

FOR HIS GLORY

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I have never shunned to rebuke, when I thought it necessary, but I hate contention. The only allowable strife is to labor who can be the most holy, the most earnest, the most zealous—who can do the most for the poor and the ignorant—and who can lift Christ's cross the highest. That is the way to lift up the members of any one particular denomination—by the members of that body being more devout, more sanctified, more spiritual-minded than others. All mere party fights will only create strife, animosities and bickering—and are not of the Spirit of God. But to live unto God and to be devoted to Him—this is the strength of the church. This will give us the victory, God helping us—and unto His name shall be all the praise.—CHS

RESCUING PRECIOUS SOULS FROM THE BONDAGE OF RELIGION

By Mike Gendron, of *Proclaiming the gospel*

We can be wrong about a lot of things in this life and still survive, but if we are wrong about the only way to obtain forgiveness from God, we will pay for that fatal mistake throughout all eternity. Our Creator provides only one way to redeem man from sin and He has revealed it in a divinely inspired message to mankind. However, it didn't take long for God's complete and perfect gospel message to be corrupted by religious leaders. These men, who say they speak for God, have distorted and perverted this good news of God's mercy and grace. Their unstated goal has been to control people by keeping them in legalistic bondage to their authority. The Lord Jesus revealed the only way of escape from this bondage. He said, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

Establish the Supreme Authority for truth

Reaching those who are

being held captive by religious indoctrination must always begin by establishing the Bible as the supreme authority for knowing God's gospel. Christ and His word must rule over man's religious traditions because God has exalted His word above all things (Psa 138:2). The Word of God is infallible and has no equal (Isa 55:10). The Bible is the most authoritative, influential, and powerful book ever written. It is the standard for discerning the truth of God from error (1 John 4:6). It is sufficient to function as the sole, infallible rule of faith (2 Tim 3:14-16). The Bible does not refer us to any other rule of faith because everything we must know, understand, and believe to be reconciled to God is found in Scripture (1 Cor 15:1-4). Whenever we are confronted by two or more opinions, we must always ask, "But what does the Scripture say?" (Gal 4:30).

What About

(See *Rescuing Precious Souls* on page 3)

OBEY HIM!

By Charles H. Spurgeon

Come, brothers and sisters, and especially those who are beginners, and have but lately enlisted in Christ's cause—let me mark you out Christ's way and then—if you would serve Him, follow Him! I know the proud flesh wants to serve Christ by striking out new paths. Proud man has a desire to preach new doctrines, to set up a new church—to be an original thinker, to judge and consider—do anything but *obey*. This is not service to Christ. He that would serve Christ must follow Him. He must be content to tread only in the old footsteps and go only where Christ has led the way. It is not for you and me to be originals. We must be humble *copies* of Christ.

There must be nothing about our religion of our own inventing. It is for us to lay thought, judgment and opinion at the feet of Christ—and do what *HE* bids us—simply because He gives the command. Look, then, brethren, at your Lord. I think I see the Savior—oh, that you would follow Him today! I think I see Him coming. It is His first public entry in the

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REFLECTIONS

Gems gleaned by Jim and Kappy Robinette
www.missionafricajk.net

DAVID LIVINGSTONE

The motto of David Livingstone was in these words, “I determined never to stop until I had come to the end and achieved my purpose.” By unfaltering persistence and faith in God he conquered.

A mission society is reported to have written to David Livingstone—“Have you found a good road to where you are? If so, we want to send other men to join you.” Livingstone replied—“If you have men who will come only if they know there is a good road, I don’t want them. I need men who will come if there is no road at all.”

“I am trying now to establish the Lord’s kingdom in a region wider, by far, than Scotland. Fever seems to forbid, but I shall work for the glory of Christ’s kingdom—fever or no fever.”—From *Streams In The Desert* by Mrs. Charles Cowman, Published by The Oriental Missionary Society Los Angeles, CA 1947

THE CHURCH

“A church which does not exist to do good in the slums of the city is a church that does not exist to reclaim heathenism, to fight with evil, to destroy error, to put down falsehood. A church that does not exist to take the side of the poor, to denounce injustice and to hold to righteousness, is a church that has no right to be. Not for yourself, O church, do you exist, any more than Christ existed for Himself. His glory was that He laid aside His glory, and the glory of the church is when she lays aside her respectability and her dignity, and counts it to be her glory to gather together the outcasts. And her highest honor is to seek amid the fullest mire the precious jewels for which Jesus shed His blood. To rescue souls from hell and lead them to God, to hope, to heaven—this is her heavenly occupation. O that the church would always feel this! Let her have her preachers and let them be supported, and let everything be done for Christ’s sake decently and in order, but let the goal be the conversion of the wandering, the teaching of the ignorant, the helping of the poor, the maintenance of the right, the putting down of the wrong and the upholding at all hazards of the crown and kingdom of Jesus Christ.”—CHS

OBEDIENCE...

(Continued from page 1)

world. And where does He go? It is the beginning of His manifest ministry among men. He is about to show you what should be the beginning of yours.

He goes to Jordan. There stands the Baptist and the willing crowds are baptized with the baptism of repentance. As John stands there, lo, the Son of Man, Himself, appears! And John asks, “I have need to be baptized of You, and You come to me?” But our Master, whom if we would serve, we must follow, says, “Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness.” He descends into the stream. He is buried beneath the water. And as He comes up from that immersion, the Heaven is opened and the Spirit descends upon Him like a dove.

If you would serve Him, follow Him. “But...but...but!” Alas, my brothers and sisters, this is not a fitting word for a *disciple*—you forget your service when you begin to question. If you would serve Him, follow Him. Your business as a servant is not to object, but to obey. Imagine that you ask your servant to fill a bath with water. “But...” You say, “I must have it filled.” But she questions again and again and again and, at last flatly refuses to do more than sprinkle it with a few drops! Do you call her a servant any longer? I don’t think so.

So there are some of you who see most clearly that your Master was baptized at the commencement of His public life and yet you are raising questions where there is no room for questions. You will neglect a duty which is as plain in Scripture as the very deity of Christ! You will turn aside from a baptism which is as plainly taught in express words as even the doctrine of justification by faith—you do not take up your service as you should.

