

GOD'S WITNESSES

NO. 644

A SERMON
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“Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant, whom I have chosen.”
Isaiah 43:10

YOU, most of you, know that I am incessantly engaged every hour in the week either in preaching the Gospel or in endeavoring to discharge the multifarious duties connected with this immense church. Now I always look upon my Saturdays as being consecrated, as far as possible, to meditation and study, that I may find something to set before you on the Lord's day.

But unfortunately for me, I was served with a subpoena to attend the assizes at Croydon, and was compelled to spend the whole of yesterday sitting in a hot and crowded court. There is a wide difference between the throne of grace and the bench of justice, and between communion with heaven and converse with lawyers and witnesses.

I tried to think while sitting there, but I found the business so distracting, that I went home with a headache and thought I would scarcely be able to preach to the assembled crowds on the morrow. It struck me, however, that if I could not preach about anything else, I must just try to get something out of the occupation of yesterday. Perhaps we may glean some profitable ears of corn among such unlikely stubble. Let me draw your attention to the text, and compel my occupation of yesterday to yield a few illustrations to set forth its meaning.

As the text stands, in its connection, we have before us a great assembly. All the nations of the earth are summoned to bring forth their rival gods, and the question to be decided is this—which out of them is the living and true God. The mode of test is this most admirable one—*which out of these gods has foretold the future?* Among all these votaries of various idols, which of them can claim that their deity possesses the gift of foresight?

Let all the venerated blocks of wood and stone bring forward their witnesses. They can tell of Sibylline oracles, of strange mysterious mutterings which contained doubtful declarations hidden under ambiguous terms. The Lord demands that there shall be presented before this court plain prophecies, distinct declarations of events which could not have been foreseen by human sagacity.

In this respect, the gods of the heathen failed, but when JEHOVAH summoned His people Israel, and put them into the witness box, and said to them, “Ye are my witnesses,” they were able distinctly to prove that all the great events of their national history had been foretold by their God, and that each had occurred precisely as foretold.

Not one of His prophecies had failed. Not one word had dropped to the ground. Surely the Jew might, with great satisfaction, recur to that ancient prophecy which is recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the book of Genesis. We read in the twelfth verse of that chapter that, “When the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, know know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And you shall go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come here again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”

Every descendant of the patriarch could point to this as a revelation given to his great ancestor at a time when such events seemed improbable and yet it was literally fulfilled. The people went down into

Egypt. They stayed there till the four hundred years of this prophecy had been fulfilled. At that very hour they came out of Egypt. With a strong hand and with an outstretched arm did God bring them out. He judged Egypt with many plagues and with a terrible overthrow in the Red Sea.

But Israel came out with great substance, for we find that they had jewels of silver and jewels of gold. After forty years, they found the sin of the original inhabitants of Canaan was full, and that the set time was come for their slaughter and destruction. All this was fulfilled verbatim, and in the eighteenth and following verses there is a continuation of the prophecy, and this too was literally accomplished.

“Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.” And all the inhabitants of the land were to be destroyed, and Canaan was to be the possession of the descendants of the solitary man who as a stranger and a pilgrim with his God, trod its acres without owning a foot of the soil. This early prophecy was so exactly accomplished that to Israel it was conclusive proof that JEHOVAH was truly the Lord.

Moreover, the Jews could say that in every national event they had always been forewarned. Was David appointed that his seed should rule over Israel? Jacob long before had seen the sceptre in the tribe of Judah. Was the kingdom to be divided at the latter end of the reign of Solomon? Ahijah tears the garment of Jeroboam, and foretells that he shall take ten pieces to make another kingdom for himself.

Was the race of Jeroboam to be put away? Remember the terrible words, “There shall not be left so much as a dog of the house of Jeroboam, son of Nebat.” Were they to be molested for their sins by the neighboring nations? God always sent to them a warning prophet to bid them repent, lest suddenly they should feel the smarting rod.

