

A CALL FOR REVIVAL NO. 1066

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, AUGUST 18, 1872
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

*“Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.
Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish,
whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.
The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old,
which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.”
Song of Solomon 7:11-13*

I REMEMBER to have heard it said that when a church is in a right condition, all that it wants on the Sabbath day is that the sermon should be like the orders given by a commanding officer to his troops: it need not be rhetorical or eloquent, it only need be clear and plain—a word of direction for the Lord's servants. If the soldiers are prepared for action, they will not look to be regaled with oratory, but having heard the words of command, they will with all their hearts go about to obey them.

Assuredly the church needs instructing, consoling, and edifying, as well as directing. But this morning I feel that I have a word from the Captain of our salvation, addressed first to this particular regiment, and next to those other portions of the Grand Army which are represented here this morning. I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say.

Traveling along our island just now you see everywhere the sickle, or the reaping machine, in full work, harvest whitens the plains. Everywhere the loaded wains are bearing home the precious fruits of the earth. My spirit is stirred within me, and my soul is on flame, for I see everywhere a harvest except in the church of Christ. Reapers are busy everywhere except in the fields of our divine Boaz. All fields are ripe, but those of Bethlehem. All barns are filling but those of the Great Husbandman. Christ Jesus has scarce a sheaf ingathered of late, we hear of very few results from the sacred sowing of the Word.

Here and there the church, like Ruth, gathers an ear, a very precious ear it is true, for who shall estimate the value of a single soul. But we have no wave-sheafs as in the days of Pentecost, or if we have them, they are few and far between. And as for the harvest home which we have so long expected, our eyes fail in looking for it in vain.

As a church, constituting a part of the Master's field, we have had for years one continued harvest, but still never such an one as has satisfied our spirits, for our idea of our King is such that the largest increase to His church would not content us, we should still feel that our Lord Jesus deserved far more. As *He* has not yet seen of the travail of His soul so as to be satisfied, so neither are we His servants content on His behalf, but we long, and cry, and pray for a larger harvest as His reward for the dread sowings in Gethsemane and Golgotha, in bloody sweat and streams of vital blood.

The time when our churches can operate extensively with the greatest convenience will soon be upon us. We do not usually look for any great things during the summer, when congregations are scattered at the seaside, and workpeople are busy many hours in the day. The summer of nature is the winter of the church, and the earth's winter is our harvest. These warm days will soon be gone, and the long evenings will come, and with them abounding opportunities of doing good.

Therefore, it seemed to me to be a seasonable thing to give the rallying cry this morning, and bid our friends remember that the harvest of the church comes on apace. I would urge you all to sharpen your sickles, and with good hope and prayerful confidence prepare for the appointed weeks of our harvest.

May God, by His Holy Spirit, inspire you with zeal for the work which awaits you, and give you to walk in fellowship with Jesus in all that you do.

I. We shall, this morning, first of all, call your attention to the fact which is implied in the words of our text, that LOVE IS THE GREAT MOTIVE FOR ACTION IN THE CAUSE OF CHRIST.

All through these verses the spouse acts with reference to her beloved. It is for Him that she goes forth into the field, for the sake of His company, and the quiet enjoyment of His love, she would lodge in the villages. And all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which are stored within her gates, she declares to be laid up for her beloved. Love, then, is the fittest and most powerful motive to holy service. "The love of Christ constraineth us."

This love has about it certain marked peculiarities. It is first *a love which realizes the person of the Beloved*. In the text the spouse speaks of "my beloved" as of a real personage, whom she sees, upon whom she leans, and with whom she talks. Christ Jesus is to His church no fiction, no myth, and no imaginary hero. Throughout the song both the personages are most real to each other, so real that they both enter into graphic descriptions of each other's beauties, and present us with portraits drawn by the pencil of admiring love.

Now a church will always be strong when the Lord Jesus is real to her, by this, indeed, may her power be estimated. Jesus must be to us no historical personage who was once on earth, but is now dead and powerless. He must be an actual person living still in our midst.

Imagine my brethren, with what enthusiasm the present audience would be stirred if I should retire, and in my place there should come forward the very Christ who was nailed to the cross of Calvary. You would know Him by His hands and His feet, the sacred marks of His passion. Oh, how the sight of Him would stir your souls! You would be bowing your heads in adoration, but grudging the closing of your eyes even for a second in prayer, for you would desire, without a pause, to drink in the blessed vision.