“But, it is not essential,” you say. Is that a *servant’s* business? “But what good will it do?” Is this a question for a *servant*? “If any man will serve Me”—Christ does not say—“Let him question Me. Let him be asking Me why I command him to do such a thing.” No, no! He says, “Let him follow Me.” “But I dread the publicity, I fear the ordinance.” It is your proud flesh that fears it—subdue it under your feet and take up your cross, for there are far heavier crosses than *this* to carry. Thus your Master puts it—“If any man will serve Me, let him follow Me.”

He now comes from Jordan and the Spirit leads Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. You, too, must be tempted. Do not think, when you are tempted, that you are out of Christ. No—if you would be His servant, you must follow Him and must be tempted, too. Now the Master comes forth boldly and begins to preach and teach and labor. If you would serve Him, follow Him! Labor for Him. In some way or other teach His gospel. If you cannot teach it to the thousands, teach it to the tens. It you cannot converse with multitudes, converse with one at the well, as Christ did at Sychar. If you would be His servant, let His life be *your* life. And let your life be the miniature, the condensation of the life of Christ.—Adapted from *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software—Sermon #463—*Christ’s Servant—His Duty and Reward*—Read/download entire sermon at <http://www.spurgeongems.org> .

RESCUING PRECIOUS SOULS

(Continued from page 1)

The Traditions of Men?

Roman Catholics reject the supreme authority of Scripture by elevating their tradition to the same level of authority. They defend their position by quoting St. Paul who wrote, “Stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us” (2 Thess 2:15). But we must make a distinction between traditions which *had already been taught by the apostles in the first century* and the traditions established by men over the last 1900 years (2 Cor 11:2; 2 Thess 3:6). Clearly there are certain apostolic traditions recorded in Scripture that Christians must embrace, but not all traditions are biblical. Paul encouraged us to make this distinction. He wrote, “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the *tradition of men*, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ” (Col 2:8). Paul is warning us that we can become ensnared by the traditions of men when they do not conform to Christ and His word. Tradition must always be subservient to Scripture because God’s word is divinely inspired while tradition is not.

What About “Infallible” Men?

Roman Catholics also reject the supreme authority of Scripture by elevating its “infallible” bishops to be equal in authority. In practice, the bishops actually sit above Scripture by declaring no one else can give an authentic interpretation of the Word of God (Catechism of the Catholic Church, para. 85). Yet the Apostle Paul commended the Bereans (who were not bishops) for interpreting the Scriptures to verify the truthfulness of his teaching. “Now the Bereans...received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true” (Acts 17:11). It is quite clear that the apostle, who penned over half the New Testament, encouraged his listeners to submit to the supreme authority of the Hebrew Scriptures. The veracity of every man’s message must be tested with the same Scriptural authority.

Getting the Gospel Right

Once the supreme authority of Scripture has been communicated to Catholics who are enslaved to another authority, the gospel of God can be heralded. It is wise to present God’s gospel in contrast to Rome’s plan of salvation so Catholics can discern the difference. The distinction between the two gospels can best be described as the difference between divine accomplishment and human achievement. The true gospel describes what God has *done* through Jesus Christ to save sinners, while the gospel of Rome describes what man must *do* for God. Paul defines the gospel according to Scripture *alone* (1 Cor 15:1-4). The glorious gospel of grace is what one perfect Man did 2000 years ago to reconcile sinful man to God. It has nothing to do with what any imperfect man has done since, or is doing now. This eliminates all the requirements Roman Catholics have added to the finished work of Jesus Christ. It also eliminates Catholic priests making daily sin offerings on their altars.

Catholics Are Totally Dependent Upon An Illegitimate Priesthood

One of the most controlling elements of the Roman Catho-

lic religion is its indoctrination concerning the priesthood. Each Catholic is taught that their salvation is utterly dependent upon the ministry of their priests. According to the unbiblical teachings of Rome, it is the Catholic priest who baptizes infants for their justification and spiritual birth, the priest who hears confession, and demands penance as the satisfaction for sin, the priest who dispenses Jesus in the Eucharist, the priest who imparts the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of confirmation, the priest who gives Last Rites and the priest who offers the sacrifice of the Mass for souls suffering in purgatory. What a fatal deception! There is no longer a need for priests offering sacrifices for sin because by one offering, Jesus Christ has perfected for all time those who are sanctified (Heb 10:14). At the very moment our Lord Jesus gave up His Spirit on Calvary’s cross, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom (Mat 27:51). The veil that separated sinful man from the Holy of Holies was ripped open, and now, anyone washed by the blood of Christ can come boldly into the presence of God! When Jesus, our High Priest, offered Himself once for all sin for all time, He made the sacrificial priesthood obsolete. Every believer in Jesus Christ has been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all (Heb 10:10).

The illegitimacy and obsolescence of the Roman Catholic priesthood is also expressly noted by the sovereign and exclusive work of the Triune God in saving sinners. It is God the Father who chooses, calls and draws the lost to His Son (John 6:44; James 2:5). The Holy Spirit convicts them of their sin and the coming judgment (John 16:8-11). Jesus Christ is proclaimed through His word as the only way of salvation (John 14:6). God gives life to those dead in sin and grants the sinner repentance and faith (Rom 4:17; Eph 2:8-9; 2 Tim 2:25). Jesus exchanges His righteousness for the sins of the believer (2 Cor 5:21). The Holy Spirit seals, indwells and empowers the justified believer (Eph 1:13-14, Rom 8). The Father adopts, secures and glorifies His children (John 1:12; Rom 8:30). Clearly, God alone is deserving of all glory! (Rom 11:36). He alone is worthy to be praised!

Peter expressed the bondage that enslaves religious leaders who exchange the truth of God for the fatal errors of men. He wrote, “Speaking out arrogant words of vanity, they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, promising them freedom while they, themselves, are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved (2 Peter 2:18-20).

How Can We Rescue These Precious Souls?

Paul provides the answer! “The Lord’s bondservant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition. Perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will” (2 Tim 2:24-26).