Now, what the Jew could say in Isaiah's day, we can say yet more fully. My brethren, it is our happiness to live in an age when expeditions to eastern lands are proving every letter of prophecy. Go to Nineveh and mark her heap, and her solitary river flowing silently to the sea. Did it ever seem likely that Tigris and Euphrates, where the Chaldeans made their boast in their ships, upon whose banks stood the two greatest cities of antiquity, should become the haunt of dragons and owls?

Go you to Nineveh and learn what God can do, and how He can foresee the desolation of His foes. Cast your eye to the beach of Tyre, where the fisherman spreads his net, and there is not a ship to be seen, but where once the commerce of half the world floated in its glory.

Tread the silent and deserted halls of Petra, and shiver as you read the words—“The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; who saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.”

Where is Moab? What ails you, O Ammon? Where are those boastful monarchies which said, “We are ladies for ever: we shall sit upon our thrones and know no sorrow”? JEHOVAH has spoken and has done it—He is God—He only is the God of the whole earth.

This is the scene presented before us in the text—the whole assembled nations, and the Jewish people brought together to prove that in their sacred books they had distinct notification of future events, proving that God is God, since no heathen idols have been able, after this sort, to foresee or to foretell.

We will depart from the precise meaning of the text, and take it in a very truthful sense, though not in the one originally intended. Believers in Christ Jesus, you take the place of Israel of old, and you are, every one of you, God's witnesses this day.

A great controversy is going on between God and the world. The world puts its witnesses forward to speak in its name. And you, the chosen ones of the Most High, are ordained to this office, to be testifiers and witness-bearers for your God and for His truth. “Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant, whom I have chosen.”

I. We will advance at once to our subject by mentioning some of THE QUESTIONS UPON WHICH CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED TO GIVE EVIDENCE IN FAVOR OF THEIR GOD.

These questions are the most weighty which can be discussed. One of the first is this—*is there such a thing nowadays as a distinct interposition of God on behalf of man in answer to believing prayer?* The world ridicules the idea. The horse laugh is heard the moment you talk about the efficacy of prayer and faith.

“Why,” say some, “the wind that drives the pirate on the rock will also cause the shipwreck of a vessel laden with ministers of the Gospel. Providence is alike severe in its severities and alike bountiful in its bounties. The rain falls upon the field of the wicked as well as upon the field of the righteous. God has gone away from earth and left it to manage itself—has wound it up like a clock and set it going, and now He does not interfere, but lets each wheel act upon the other wheel, and the whole machinery go on without any interposition from His hand.” That is the world’s theory.

Now, in opposition to this, we hold that, albeit the same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, yet still in those very events there are distinct differences in God’s dealings. But that is not precisely the question. The question is whether or no God does answer prayer and come in to the assistance and deliverance of those who have faith in Him. We declare that He does do so.

I think, dear friends, if I were to call some of you into the witness box, you would give very clear and distinct proofs of this. Suppose I call Mr. George Muller, of Bristol. He would say, “Look at those three orphan houses, containing no less than one thousand one hundred and fifty orphan children, who are entirely supported by funds sent to me in answer to prayer.”

“Look,” says he, “at this fact—that when the water was dried up in Bristol, and the water works were not able to serve sufficient water to the people—I, with my more than a thousand children dependent upon me, never asked any man for a drop of water, but I went on my knees before God, and a farmer who was neither directly nor indirectly asked by me, called at my door the next hour and offered to bring us water.

“And when he ceased because his supplies were dried up, instead of telling anybody, I went to my God and told Him all about it, and another friend offered to let me fetch water from his brook.” He will point you to his report in connection with the orphan houses these many years, and say to you, “Here it is—I solemnly assert that I never told any man one of my wants, but went straight away to cry unto my God, and while I have been calling, He has answered me, and while I have yet been speaking, He has sent the reply.”

And George Muller is no solitary specimen. We can each of us tell of like events in our own history. Indeed, it were hard for me to find in my life a case in which I have asked and not received. I should find it difficult to discover a season in which I have cried unto God and not received deliverance, during the whole run and tenor of my life.

I admit it to be shorter than that of some of you, but yet that short life suffices for me to say that in hundreds of instances I have had as distinct answers to prayer as if God had thrust His right hand through the blue sky and given right into my lap the bounty which I had sought of Him.