And if the crucified One should stand here and say, "My brethren, My blood-bought ones, for whom I laid down My life, there is yet much to be done to extend My kingdom, there are precious souls, brothers and sisters of yours who know not My name who must be brought in. There are ignorant ones to be taught and sinful ones to be restored," and suppose He should then point with His hand to one of you and say, "I send you *there*," and to another, "I send you *there*." Why you would feel at once anointed to the appointed work, and go forth to do it with much earnestness, carefulness and joy. You would be right pleased to receive a commission from those dear honey-dropping lips.

My brethren, have you forgotten that you walk by faith, and will you permit it to be thought that sight would have more power over you than faith? I trust you will not have it so. Then, remember, by faith you may realize and ought to realize this morning that Jesus walketh among the golden candlesticks and is in His church now, saying to every one of His people, "Go and serve Me! Seek My blood-bought ones! Help My feeble ones! Feed My sheep and My lambs!"

I pray you, let your faith this morning sweeten your duties by the knowledge that they arise out of your Beloved's personal commands. Execute His Holy commands as if you had received them, as in very deed you have, directly from Himself. Let your heart go with mine, while I say—Jesus, my Beloved, though I see Thee not, and must be content to behold Thee by faith alone, yet my faith shall be more influential than my sight. I know that Thou art here, and what Thou biddest me do my soul shall perform with all her might, because Thou sayest it.

Note next, that *the love here spoken of was well-assured of the affection of its Beloved*. Note the verse which precedes our text, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is towards me." A Christian is never strong for service when he does not know whether Christ loves him or not. If that is a question, you have put out the fire by which alone the force can be generated which must work the machinery of your spirit.

You must know beyond question that Jesus loved you and gave Himself for you. You must feel that He is loving you now, that His heart is looking out through those dear eyes which once wept over Jerusalem, and that the meaning of His loving glance is, "Soul, I love you, I loved you so that I gave

Myself for you, and I have not repented of the gift. I love you still as much as I loved you upon Calvary's bloody tree."

It is strength to feel that still "His desire is toward me." Oh, when you feel, "Jesus loves me, Jesus desires me to show my love to Him, Jesus at this moment thinks of me and takes a delight in me," this will make you strong as a giant in the cause of your beloved. Between the very jaws of death a man would venture who felt that the love of Christ was set upon him. Love to Jesus is the fountain of courage, the mother of self-denial, and the nurse of constancy! Strive, then, for a well-assured sense of the Savior's love. Be not content till you possess it, for it will be health to your spirit and marrow to your bones: it will be a girdle of strength to your loins and a chain of honor about your neck.

Observe that *the love of the spouse lived in fellowship with the Well-beloved*. "Come, my beloved, let us go, let us lodge, let us get up, and let us see." "There will I give thee my loves." True love to Jesus grows stronger and stronger in proportion as it abides in Him. We are cold in our love because we live at a distance from Him. The angel who dwells in the sun has never to complain of an ice-bound heart, and he who lives in Christ and abides in Him will blaze and glow with warmth of love comparable to that of Christ Himself.

I do not think that the numbers of a church will have so much to do with the work it accomplishes, that depends more upon the degree of love than upon the length of the church roll. A small church inflamed with ardent affection for the divine Lord will do more for Him than a great host eaten up by worldliness. Love burns its way by its own vehement flames. Coals of juniper are soon felt.

The Enochs are the men—they walk with God, and hence they have power over their times. The Johns are the men, they lean on Jesus' bosom, and when they come forth to tell of what they have seen and heard, they speak with authority as sent by the Most High. The Lord give to us, as members of this church to abide in habitual fellowship with Jesus, not to have occasional spasms of delight in God, but one unbroken rest in Him.

We would not now and then look through the windows of agates and behold the King in His beauty, but we would continue "looking unto Jesus." We would have His praise continually in our mouths, and His love burning like the quenchless altar fire of the temple, forever within our hearts. This is the one thing needful to promote and sustain a revival in a church.

If we have abounding love to Jesus we can prosper under disadvantages, but if we have it not we have lost the great secret of success. Love to Jesus teaches our hands to war and our fingers to fight. It sets us side by side with the conquering Immanuel, and makes us share His victories. It yokes us with the strong Son of God, and so makes our infirmities to be but opportunities for the display of His power.

