—you might have to go and preach in the street to them. You can live so easily and pleasantly, and even be a priest and be called, “His Reverence,” if you are very careful which side of the road you take. “He passed by on the other side.”

32. *And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.*

There are some whose looks are evidently esteemed by themselves to be so very precious, that, when they have given them, they give nothing more. He may have meant, “I will see into it.” There are a great many who are very diligent in their promises to see into a case, but we do not see much come of what they say. They also pass by on the other side. Neither the priest nor the Levite acted as a neighbor to the man who fell among thieves.

33. *But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was:*

He looked, approached, drew near, “came where he was.”

33. *And when he saw him, he had compassion on him,*

He did not ask him how he got there, or say to him, “Why, man, you must have been very foolish to travel alone. My dear friend, next time you come this way, you must come armed. Did you not know this was a very ugly part of the road? And I think you are ill-advised to have been travelling quite so late.” Oh, we have many dear friends who always favor us with their rebukes when our wounds are bleeding! “He had compassion on him.”

34. *And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.*

Oil and wine—two very good things for external application—and he used them for that. Wondrous healers these were known to be. They were expensive things too. He had brought them for his own comfort and he freely used them for this poor man. Then he set him on his own beast—so he had to walk. He took the inconvenience. He relinquished his own comfort for the sake of doing good.

“And he brought him to an inn and took care of him”—perhaps sat up all night with him, he took care of him after he had got him into the inn. He did not immediately commend him to the care of some paid person, but at first he took care of him. But this good Samaritan had urgent business and was obliged to go about it.

35. *And on the morrow when he departed he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.*

“This is my piece of work. I want to finish it, and as I cannot stay, will you kindly supply the ready money, and when I come again, I will repay you?”

36-37. *Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him.*

Oh, you lawyer, why did you not say, “The Samaritan”? Of course, he did not like to use that word. Oh, no, we never mention them—the “Samaritans.” “The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.” So he would not honestly say, “The Samaritan,” but he made a roundabout of it and said, “He that showed mercy on him.”

37. *Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.*

May we all be enabled to do so by exercising constant love to those who are in need!

38. *Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.*

There were not so very many that kept open house for Christ. But Martha did. It was her house.

39. *And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word.*

She was free to do so. It was not her house. She need not attend to the hospitalities of it. Her sister was quite equal to it and so Mary did well to avail herself of the opportunity of sitting at Jesus’ feet and hearing His word.

40. *But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.*

She wanted to get so much ready—to have everything nice. So she came almost scolding the Master. She was out of temper, surely, that day. She had got to be troubled. Dear friends, it is not wrong to labor and to work and do all we can, but it is wrong to grow cumbered with it—to get fretful, anxious, worried about this thing and that. You will not do it any better. You will probably do less and you will do it worse. She was “cumbered about much serving.”

41-42. *And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful:*

“You have forgotten much. Looking after many things, you have failed to remember the chief, the only needful thing.”

42. *And Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.*

And so He let her still sit there and hear His blessed words.

*“Oh, that I could forever sit
With Mary at the Master’s feet;
Be this my happy choice!”*

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.