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WHY DIDN'T SPURGEON CONTINUE WORSHIPPING WHERE THE LORD SAVED HIM?

By C. H. Spurgeon

When I first received everlasting life, I had no idea what a treasure had come to me! I knew that I had obtained something very extraordinary, but of its superlative value I was not aware. I did but look to Christ in the little chapel and I received eternal life! I looked to Jesus and He looked on me—and we were one forever! That moment my joy surpassed all bounds, just as my sorrow had, before, driven me to an extreme of grief.

I was perfectly at rest in Christ, satisfied with Him, and my heart was glad—but I did not know that this grace was everlasting life till I began to read in the Scriptures and to know more fully the value of the jewel which God had given me. The next Sunday I went to the same chapel, as it was very natural that I should. But I never went again, for this reason, that during my first week, the new life that was in me had been compelled to fight for its existence, and a conflict with the old nature had been vigorously carried on.

This I knew to be a special token of the indwelling of grace in my soul—but in that same chapel I heard a sermon upon, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” And the preacher declared that Paul was not a Christian when he had that experience! Babe as I was, I knew better than to believe so absurd a statement! What but divine grace could produce such sighs and cries after deliverance from indwelling sin!? I felt that a person who could talk such nonsense knew little of the life of a true believer. I said to myself, “What? Am I not alive because I feel a conflict within me? I never felt this fight when I was an unbeliever! When I was not a Christian, I never groaned to be set free from sin! This conflict is one of the surest evidences of my new birth, and yet this man cannot see it! He may be a good exhorter to sinners, but he cannot feed believers.” I resolved to go into that pasture no more, for I could not feed there.

I find that the struggle becomes more and more intense. Each victory over sin reveals another army of evil tendencies and I am never able to sheathe my sword, nor cease from prayer and watchfulness. I cannot advance an inch without praying my way, nor keep the inch I gain without watching and standing fast! Grace alone can preserve and perfect me! The old nature will kill the new nature if it can, and to this moment the only reason why my new nature is not dead is this—because it cannot die! If it could have died, it would have been slain long ago.

But Jesus said, “I give unto My sheep eternal life.” “He that believes on Me has everlasting life.” Therefore, the believer cannot die! The only religion which will save you is one that you cannot leave because *it possesses you and will not leave you!* If you hold a doctrine which you can give up, give it up! But if the doctrines are burnt into you so that, as long as you live, you must hold them—and so that if you were burnt, every ash would hold that same truth in it because you are impregnated with it—then you have found the right thing!

You are not a saved man unless Christ has saved you forever. But that which has such a grip of you that its grasp is felt in the core of your being is the power of God! To have Christ living in you, and the truth of God ingrained in your very nature—O sirs, this is the thing that saves the soul—and nothing short of it! It is written in the text, “God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

What is this but a life that shall last through your three-score years and ten? A life that shall last you should you outlive a century? A life that will still flourish when you lie at the grave’s mouth? A life that will abide when you have quit the body and left it rotting in the tomb? A life that will continue when your body is raised, again, and you shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ? A life that will outshine those stars and yon sun and moon? A life that shall be coeval with the life of the Eternal Father?

As long as there is a God, as a believer you shall not only exist, but live! As long as there is a heaven, you shall enjoy it! As long as there is a Christ, you shall live in His love! And as long as there is an eternity, you shall continue to fill it with delight! God bless you and help you to believe in Jesus. Amen.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software,—Sermon #1850, Volume 31—*Immeasurable Love*—Read/download entire sermon at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.

ATTENTION INMATES!!!

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Plead with our Heavenly Father that for the sake of His Son’s blood, He might draw hundreds of millions of Roman Catholics to Him that they might be set free, indeed, from bondage to the apostate Church of Rome.

A Study of Ephesians

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER

We arrive today at a new section in our study of Ephesians 3. Beginning at the 14th verse, Paul prays for the Ephesians. This is certainly one of the most wonderful and instructive prayers in all the Bible. It begins, “For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph 3:14).

The opening words of this section, “For this reason,” make it clear that Paul is telling us why he is now praying this prayer. We should remind ourselves of some of the things that have preceded the verse so that we don’t miss the connection. It seems that Paul started to offer this very prayer in the beginning of the chapter, which he begins with the exact same words, “For this reason.” But having thought that the Ephesians might be disturbed about his being imprisoned, he was temporarily sidetracked. Now, however, having explained his situation and how it was working to the glory of God, he returns to the prayer which he was going to offer.

But we must also recall the way chapter 2 ended, for it was in relation to the close of chapter 2 that Paul first spoke the words, “For this reason.” “For what reason?” we ask. Why is it that Paul now offers this tremendous prayer? The end of chapter 2 tells us that the Ephesians were no longer outside the covenants of promise. They, along with all Gentiles who believe on the Lord Jesus, enjoy the status of being partakers of all the promises of God and especially of the redemption purchased by the Lord Jesus Christ through His atoning death on the cross. Thus, when Paul now says in verse 14, “For this reason I bow my knees to the Father,” he is saying that he prays for the Ephesians and for all Gentile believers because they are fellow citizens with the saints. They are God’s people. They constitute a part of the holy temple in which God lives by His Holy Spirit. They are members of the body of Christ.

Now, having seen the connection, we are ready to look at a few lessons which we can learn about prayer. And for these, I am once again indebted to a sermon by Pastor Martyn Lloyd-Jones. The first principle we see here is that you can’t stop a believer from praying. Paul told us at the beginning of the chapter that he was a prisoner. He had been put into prison because of the hatred of his fellow Jews against him for having preached the gospel. But Paul makes it clear that he kept right on praying. At the moment, he could no longer travel or go around preaching, but he couldn’t be stopped from praying. This is a very comforting truth of God for believers. There are at this very moment many believers who are experiencing great persecution. Some are in prisons and camps undergoing cruelty and torture. Yet, while their enemies can confine and mistreat their bodies, they cannot keep them from praying! Their spirits are free to cry out to their heavenly Father. In the past, haters of God’s people have even cut out men’s tongues so that they could not speak in God’s name any longer. Yet, even without a tongue, these brothers and sisters could still pray to God who looks upon the *heart* and can read our very thoughts! The same might be said for some older saints or those with serious illnesses whose bodies have grown weak and frail. They may wonder, at times, why God keeps them alive. Here is one reason—they can pray. And their prayers may be doing far more in God’s kingdom than the young who are all activity.