Now we are not insane. We are not so wonderfully enthusiastic—we wish we were a little more so. Many of us are as sober souls, as common-sense acting men, as any that are to be found. There are brethren here who exhibit a shrewdness in business which would screen them from being called fools by worldlings themselves, and yet our unanimous witness as Christians is this—we have sought God, and He has heard us—and that though we have been brought very low, if we have been enabled to cry out to God, even from the very depths, He has delivered us in our hour of need. Upon this point the Christian should take care that he bears very clear testimony, for he certainly may do it without any difficulty.

There is a question, also, *as to the ultimate results of present affliction*. The world holds as a theory, that if there be a God, He is very often exceedingly unkind. That He is severe to the best of men, and that some men are the victims of a cruel fate. That they are greatly to be pitied, because they have to suffer much without compensating profit.

Now, the Christian holds, first of all, that the woes of sinners are punishments, and are very different from the chastening sorrows of believers. Of these last he believes that all things work together for good

to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose. He believes, as a matter of faith, that he gains by his losses, that he gets health by his sicknesses, and that he makes progress towards heaven by that which threatens to drive him back.

This, I say, is the doctrine with which he starts. Now what is your testimony, brother Christian, with regard to this as a matter of experience? How have you found it? I must speak for myself, and say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." "It is good for me that I have been afflicted."

All of you who have sounded the deeps of soul-trouble, and have enjoyed the presence of Jesus, can distinctly testify the same. You have found that afterward affliction works the comfortable fruits of righteousness, though now, for a season, it is anything but joyous. You have, some of you, passed through very severe difficulties and trials—I have been the sympathizing witness of the griefs of some of you—but I have heard you say, and say it confidently, not in moments of religious excitement, but in times of sober quiet, that you would not have had it otherwise for all the world.

I have heard you say, and I know you are ready to repeat it in any company and in any place, that if you could have altered your past life, especially as to its trials and its difficulties, you would not now in looking back upon it have had it altered for a thousand worlds. Oh no, the rough was a right way. The tempest purged the pestilential air. The earthquake shook down houses of evil. The fire consumed heaps of wood, hay, and stubble. In this thing may I beg you always clearly and distinctly to state the truth as witnesses for your God.

A third point very much in dispute is as to *the joyfulness of a true believer's life*. The world's theory is, that we are a very miserable set of people who take to religion from the necessity of a naturally melancholy disposition. "The gloomy tenets of Calvin," as they are generally called, "the horrid dogmas of Calvin," are supposed to possess congenial charms for minds gloomy and morose.

Now what is your testimony, Christian, especially you Christians who have learned to see in "the horrid dogmas of Calvin" the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Well, we can say if we are melancholy, joyous people must be very joyful indeed. We sometimes think we have run up as high on the gamut of joy as any human hearts can go, and if we are melancholy, what a deal of joy there must be in the world! What happy people other people must be if we be melancholy!

I know that many of God's saints can say that when they can lay hold upon the great doctrines of sovereign grace they are as happy as the day is long in midsummer. So that with all their trials they can rejoice in the Lord, and again and again rejoice.

I saw a Baptist minister this week who was "passing rich on forty pounds a year," owing no man anything. I told him I hoped he would not die with the secret, for I should like to learn the art of keeping house on forty pounds a year. But he said to me, when I smiled at his salary, "You see before you the happiest man out of heaven." And I know I did too, for his face showed that he meant what he said. The happiest man out of heaven—a poor Baptist minister on forty pounds a year!

Ay, and there are some here who can declare though they are nothing but poor work girls, and have to stitch, stitch, stitch, far into the night to get their living, yet when they think that Christ is their own Beloved, they are the happiest girls out of heaven. Some of you have not much to spare when the rent is paid and food is bought, yet with all that you want no man's pity, for you are rich to all the intents of bliss.

When Mr. Hone, who wrote the "Everyday book," was traveling through Wales—he was an infidel—he stopped at a cottage to ask for a drink of water, when a little girl said, "Oh yes, sir, I have no doubt mother will give you some milk. Come in." He went in and sat down.