This love leads the church to hold all things in joint possession with Christ. Observe that word, "at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits." Love to Jesus constrains us to make over all that we hold to Him, while faith appropriates all that Jesus has to itself. Love will not stand to have divided properties. Such was the love of Jesus that He gave all that He had to us. He could not bear to have anything, not even His throne itself, that should be altogether to Himself. He stripped Himself to His last rag to clothe us, and then gave us His breath to be our life, His blood to be our health, and now today, if we love Him as we should, we are saying—

*"If I might make some reserve,
And duty did not call;
I love my God with zeal so great,
That I would give Him all."*

I like to think, in church matters especially, that we are all Christ's, that if we have any ability, it is Christ's ability—to be laid at His feet. If we have any substance, it is Christ's money—to be used in spreading His church. Our Sunday school is Christ's nursery, and the little ones are Christ's lambs. Our work out of doors in preaching at the corners of the streets is Christ's mission, it is His trumpet, that is

blown when the Gospel is preached. And every form of agency is not ours—it is Christ's, or if ours, it is only so because it is His.

Oh, to have more and more all things common with our Lord, and no longer to speak of mine or thine. Beloved, we are joint heirs with Him. All that we have is His, and all that He has is ours. When the church believes and acts upon this, the hour of her success is close at hand.

Consider once more, the love which is the great motive to Christian action is a *love which looks to Jesus for united operation*. It is, "Come, my beloved, let *us* go forth into the field, let *us* get up early to the vineyard."

Oh, it is glorious when Christ comes with the preacher, not the servant alone, but the Master looking through His servant's eyes, and speaking with His servant's tongue, and pleading with His servant's heart. Oh, it is good teaching in your Sabbath school when Jesus sits there among the boys and girls and speaks to their hearts. It is good going into lodging-houses or calling at the people's doors to tell them of the Savior when Jesus knocks as well as you, and the Crucified goes with you among the fallen, the infidel and the profane.

All is well when the Redeemer leads the way. Be not afraid, beloved, for you go in good company. Who among us will be afraid to do anything or go anywhere if Jesus says, "I will go with you"? Such was the prayer the spouse put up, and doubtless she was led to pray for that which God will grant.

Let us pray with her as she prayed. Come, Savior, come up with us to whatsoever we attempt for Thee! If there be any brethren here who are working away for You in dark places in London, dear Savior carry the lantern with them, be Thou their Light! If they are digging for You, and quarrying amidst granite rocks which refuse to yield to their strokes, come Thou Almighty One and wield Thy hammer, and straightway the stone shall be broken.

Come with us, Lord. This is the fellowship we desire of Thee, the fellowship of labor and of soul-winning. We would not only sit at Thy feet to learn, but we would take up our cross and follow Thee. We would go with Thee whithersoever Thou goest. We would fight, or labor, or suffer, or live, or die, at Thy bidding. Be this the fellowship Thou shalt bestow upon us!

II. Secondly, LOVE LEADS US TO GO AFIELD IN THE SERVICE OF JESUS.

"Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field." A *loving church spontaneously puts herself upon widened service*. She has a large heart towards her Lord, and longs to see Him reign over all mankind. She does not wait to hear again and again the Macedonian's cry, "Come over and help us," but she is prompt in mission enterprise. She does not tarry till she is forced by persecution to go abroad everywhere preaching the Word, but she sends forth her champions far and wide.

As sure as ever she loves her Lord she asks herself the question, "What more can I do for Him?" When she looks over the plot of ground which she has been tilling, she says, "It is not large enough, the harvest I can get out of this will not suffice me for my dear Lord," and she says to Him, "Let me go to the regions beyond to break up the fallow ground, and cause the wilderness to blossom."

Now, beloved members of this church, do you not feel some such desire this morning? It is upon my heart that we should be undertaking larger things for Christ. Keep up the old agencies by all manner of means, quicken them, strengthen them. But does not love suggest that as increasing years add increasing indebtedness to Christ, as we are always receiving fresh mercies, so we should make new and larger returns to our best Friend?

If by us, as a church, nothing new may be ventured, yet cannot each individual have his own plan, and branch out afresh? Will not each man say in their heart, "What can I do for Jesus today, over and above what I should have done if things had gone on in the ordinary course?" Inquire of Him you love, and if your hearts are with Him, it will not be long before you will discover what He would have you do.

The spouse, when she said, "Let us go forth into the field," *knew that the proposal would please her Lord*, for the nature of Christ is a large and loving one, and therefore He would bless the far-off ones. His is no narrow heart, His thoughts of love are far reaching, and when the church says, "Let *us* go forth into the field," truly her Lord is not backward to accept the invitation.