When in jail, Paul was not depressed. He did not feel useless and become lazy. He wrote letters and he prayed. When you read his letters, it is amazing how many references there are to prayer. Another principle we can learn here is how important prayer is. We do not get the impression, as we read Paul’s letters, that he prayed only when he could not preach and evangelize. Paul considered prayer of utmost importance no matter how busy he was and no matter what else he was doing. He knew that his preaching would be in vain if he did not pray. And so, while in jail, he took advantage of the situation to pray even more.

One of the sad realities of the present state of the church is how little her members pray. believers read books, go to Bible studies and listen to sermons, yet often neglect prayer. The truth is, unless we pray, all the knowledge of Scripture we gain will be utterly useless. Similarly, we frequently hear much talk on the need to evangelize. But often the missing ingredient is *prayer*. It is great to be a witness to our family members, friends, co-workers, neighbors and others around us. But that is not enough. Especially those of us who say that we believe in sovereign grace and that only God can save a soul—we should, of all people—be those who pray! If we really believe that only God can save a soul and that apart from a work of the Holy Spirit opening a person’s heart to the truth of God there is no possibility of salvation, then we should realize that prayer is the most important thing we can do.

A third principle we learn here from Paul is the manner of approach to God in prayer. He says, “I bow my knees to the Father.” The Scriptures indicate that kneeling is an appropriate posture for prayer, yet they also speak of many who prayed while standing or even while in their beds. Why, then, does Paul tell us this? He is showing us something more important than posture in prayer. He is showing us his *attitude*. When Paul went to prayer, he had a deep sense of the glory of God. He came to God with reverence and godly fear. It is important for us to put this together with what Paul said in verse 12, that believers are to come with boldness and confidence in our acceptance. We must see that boldness is not the same as flippancy. Some people give the impression that a mark of spirituality is to be on “buddy-buddy” terms with God. But that is never the case with those who realize who God is. How did the Lord Jesus Christ address God? He begins His prayer with the words, “Holy Father.” He comes with awe and worshipful reverence. Yes, we are to come boldly because Jesus has torn the veil and opened the way for us. Yet we must come with awe. We must come to worship and praise and adore Him.—PF

Reasons for Praising God (2)

An Exposition of Psalm 18:46-50

By Daniel E. Parks

Pastor, Sovereign Grace Baptist Church - 74 Cane Carlton - Frederiksted, VI, USA, 00840

Verse 47: “It is God who avenges me...”

1. Saints are not to avenge themselves.

i. God forbids it (Lev 19:18): “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.” “Do not say, ‘I will do to him just as he has done to me; I will render to the man according to his work’” (Prov 24:29).

ii. Christ Jesus as the Son of Man has set the example for believers (1 Peter 2:23): “who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously.”

2. Rather, God avenges the saints (Rom 12:19): “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord” (Deut 32:35).

i. Christ will exact vengeance against the wicked at the final day, “the day of vengeance of our God” (Isa 63:1-6), “in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess 1:8).

“...And subdues the peoples under me;” As God subdued many nations under David (as in 2 Sam ch. 8), so will He do under Christ (Psa 110:1f): “The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’ The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!”

Verse 48: “He delivers me from my enemies. ...”

1. God had delivered David from all his enemies (see the superscription to this Psalm).

2. God delivered Christ from all His enemies—in answer to their taunt at His crucifixion (Psa 22:7f / Matt 27:43): “All those who see Me ridicule Me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, ‘He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!’”

3. God through Christ delivers all His saints from their enemies—both earthly and spiritual (1 Cor 15:25f, 54-57): “For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death...then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written [in Isa 25:8]: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’ ‘O death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?’ (Hosea 13:14). The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

“... You also lift me up above those who rise against me; ...”

1. God had exalted David from the sheepfold to the throne of Israel (2 Sam 7:8): “Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of Hosts: “I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel.”’

2. God exalted Christ from a tomb of the earth to the Throne of Glory (Acts 2:31f): “His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up...being exalted to the right hand of God.”

3. God exalts believers from the depths of sin and death to thrones in glory on which “they shall...reign with Him a thousand years” (Rev 20:4-6), and from which “the saints will judge the world” (1 Cor 6:2).

“... You have delivered me from the violent man.”

1. God delivered David from the violent man Saul (see the superscription to this Psalm).

2. God delivered Christ from every violent man of all the raging nations (Psa 2:1-6).

3. God delivers believers from their violent adversary, Satan. He in their conversion delivers them from the “snare of the devil” (2 Tim 2:26). And He will at the final day deliver them from his final assault against “the camp of the saints and the beloved city” (Rev 20:7-10). — (To be continued.)

Ask the Holy Spirit to put the law of God into your heart.

**PRAY DAILY FOR GOD’S ELECT IN PRISONS.
PRAY FOR THEIR SPOUSES AND CHILDREN.**

Pray for grace to know Jehovah as the only living and true God, to know Him personally and intimately, so as to say with David, “You are my God.”

PRAY FOR OUR NATION

Would You Worship With Bill?

His name is Bill. He has wild hair, wears a T-shirt with holes in it, jeans and no shoes. This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of college. He is brilliant. Kind of esoteric and very, very bright. He became a Christian while attending college.

Across the street from the campus is a well-dressed, very conservative church. They want to develop a ministry to the students, but are not sure how to go about it. One day Bill decides to go there. He walks in with no shoes, jeans, his T-shirt, and wild hair. The service has already started and so Bill starts down the aisle looking for a seat. The church is completely packed and he can't find a seat. By now people are really looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything. Bill gets closer and closer and closer to the pulpit and, when he realizes there are no seats, he just squats down right on the floor.