The little girl was reading her Bible. Mr. Hone said, "Well, my little girl, you are getting your task?" "No, sir, I am not," she replied, "I am reading the Bible." "Yes," said he, "you are getting your task out of the Bible?" "Oh, no," she replied, "it is no task to read the Bible, I love the Bible." "And why do you love the Bible?" said he. Her simple, childlike answer was, "I thought everybody loved the Bible."

She thought full sure it was the greatest treat in all the world, and fancied that everybody else was delighted to read God's Word. Mr. Hone was so touched with the sincerity of that expression, that he read the Bible himself, and instead of being an opponent to the things of God, came to be a friend of divine truth.

Let us in the same way show to the people of the world who think our religion to be slavery, that it is a delight and a joy, that it is no more a burden to us to pray than it is for fish to swim, that it is no more bondage for us to serve God than for a bird to fly. True godliness is our natural element now that we have a new nature given us by the Spirit of God. On that matter be you witnesses for God.

Another point in dispute refers to the moral tendencies of Christianity, and especially of that form of Christianity which it is our delight to preach. There is a growing belief, nowadays, that the preaching of the doctrine of free grace has a tendency to make men think little of sin, and that especially the free invitations of the Gospel to the very vilest of sinners, and the declaration that whoso believes in Jesus shall be saved, has a tendency to make men indulge in the worst of crimes.

I read a paper the other day, in which a public writer had the impudence to lay the crimes of Southey and Pritchard, and such men, at the door of our holy religion. I called the writer a villain and he deserves no better name. He must be a villain to dare to lay at the door of Christ's holy Gospel the infamy of murder. He says that while we continue to preach that God forgives sin so easily, men will sin more and more.

Now our testimony is, and we speak positively here, that there can be nothing which exerts so sanctifying an influence upon the heart of man as the doctrine of the love of God in Christ Jesus. And if you seek proofs, look around. If it were right for you to speak, my brethren, there are certain happy ones among us who could testify this day, "We are living manifestations that the grace of God can turn the drunk into a sober man and make the harlot a Christian woman, and bring up the depraved and the profane to seek after purity and holiness."

Why, we are each of us, in our degree, witnesses to that. When do you hate sin most? Why, at the foot of the cross. And when do you love holiness best? Is it not when you feel that God has blotted out your sins like a cloud? No truth can so subdue the human mind as the majesty of infinite love. It is just that which makes a man hate himself for having offended against so tender and gracious a God. Prove by the integrity and uprightness of your characters, that the Gospel has had a mighty power on you to make you honest, benevolent, devout, loving your neighbor and your God.

Again, it has been whispered—nay, it has been boasted by certain very profound philosophers—that the Christian religion has reached its prime, and though it had an influence upon the world at one time, *it is now going down*, and we want something a little more juvenile and vigorous, with a fresher vigor in its veins to stir the world and produce noble deeds.

I have been told many times that the simple preaching of the doctrine of grace has no effect now upon the thinking portion of the community, the gentlemen who say this being themselves the thinking portion of the community in their own estimation.

For you must understand that in order to be one of the "thinking portion of the community," it is necessary not to think in a straight line, but to think in a kind of circumbendibus—to think in a style in which nobody else can understand you, to think till you get at the bottom of things and stir the mud, so that you cannot find your own way and nobody else can see where you are. That is considered to be thinking nowadays—whereas it strikes me that the best form of thinking is that which submits itself to God's thoughts and is willing to sit at the feet of Jesus.

Now is the time, however, for true believers to vindicate the manliness and force of their faith. It is not true that Christianity has lost its force and its power—and we must make this clear as noonday. You are God's witnesses, my brethren. You are put in the box, and I pray you, if in the past or present you have not proved this, do it in the future.

The Gospel can now nourish heroes as it did of old—it could furnish martyrs tomorrow, if martyrs were required to garnish Smithfield's stakes. It produces now self-denying missionaries. It educates men

and women by the thousands who can bear the sneer and the jeer, and who would be prepared to lie in a prison till the moss grew on their eyelids sooner than give up Christ.