The spouse does not guess at this, nor does she merely infer it from her Bridegroom's nature, but she has it in express command from His own lips, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." There stand the orders, and when our largest enterprises shall have been fulfilled we shall not have exceeded them. There is no exclusion put upon any tribe or clan, no classes are laid under ban, no individuals are exempted.

Therefore, church of Christ, by the love you bear to your crucified Master, by His wounds and death for you, and by His living love to you, seek out the lost and gather together the outcasts. You fishers of men, launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught. You sowers of holy seed, go abroad, and sow the untrodden wastes. You consecrated builders, break away from old foundations, and lay fresh groundwork for a larger temple for your God and King. Surely the Spirit of love in a church will suggest this.

Note that *the spouse is evidently prepared for any discomfort that may come as the result of her labor*. She must leave the fair palaces of her royal husband and lodge in rustic cottages. Poor lodging there for Solomon's fair spouse, but what does she care? Any roof which covers her from the evening dew, and shields her from the drops of the night, shall quite suffice her. Yea, if *he* be there, the tents of Kedar shall be fair as the curtains of Solomon, for his sake.

Brethren and sisters, if you serve the Lord Christ in breaking up fresh ground, you may have to meet difficulties and make sacrifices, but they will be as nothing to you, you will welcome them for His dear sake. Am I stirring no hearts now? Has my finger touched no responsive string? I think I feel in my own soul that some of you are responding. Some brother, some sister is here—I know not to whom the prophetic word is coming—who is saying, "Lord, I am Thy spouse, I will go forth with Thee into the field, and I will lodge with Thee in the villages, if there I may but glorify Thy name."

Observe too, *the spouse is quite ready to continue in this uncomfortable service*. She says, "I will lodge in the villages," there will she abide awhile, not paying a flying visit, but stopping until the good work is done, for which her Lord and she went forth. Oh, get ye out, ye Christians, into the distant fields of labor. Many of you—how often I have said it!—sit here Sunday after Sunday, and hear many sermons, when I believe you would be better engaged if you were preaching yourselves, and winning souls for the Redeemer.

I have often been glad to miss some of my dearest brethren from our assemblies. Your presence gives me great pleasure, but when I know you have been away, seeking after Christ's blood-bought souls, I have had pleasure in your absence. Go, and the Lord go with you. Go, more of you. Yes, I say, go more of you. Your empty seats will be occupied by sinners whom God will save, while you, dear comrades, if you be fighting for my Master somewhere else, will do my Master much more service than you could have done by listening to me.

We must not allow a single talent to lie idle, we must not waste an hour of these blessed Sabbaths, we must get us away among the ignorant ones and carry them the light. We must hunt for precious souls. For our Master's sake, and in His strength and company we must compass sea and land for His redeemed ones. Only, if any of you go, *do not try to go alone*. Stop until you breathe the prayer, "My beloved, let *us* go." You go in vain when you go not with the Master, but when you have secured His company, then go and welcome, for you "shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing your sheaves with you."

Observe how the spouse says, "There will I give Thee my loves." As much as to say, if Jesus will thus go with us into active service, then will we reveal to Him the love of our hearts. I suppose there may have been times in the church when a hermit's life would suitably reveal the heart's love to Jesus, but I am certain it is not so now. If there are any here who love contemplation, and would fain spend their whole lives in quiet retirement, I am persuaded that such a course would be injurious to their generation, and to the cause of the truth.

Of course, there may be exceptions, and if you have no gifts but such as could be serviceable to Christ in solitude, use them in solitude. But from the most of us the times demand activity. So dark is the

world we cannot afford to lose a glow-worm's spark. Men are perishing, can we let them perish? Would we suffer a soul to be lost even though it was given to us in exchange to enjoy the highest fellowship with Christ? Behold this day the sheep have gone astray, and the wolves are howling after them, not even to enjoy the Great Shepherd's company can we, the under-shepherds, dare to leave you wanderers to perish.

The church today has her vocation, which is not so much to eat the fat and drink the sweet, as to light her candle and sweep her house, and seek diligently till she finds her lost piece of money. Think not that active service prevents fellowship, nay, it is but another form of sitting at His feet, another shape of fellowship quite as true, and because more called for at this era, even more acceptable. I know I have had as great fellowship with Christ in His service as ever I have had in quiet contemplation.