By now the people are really uptight and the tension in the air is thick. About this time the minister realizes that from way at the back of the church a deacon is slowly making his way toward Bill. Now the deacon is in his eighties, has silver-gray hair and a three-piece suit. A godly man, very elegant, very dignified, very courtly. He walks with a cane and as he starts walking toward this boy everyone is saying to themselves that you can't blame him for what he's going to do. How can you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid on the floor? It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy. The church is utterly silent except for the clicking of the man's cane. All eyes are focused on him. You can't even hear anyone breathing.

The minister can't preach the sermon until the deacon does what he has to do. And now they see this elderly man drop his cane on the floor. With great difficulty he lowers himself and sits down next to Bill and worships with him so he won't be alone.

Everyone chokes up with emotion. When the minister gains control, he says, "What I'm about to preach, you will never remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget. Be careful how you live. You may be the only Bible some people will ever read."—(Used first time in this publication, June, 1999. Submitted by Miller Ferrie, Leith, North Dakota).

Did our Lord send "Bill" to *your church* in the form of an ex-con last week? Did you invite him over for fellowship and a meal?

HILL COUNTRY DEVOTIONAL

By Pastor Albert E. Shults [Deceased]

STUDY THE TRUTH OF GOD

The Apostle Paul said to Timothy in his second Epistle, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15).

"Rightly dividing" means to correctly handling the Word of God in both analysis and presentation—in contrast to the inane interpretations of false teachers. For example, in recent days the public, which also includes some churches, is talking about the book and movie, "The Da Vinci Code." Why?

This book and movie are works of fiction and do not belong in the pulpit of the Lord's churches or in the Sunday school classes. Again, it is a work of FICTION! Yet examples like this one show us how immature we are in our trust and faith in God's Holy Word. Psalm 91:4 says, "He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler."

The Apostle John said in 3 John 3, "For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth." Then John says in verse four, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

Beloved, when we seek to find the truth about God, then we find that truth in the Holy Scriptures. When we study about the Lord and learn how to live life, then we study His Bible. The Scriptures will show us the truth of God and that truth is absolute. So do not let this world dictate to you what is truth and do not bring such things as this popular work of "fiction" into your church. Things like this can never be the truth of God because the truth is God's Son, Jesus Christ.



JOHN 3:18 — THAT'S RIGHT,
JOHN 3:18 ... LEST WE FORGET...



Letters to Mike Gendron of Proclaiming the gospel:

ptg@pro-gospel.org ~ www.pro-gospel.org ~ P.O. Box 940871, Plano, TX 75094

Eddie A., Internet, writes—At the *Steeling the Mind Bible Conference* you accused the Roman Catholic Church of perpetuating Satan’s lie—“You surely shall not die.” You said our catechism teaches “venial” sins do not bring death to the soul. You misled your audience because this is what paragraph 1863 teaches—“Venial sin does not break the covenant with God. Venial sin does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace, friendship with God, charity, and consequently, eternal happiness.” This is a far cry from—“You shall surely not die.” Clearly you left a catholic faith that you really did not know or understand. When I converted to the Catholic faith I found something that was holy and wholly. I will pray for your reversion to the faith and the fullness of truth found in the only true church.

Brother Mike answers—Perhaps if you knew “death” in the Bible means “**separation**,” you would see the catechism confirms my statement. Spiritual death is the **separation** of man from God (Isa 59:1-2). Physical death is the **separation** of the soul from the body (Eccl 12:7). Being “dead to sin” is to be reckoned **separate** from sin (Rom 6:2, 11; Heb 7:26). By rejecting God’s clear teaching on the consequence of sin, the Catholic Church continues Satan’s lie. Scripture reveals sin causes death and **separation** from God. (Rom 6:23; Ezek 18:4). However there is good news—once God reconciles believers to Himself through Christ, He no longer counts their trespasses against them (2 Cor 5:18-19). May God give you the grace to believe His word.

C. M., Owasso, OK, writes—When you visited our church last year, it was a blessing, and I really enjoyed hearing you. However, six years ago my husband became a Catholic. Although he grew up in the Catholic Church, he never showed any interest. I really thought your conference would bring my husband around. Instead, he was offended. I apologized to my husband and we left Tulsa Bible Church. Now we go to a Mennonite church where the pastor does not reject RC teachings. I know most Catholics are not swayed by proof texts from Scripture or apologetics. While evangelicals dwell on the ugly truth of the RCC, their scarlet robes look better and better to the typical Catholic. The truth of the gospel is all that needs to be proclaimed.

Brother Mike’s reply—Thank you for your thoughtful letter. We strive to be obedient to our great God and Savior rather than to be pleasers of men. The apostles taught antithetically and we should do the same. They not only proclaimed the truth of God, but also called people to repent of any false teachings they were embracing (Eph 2:8-9). Have you considered how soundly Jesus rebuked the religious leaders of His day for shutting the kingdom of God to those who wanted to enter? (Mat 23:13-36). We must expose false teachings to show Catholics what they must forsake before they can be saved by grace. God justifies sinners only by His grace, not by merit; by His finished work, not by our works; by the baptism of the Spirit not by water baptism; by His righteousness, not by our righteousness; by the one offering of Jesus, not by daily offerings of Catholic priests; by His shed blood, not by purgatory or indulgences, and by His perfect obedience, not by our obedience. We praise God for the courage and obedience of the elders of Tulsa Bible Church to expose the lies of the Catholic Church. It is those lies that hold men captive to do the devil’s will (2 Tim 2:24-26). I pray your husband will learn to love God’s truth and hate all that opposes it. Please know that truth of God only angers those whom it does not fully convict.

J.&D. H. Plano, TX, write—We’ve had the chance to see you in person several times and it is incredibly refreshing to hear truth of God straight from the Scriptures rather than with the religious “spin” being used today to attract people into the pews. Our Lord was controversial 2000 years ago when He taught the way to heaven is narrow. The gospel is very narrow and most will miss it as they embrace another gospel that better meets their personal needs. Why would anyone place trust in a religion where the leader is called “infallible”? What a comfort it is to rest in the simplicity of divine grace—adding nothing that is man-made to the mix. That is true peace!