Our belief is that Christ has the dew of His youth, and that the Gospel is as adapted to the boasted enlightenment of the nineteenth century as to the darkness of the first ages. But you are God's witnesses, and you must prove it, and I must ask every one of you to prove it by the holy zeal, the conspicuous enthusiasm, the sacred fire and fervor that shall blaze and flash in your lives.

For truth and for Christ let us teach this world that we retain the old power among us. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to enable us to live such forceful vigorous lives, that men shall know once more what we can do. Indeed, I am not boastful in venturing to say that there are still a host of facts to prove that the Gospel has not lost its power over the minds of men.

We can point to spots in Glasgow, London, Edinburgh—in the most crowded of our cities where once there were dens of infamy and haunts of vice, and there by the enterprising benevolence and holy perseverance of single, solitary men, the desert has been made to blossom as the rose. But enough of this. Go you witness each man in his own person.

Once again—it is our daily business to be witnesses for God on another question, as *to whether or not faith in the blood of Jesus Christ really can give calm and peace to the mind*. Our hallowed peace must be proof of that.

The last testimony we shall probably bear will answer the question, *whether Christ can help a man to die well or not*. Whether religion will bear the test of that last solemn article. Whether we shall be enabled to go through the river either triumphantly shouting, or quietly accepting our end. Well, beloved, we will prove that when the time comes.

But how many there have been among us whose names we venerate, who have died rejoicing in the love of Jesus. There are those above whom we mention with a joyous sorrow, when we recollect how well to the last they testified of the faithfulness of Christ and His power to bless when all other blessings fail us.

You see, then, that there are many questions in dispute, and that the Christian's business is to be God's witness, speaking the truth for God upon these matters.

II. Time flies, and therefore I must take you on to the second point, which is to give SOME SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE MODE OF WITNESSING.

Let me say, as a first suggestion, that you *must* witness—you *must* witness if you be a Christian. You may try to shirk it if you will, but you *must* witness, for you are *sub poena*—that is to say, you will suffer for it if you do not.

Some Christians think they will sneak comfortably into heaven without bearing witness for Christ. I fear they will be mistaken. But this I know, that every Christian who does not come out distinctly and boldly for his Master, will lose all choice enjoyments. He may have enough religion to make him wretched, but he shall have none of the joy and peace, the exhilaration and delight, which a greater boldness and faithfulness would have given him.

The bravest Christians are the happiest Christians. Those who serve God most have the most enjoyment—and those Nicodemites who come to Christ by night, generally find it night. Christian, do not shun witnessing for Christ.

After the disgraceful defeat of the Romans at the battle of Allia, Rome was sacked, and it seemed as if at any moment the Gauls might take the capitol. Among the garrison was a young man of the Fabian family, and on a certain day the anniversary of a sacrifice returned—when his family had always offered sacrifice upon the Quirinal Hill.

This hill was in the possession of the Gauls, but when the morning dawned, the young man took the sacred utensils of his god, went down from the capitol, passed through the Gallic sentries—through the main body, up the hill—offered sacrifice and came back unharmed. It was always told as a wonder among Roman legends.

I think this is just what the Christian should do when there is something to be done for Christ—though he be a solitary man in the midst of a thousand opponents—let him, at the precise moment when duty calls, fearless of all danger, go straight to the appointed spot, do his duty, and remember that consequences belong to God and not to us. I pray God that after this style we may witness for Christ.

In the next place, *every witness is required to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth*. Christian, as a witness for God, do this. Speak the truth, but let your life be true as well as your words. Live so that you need not be afraid to have the shutters taken down—that men may look right through your actions.

You are not true if you have any sinister motive or anything to conceal. Speak in your life the truth and let it be the whole truth too. Tell out for God all the truth as it is in Jesus and let your life proclaim the whole teaching of truth. Let it be nothing but the truth.

I am afraid many Christians tell a great deal which is not true—their life is contrary to their words. And though they speak truth with their lips, they speak falsehoods with their hands. Suppose, for instance, I draw a miserable face, and I say, “God’s people are a blessed people.” Nobody believes me because my face tells falsehood while my mouth utters a truth.