L. D., Hammonton, NJ, writes—I went to a funeral the other day and wanted you to know that whenever I go to the Catholic Church, I always have your tracts in my handbag. I prayed throughout the service for a way to get your tracts to the priest. As we left church I gave them to a friend who handed them to the priest. My Catholic sister got very upset with me. She said I used Satan to give the priest those tracts. Please pray that the priest’s eyes and heart are opened. When I give your tracts to friends at *our* church they are so thankful, saying they help them to witness to their loved ones. Thank you for your wonderful website and all your resources.

B.G., Internet, writes—Your site is great for laughs! How anti-intellectual and exegetically and theologically simple-minded! So how does it feel to have so many bright lights of Protestant Christianity cross the Tiber to Rome? I’m not normally triumphalistic but your site is sickening. Grow up. Really.

C.H., Liberty, KY, writes—Our Great God is using you in a very powerful way. Your newsletter has given me new ways to witness to my parents who are lost in Catholicism. I find myself tremendously blessed, encouraged, convicted, taught and burdened when I read your writings. I praise God for your bold, unashamed delivery of the truth of God. You are truly unashamed of the gospel! I appreciate what you do, and give all glory to God for the power of His ministry in you. I plan for everyone in my city to receive your *Greatest News* tract! Lord willing, many hearts will be changed as the Holy Spirit quickens them to believe the gospel, and repent of their sin. May their eyes be opened, the veil lifted, and the scales removed so they may see the knowledge of the glory of Christ in the face of Christ!

FAITH TO WORK MIRACLES (2)

By A.W. Pink (1886 - 1952)

Let it be pointed out that what we are advancing in this article is no novelty of our own devising, but rather a line of interpretation (alas, unknown to many in this superficial age) given out by many eminent servants of God in the past. For example, in his notes on Matthew 21:21, 22, Thomas Scott wrote, “When Jesus observed the surprise of the disciples, He again showed them the energy of faith, with a special reference to the power of *working miracles* in His name. . . they would not only be enabled to perform as wonderful works as that of withering the barren fig tree, but even the Mount of Olives, which they were then passing, might, at their word be removed and cast into the sea! That is, nothing that they undertook would be impossible for them.” So also Matthew Henry said on Mark 11:22, 23, “This is to be applied first to that faith of *miracles* which the apostles and first preachers of the gospel were endowed with, who did wonders in things natural.”

Let us next inquire as to *the extent* of this promise: “All things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.” Though this language is indefinite and unqualified, yet we are not warranted in drawing the conclusion that it is to be taken without any limitation. From the immediate context it is quite clear that this promise had sole respect unto the working of miracles. Christ’s object was to assure His apostles that if they prayed in faith for any supernatural gift or power in particular, that that gift or power would be granted to them. But we have no ground for believing that if those apostles prayed for *something different*, no matter how firm their expectation, that they would receive the same. They were not justified in extending the terms of the promise any further than was warranted by the obvious design of their Master on that special occasion.

Though the Twelve had been endowed with supernatural powers yet had they prayed for the bestowment on themselves of any temporal or spiritual blessing, there was nothing whatever in this particular promise which guaranteed an answer to any such request. Like we, the Apostles and the primitive Christians were subject to poverty, disease and all the common trials and afflictions of this present life. We have no reason to doubt that they—for they were men subject to like infirmities as we are—prayed for their removal or mitigation, yet we know from other Scriptures that their prayers respecting these things were not always granted. This at once shows us the promise of Matthew 21:22 was not a universal one, for in that case they might have sought any temporal favors with the same faith and assurance of being heard as when they prayed that miracles should be wrought by their hands.

But let us now take note of the *proviso* which our Lord laid down: “All things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, *believing*, you shall receive.” The same stipulation is found again in the parallel passage: “What things soever you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them” (Mark 11:24). This promise made by Christ with respect to the working of miracles was thus conditioned upon the exercise of a certain kind of faith. If those unto whom it was made really acted out the requisite faith, then their faith absolutely secured the fulfillment of the promise. On the other hand, if they failed to put forth the faith specified, then their request was not granted. Like most of the promises in Scripture, this also was a *conditional* one.

Matthew 17 furnishes us with an illustration of the apostles being unable to perform a desired miracle because of their failure to meet the proviso attached to the promise we are here considering. There we read of a certain man coming to Christ on behalf of his sorely-vexed son, begging the Savior to have mercy on him, and saying, “I brought him to Your disciples and they could not cure him” (v 16). After the Lord had healed the demon-possessed youth, His disciples asked why *they* had been unable to perform this miracle. His answer is instructive, for it definitely confirms what we have said above: “And Jesus said unto them, because of your *unbelief*: for verily I say unto you, If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you” (v 20).

We must next inquire wherein did this faith to work miracles differ from any other kind of faith? The answer is, It rested on an entirely different foundation. In the first place, it could only be exercised by those who had been specially endowed by supernatural power to work miracles, which pertained alone to Christ’s servants at the beginning of this Christian era. And in the second place, such faith had to rely implicitly upon the specific promises which Christ had made unto such, namely, that upon their counting on His assistance to enable them thereto, He would infallibly make good His word respecting the same. The same thing may be seen, as pointed out in an earlier paragraph in the promises recorded in Mark 16:17, 18. Such were quite distinct from that faith which secures eternal life, resting upon quite another sort of promise.

In proof of what has last been said we refer to Acts 3. There we read of the beggar who had been lame from his birth asking alms of the apostles as they were about to enter the Temple. To him Peter said, “Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I to you: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk” (v 6, and cf. “in My name” in Mark 16:17). Later, in explaining to the wondering bystanders what had happened, Peter, after charging them with delivering up the Lord Jesus to Pilate, declared that God glorified His Son adding, “and His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong” (Acts 3:16). Peter, then, had definitely acted in faith upon such promises as had been given to the Apostles in Matthew 21:21, 22, and Mark 16:17, 18, etc.. Saving faith consists of the heart’s appropriation of the gospel: it is laying hold of Christ Himself as He is offered therein to poor sinners: it is trusting in the mercy of God in the Redeemer. But the faith to perform miracles could only be effectually exercised by those to whom special promises for the working of such had been given. Christ had endowed the apostles with supernatural powers and had given assurance that He would assist them in the bringing of wondrous signs to pass

(See *Faith to Work Miracles* on page 10)

“I LOVE THEM WHO LOVE ME AND THOSE WHO SEEK ME EARLY SHALL FIND ME”

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

“And they departed quickly from the sepulcher with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell My brethren to go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me.”