And if I say, “Yes, religion has a sanctifying influence upon its professors and possessors,” and put my hand into my neighbor’s pocket in any sort of way, who will believe my testimony? I may have spoken the truth, but I am also speaking something that is not the truth, and I am thus rendering my witness of very small effect.

When the witness is before the court, *his direct evidence is always the best*. If a man can only say, “I heard somebody say,” the judge will frequently stop him, and say, “We do not want hearsay evidence. What did you see?” Many professing Christians only give witness of what they have read in books. They have no vital, experiential acquaintance with the things of God.

Now remember, dear friends, that second-hand Christianity is one of the worst things in the world. We do not like it as we see it in the Church of England. We do not believe in that sponsorial salvation in which one man promises for another that he shall keep all God’s holy commandments, to be anything better than a lying pretense.

The same is true of any form of religion which you may happen to have—which you borrow from your mother, or take from your father, or gather from good books. True religion is more than what we can teach or learn. It is something that must be known and felt. And your witness for God is not worth the words in which you utter it, unless it comes from your own experience of its truth.

A witness must take care not to damage his own case. How many professed witnesses for God make very telling witnesses the other way. They damage their case by either retaining a part of the truth, or else by flatly contradicting, as we have said before, in their lives what they have professed. Do not let it be so. As a witness for God, be careful that every action tells for His glory—ay, and that every thought, and word, and deed, shall be such witnessing as you shall wish to have borne in the day when the great Judge shall call you to account.

Every witness must expect to be cross-examined. “He that is first in his own cause,” says Solomon, “seems just; but his neighbour comes and searcheth him.” You know how a counsel takes a man and turns him inside out—and though he was one color before—he looks quite another directly afterwards.

Now you, as God’s witnesses, will be cross-examined. Watch, therefore, watch carefully. Temptation will be put in your way—the devil will cross-examine you. You say you love God—he will set carnal joys before you, and see whether you cannot be decoyed from your love to God.

You said, you trusted in your heavenly Father—Providence will cross-examine you. A trial will dash upon you. How now? Can you trust Him? You said religion was a joyous thing. A crushing misfortune will befall you. How now? Can you now rejoice when the fig tree does not blossom, and the flocks are cut off, and the cattle are dead? Can you now rejoice in God as aforetime?

By this species of examination true men will be made manifest, but the deceiver will be detected. What cross-examinations did the martyrs go through! What fiery questions had they to answer! What

cutting cross-examinations were the sword, the rack, the spear, the prison, the banishment, and yet you know how faithfully they witnessed, still standing fast to the truth even to the end.

What a noble sight is Martin Luther when under trial. His friends said to him, "Luther, you will never think of going to Worms, will you? Why the cardinal will burn you as they did John Huss." "Ah," said he, "but if they were to make a fire so big that it would reach from Wurttemberg to Worms, and should flame up to heaven, in the Lord's name I would go through it to declare the truth of God before the council. I would enter between the jaws of Behemoth. I would break his teeth and would confess Jesus Christ."

Thus Luther was proved to be the true man of God, and his witness for God moved the world in his own time, and is moving it now. May we all be able to stand the test of such cross-examinations.

III. Did you observe in the text, dear friends, that THERE IS ANOTHER WITNESS BESIDE YOU.

"Ye are my witnesses, and my *servant* whom I have chosen." Who is that? Why the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. If you want an exposition of who this servant is, turn to the Philippians and read these words—"Who took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Witnesses for God are never solitary. When they seem alone, there is still one with them whom Nebuchadnezzar saw in the fiery furnace with the three holy children—"The fourth is like unto the Son of God." "Fear not," Christ may well say to all His faithful witnesses, "I am with you, the faithful and true witness."

Let us remark, concerning Christ's life, that He witnessed the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. If you want to have a witness to every attribute of God, only read the four evangelists, and there you have it. Beloved, would you see God's *truth*? Observe how Jesus Christ, in all His actions, with a sacred simplicity, with a transparent sincerity, writes His heart out in His every act. Here you have no sophistry, no Jesuitical reservation—He lives out in His life His own heart and the heart of God.

What testimony you have to God's *holiness* in the life of Christ. In Him was no sin. "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." Read that divine book, "The Life of Christ," through, and through, and through—you shall find nothing to be put at the end by way of addendum, much less anything by way of errata. It is all there and there is nothing there but what ought to be.

What witness-bearing, too, there is in the life of Christ to divine *justice*. See Him sweating great drops of blood, mark His face marred with a multitude of sorrows, see His brow crowned with thorns, decked with ruby drops of His own blood, read in His hands and in His feet the terrible writing of divine vengeance, look into His side, and see there the sacred mystery of God's hatred for sin—a hatred so deep that He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up because of sin! Never could there be a clearer witness than the bleeding Jesus, of God's hatred to sin.

Above all, read Christ's witness to God's *love*. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." In every action of the life of Jesus—from the time when He lay in Bethlehem's manger to the moment when a cloud received Him out of their sight—it is all love.

Elijah brings fire from heaven to destroy—Christ sends it in Pentecost to bless. He opens His mouth at the first with—"Blessed, blessed, blessed"—for so He multiplied that word on the Mount where He preached His first sermon and He closed His earthly sojourn by blessing His people. His paths dropped fatness. No imagination can picture love more deep and pure than that which is reflected in the life of Jesus Christ.

I cannot, however, detain you this morning to show that the entire circumference of divine excellence is contained in the life of Christ—that every pearl of deity is in the crown which we call Jesus. That He contains in Himself a full declaration of all that the Father is, so that His words are true—"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Brethren and sisters, you are to be witnesses for Christ, and Christ is to be a witness with you. If you want to know how to discharge your duty, look at Him—He is always witnessing. By the well of

Samaria, and the temple of Jerusalem, by the Lake of Gennesaret, or on the mountain's brow. He is witnessing night and day. His mighty prayers are as vocal to God as His daily services. He witnesses under all circumstances. Scribes and Pharisees cannot shut His mouth. That fox, Herod, cannot frighten or alarm Him. Even before Pilate He witnesses a good confession.

He witnesses so clearly and distinctly that there is no mistaking Him. The common people heard Him gladly, for among other reasons, that no dark, unintelligible jargon concealed His meaning.

Beloved, make your lives clear. Be as the brook wherein you may see every stone at the bottom—not as the muddy creek of which you only see the surface—but clear and transparent, so that your heart's love to God and man may be distinctly visible to all. You need not tell men that you love them—make them feel that you love them. You need not say, "I am true"—*be* true. Boast not of integrity, but *be* upright. So shall your testimony be such that men cannot help seeing it.

Let me beg of you never, for fear of feeble man, to restrain your witness. Never put the finger of shame after this style to your lips. Those lips have been warmed with a coal from off the divine altar—let them speak like heaven-touched lips. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand."

Watch not the clouds. Consult not the wind. In season and out of season still witness for the Lord, the Savior, and if it shall ever come to pass that for Christ's sake and the Gospel you shall have to be like Naphtali—a people that hazarded their lives unto the death in the high places of the field—then blush not, but rejoice in the honor thus conferred upon you, that you are counted worthy to suffer loss for Christ's sake, for now your sufferings shall be a pulpit for you, your losses and persecutions shall make you a platform from which the more vigorously and with greater power you shall proclaim your witness for Christ Jesus.

Gird up your loins, my brethren, and go out from this assembly saying, "Am I God's witness? Then, Lord, open my lips that I may speak with decision and power, and give me grace that my witness-bearing shall be such that I shall not be ashamed when the reporting angel shall read the whole of it before assembled worlds." The Holy Spirit is wanted for this—may He dwell in you and make your bodies His temple, and so make each of us to witness for Christ.

Remember, this sermon has nothing to do with many of you. You cannot witness for Christ, for you do not know Him. You cannot witness for Him till you have trusted Him. O you who are out of Christ, let my witness to you this morning be this—that except you seek Him, you must perish, but that if you seek Him, He will be found of you. May the Lord grant you grace to find Him now, and His shall be the glory. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—ISAIAH 43

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.