Matthew 28:8-10.

THESE holy women, these consecrated Maries, shall be our instructors tonight. They were highly-favored to be the first witnesses for our risen Lord! Do you wonder why He chose them? Was it because their hearts were tender and they were very sad at His death, more sad than the men? And is He not known to come, first, to those who need Him most and to pour in oil and wine where the wound gapes widest? It may be so. Was it because they had been the more faithful of the two and, while some *men* had denied Him and all had forsaken Him, the women were last at Golgotha, as they were now, first, at the sepulcher?

Did their Lord reward them by dealing with them as they had dealt with Him? That is but His pattern. “If you will walk contrary unto Me, then will I also walk contrary unto you,” said the Lord to Israel. And He also said, “I love them that love Me; and those who seek Me early shall find Me.” These holy women did seek their Lord early in the morning of His resurrection and they found Him to a certainty before all others! Was this because Jesus had found the women more *spiritual* than the apostles? Certainly, I think that was the case. They had attained the very climax of love, washing His feet with their tears. They had reached the very center of discipleship—one of them had chosen the good part, and sat at His feet.

Sometimes, where there is less power of understanding, Jesus does give keener powers of perception, and though Mary Magdalene and the other Mary would never have become Pauls, yet they were of quick eye, like John, and were, therefore, the most fit to see the Savior in the dawning of the morning—and so they were permitted to have the first glimpse of Him.

At any rate, be it how it may, they were the first to see their risen Lord—and we will try to learn something from them, tonight. It should be an encouragement to those members of the Church of Christ who are neither pastors nor teachers that, if they live very near to God, they may yet *teach* pastors and teachers! Get clear views of your Lord, as did these holy women who had no office in the church, and yet taught the officers, for they were sent to bear to the apostles the tidings that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead! Not first to them who were the heads of the church, as it were, but first of all to lowly women did the Lord appear—and the apostles, themselves, had to go to school to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to learn that great truth of God, “The Lord is risen, indeed.” We will go to school with the apostles, tonight, and may the Lord grant that while we learn from these holy women, He who taught them may come and teach us! May He who met them meet with us in this house of prayer tonight!

First, I ask you to look at these women *in the way of obedience active*. They ran to bring the disciples word. Secondly, look at them *in the way of obedience rewarded*, for, as they went to tell His disciples, Jesus met them. And then, thirdly, we will go back to the point where we started and see these women *in the way of obedience refreshed* for, after they had seen the Lord, they persevered in their heavenly errand and still went to tell His disciples that He would go before them into Galilee—and that there they should see Him!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #2323, Volume 39—*Obedience Rewarded*—Read/download entire sermon at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.

FAITH TO WORK MIRACLES

(Continued from page 9)

for the glory of His name and the extension of His kingdom. And *that* promise of His was to be the ground of their faith. Thus, their faith had as definite and sure ground to rest upon as ours today in connection with eternal life. Nevertheless the former was vastly inferior to the latter. Judas had the one, but not the other. Hence Paul declares that it was possible in those days to have faith so as to “remove mountains” and yet be destitute of a holy love (1 Cor 13:2).

After all that has been pointed out above it should be obvious that Christians at this day are quite unwarranted in applying such a promise to themselves in any case they feel inclined and that ministers of the gospel are seriously misleading their hearers when they say to them, “All things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive them.” We are fully aware that some godly but misguided preachers *have* so misapplied this text and that some devout believers have taken this promise for themselves. Yet this is no proof that either of them were right in so doing.

We have attended many a “Faith-healing service” where such a promise was “claimed” and have witnessed the pathetic disappointment of the sick hobbling away on their crutches at the close. How many sober-minded people were led into open infidelity by such a fiasco only the Day will reveal. Perhaps some of our readers are beginning to better grasp our meaning when we say, from time to time, Many who fail to understand the *sense* of a verse are frequently misled by the *sound* of it.

A MESSAGE TO MINISTERS

By Charles H. Spurgeon

*“As the small rain upon the tender herb.”
Deuteronomy 32:2.*

All the servants of Jesus Christ ought to be tender, for, if Moses was so, much more should we be! I know there are many here tonight who are preachers of the gospel. Dear brothers, let us endeavor, to be always considerate towards those whom we address! Let us think of them as tender herbs, for many are so in their weakness, sorrowfulness, instability and ignorance! I am persuaded that we fix too high a standard when we preach and assume that our people know a great deal more than they do. I am sure we frequently need to go over, again, the elements, the fundamentals, the simplest doctrines of the gospel to our congregations, for, though there are some that are fathers for whom we are grateful, yet it is true, today, as it was in Paul’s day, we have not many fathers—and we ought not to preach with an eye to the few fathers—but with an eye to the *many* children.

We shall do well if the babes in grace are fed by us, and to do this our preaching must be, “as the small rain upon the tender herb.” We must try to the utmost of our ability to be very plain and simple, for many will not understand us even then. I was greatly pleased with a complaint brought against me the other day, to which I plead guilty, and I expect I shall plead guilty to it for many a day to come. Someone said, “Mr. Spurgeon gives us meat, but there’s no gristle—he cuts out all the bone.” They wanted a bit or two of hard bone, just to try their teeth on. Alas, many have broken more than a tooth over the novel teaching of “modern thought!” I have never been particularly earnest, when feeding my flock, to seek out the poisonous pastures just to see how much of injurious fodder they could bear without sickening. No! I have had regard to those who are not yet able to discern the differences in spiritual things, and therefore I have led them to those ancient pastures where the saints were content to feed in days gone by.

I think we cannot be too simple, nor too plain, nor set out the precious things of God in too clear a light. The little ones of God have very great needs, and must have our special care. These tender herbs are very apt to be dried up and, yet, being tender, they are not able to drink in a great shower all at once. We do well to give the tender herbs the water of life little by little. It must be, “Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little,” for God’s children are like our children and need little and often, rather than much and seldom! There is a loaf of bread and there is the child—you need to get that loaf of bread *into* the child. Well, you must do it by degrees, or else you will never do it at all! You will choke the child if you attempt to insert too much at a time into his limited storeroom. Take the bread and break it down—and in due time he will appropriate that quarter loaf and a great many loaves besides, for little children have great appetites! God’s children cannot, all of them, receive a mass of doctrine all at once—but they have a fine appetite and if you give them time, they will gradually appropriate, masticate and inwardly digest all the truths of God so that they will be nourished and made to grow! Let every minister of Christ remember this and patiently instruct his hearers as they are able to bear it.

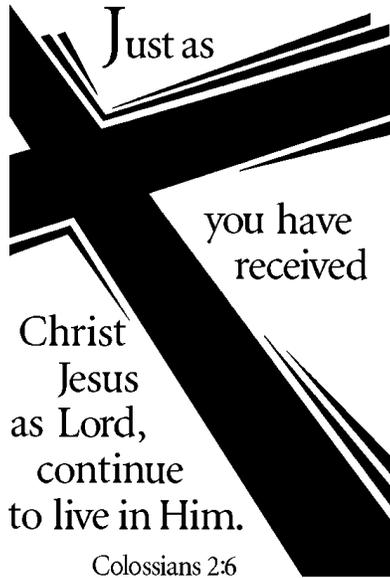
... AND A MESSAGE TO YOU AND ME!

And so, dear friends, I will say one thing more upon this point, which is, *let every Christian remember this*, for every Christian is to try and bring souls to Christ. We are *all* to be teachers of the gospel according to our ability—and the way to do it is to be “as the small rain upon the tender herb.” Perhaps you say, “Well, I should be small rain, without any great effort, for I have not much in me.” Just so, but yet that small rain has a way of its own by which it makes up for being so small. “How is that,” you ask? Why, by continuing to fall day after day! Any gardener will tell you that with many hours of small rain there is more done than in a short period with a drenching shower. Constant dropping penetrates, saturates and abides. Little deeds of kindness win love even more surely than one bounteous act. If you cannot say much of gospel truth at one time, keep on saying a little—and saying it often! If you cannot come out with a wagonload of grain for an army, feed the barn fowls with a handful at a time! If you cannot give the people fullness of doctrine like the profound teachers of former ages, you can at least tell what the Lord has taught *you* and then ask Him to teach you more!

As you learn, teach! As you get, give! As you receive, distribute! Be as the small rain upon the tender herb. Do you not think that in trying to bring people to Christ, we sometimes try to do too much at once? Rome was not built in a day, nor will a parish be saved in a week! Men do not always receive all the gospel the first time they hear it. To break hearts for Jesus is something like splitting wood—we need to work with wedges that are very small at one end—but increase in size as they are driven in. A few sentences spoken well and fitly may leave an impression where the attempt to, all at once, force religion upon a person may provoke resistance and so do harm. Be content to drop a word or two today and another word or two tomorrow. Soon you may safely say twice as much, and in a week’s time you may hold a long and distinctly religious conversation! It may soon happen that where the door was rudely shut in your face, you will become a welcome visitor; but had you forced your way in at first, you would have effectually destroyed all future opportunity.

There is a great deal in speaking at the right moment. We may show our wisdom in *not* doing, and in *not* saying, as much as in doing and saying. Time is a great ingredient in success. To speak out of season will show our zeal, but not always our sense. We are to be instant out of season as well as in season, but this does not involve incessant talking. I commend to everyone who would be a winner of souls by personal effort, the symbol of our text, “as the small rain upon the tender herb.” —Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, —Sermon #1999, Volume 33—*Small Rain for Tender Herbs—Read/download entire sermon at www.spurgeongems.org*

For HIS Glory
Prison Ministry
Emmett and Ann O'Donnell
P.O. Box 291301
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Due to Emmett's continued illness, this issue is a modification of the June, 2006 FHG . Please continue to pray for his recovery and tell someone today how much you and Emmett love Jesus Christ.

In This Issue...

...and, Lord willing, *every* issue, our *only* purpose is to honor Jesus Christ.

THE PROMISE OF ETERNAL LIFE

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Ah, dear friends, there are some of you here who have never come out as Christians! You are what I call the rats behind the wainscot, or the black beetles that come out at night, when there is nobody about to get a bit of food, and then go back again. You never say what you are—you never come out on Christ's side! I am not going to condemn you. I wish that you would condemn yourselves, however, for I think that you ought to judge that you are acting a very mean part. The promise of eternal life is not made to a faith which is never declared. Allow me to say that over again. The promise of salvation is not made to a faith which is never declared. "He that believes *and is baptized shall be saved.*" "With the heart man believes unto righteousness; and *with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*" Our Lord's own words are, "Whoever therefore shall *confess* Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven." And He also said, in connection with this confession, "but whoever shall deny Me" (which must mean, "whoever *does not confess* Me") "before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven." If you have not faith enough in Christ to say that you believe in Him, I do not think that you have faith enough in Christ to take you to heaven, for it is written concerning the place of doom, "the fearful," (that is, *the cowardly*), and unbelieving, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone."

The fact was this man [the Philippian jailer] was in downright earnest, and therefore he would not delay his baptism. He had enlisted in the army of Christ and he would wear Christ's regimentals straightway. I wish that some who profess conversion, or who profess to desire to be converted, were as much in earnest as this jailor was. "Well," says one, "do not be too severe upon us. I hope that I am a Christian, although I have never confessed Christ yet." Why do you not confess Christ if you belong to Him? I spoke like this to a man who had been, according to his own confession, 20 years a Christian. He had never joined the church. He had never made any open profession of religion. And when I spoke to him, what do you think he said to me? He said, "He that believes shall not make haste." "Well," I replied, "if you were to be baptized and to join the church tomorrow morning, I do not think that there would be much haste in it as you have been a believer 20 years! But a much more suitable text for you would be this word of the psalmist, 'I made haste, and delayed not to keep Your commandments.'"—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #2275, Volume 38—*Belief, Baptism, Blessing*—Read/download entire sermon at <http://www.spurgeongems.org> .