When I have met with a poor soul who has rejected the Lord, I have felt my heart breaking over him like the heart of Christ over obstinate Jerusalem. When I have seen the tears flowing from a penitent's eyes who could not as yet find the Savior, I have felt sympathy with Jesus when He has looked upon the like, and had compassion upon them. And when I have seen the glow of joy when the Sun of Christ's countenance has shone at last upon the troubled heart, I have entered into the joy of the Lord when He rejoices over one sinner that repenteth.

Laziness never yet had communion with Christ. Those who walk with Christ must walk swiftly. Jesus is no idler or loiterer, He is about His Father's business, and you must march with quick step if you would keep pace with Him. As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, are sluggards to active persons. Those who have much to do have no fellowship with gossips who drop in to while away the hours with chat.

Jesus has no fellowship with you who care not for souls that are perishing. He is incessantly active, and so must you be if you would know His love. There is a fierce furnace heat beating upon everything today: men are toiling hard to hold their own, and Jesus must not be served by slothful hearts. I am sure that I err not, from His mind, when I say to you, beloved, if you would know the Beloved fully, you must get up early, and go afield with Him to work with Him. Your joy shall be in spending and being spent for Him.

III. Thirdly, LOVE LABORS ALSO AT HOME. Nearer the palace there were vineyards, and the spouse said, "Let us get up early to the vineyards." Note, then, that the church does her work at home as well as abroad. When she loves her Lord, she works with zeal, *she gets up early*. All men in Holy Scripture who loved God much rose early to worship Him. We never read of one saint engaged upon sacred service who rose late. Abraham rose early, David rose early, Job rose early, and so did they all. It is put here as the very type and symbol of an earnest, vigorous service of Christ.

Dear brethren, there is such a thing you know as keeping the Sunday school going, and keeping the Tract Society going, and keeping the Evangelists' Society going, and yet nobody is up early, but after a fashion, everybody is nodding. I know these warm Sunday mornings it is not a very difficult thing for some of you, if you try hard, to go to sleep during a sermon. Well, that is a visible slumber, and is soon got over, but there is an invisible sleep which will come on Sunday afternoon when you are teaching, which is neither so soon discovered nor so easily cured.

You are talking, talking, addressing your class, or speaking to your men and women, or whatever else may be your calling, and all the while your soul is nodding. Anybody can wake you up with a push in your side if only your body is sleeping, but when the soul is slumbering it is not so easy. I fear greatly that a large proportion of Christian workers are usually asleep.

What a difference there is between what a man teaches when he is asleep and what he teaches when he is awake. You can see it in a minute. I could not describe the difference, but it is apparent in tone and manner, and in every other way. The man may say and do the selfsame thing, but still it is a different thing. The children soon perceive it if it is in your class, your hearers soon perceive it if it is in your pulpit.

Oh that God would wake up this church. I do not believe that success so much depends upon what the church does as upon how she does it. You may take your hammer and go tinkering about and not fasten a tin-tack, but if your arm has muscle in it, you will soon be driving the nails home to the very head, and clinching them. May the Lord's love so come upon you all my brethren, that what you do you may do with all your might, plunging your whole soul into His service, and never sparing force in anything.

Notice that God's people, when they are awake, first *look well to the church*. "Let us see if the vine flourishes." The church is Christ's vine. Let us take stock of it. Beloved, we ought to be each one of us, in a measure, pastors of the church. In so large a church as this, the pastoral office cannot be vested in one, or even in twenty. Each must look after his brother, and thus you must be pastors of one another. Watch over one another, pray for one another. How wonderful is the power of prayer. We do not know what blessings come from our prayers. Ten thousand darts might long ago have pierced the Lord's elect were it not that the prayers of the saints are a shield over their heads, defending the sacramental host from harm.

Then the church *looks after the little ones*. "Let us see if the vine flourishes, whether the tender grape appear." No earnest church forgets the children of her Sabbath school, and every other agency for the young will be sure to be well minded. An active church seeks to bring Jesus among the children, to see if the tender grapes appear. She pays her visits and performs her services, but ever in His dear company. Helpers in the Sunday school, and workers for Christ, I salute you. The Lord be with you. The Lord give you to see many tender grapes appearing, and may this church have joy of you as hundreds shall be converted to God by your instrumentality.

Then the church also *takes notice of all inquiries*. "Let us see whether the pomegranates bud forth." If a church be alive, there will always be many to observe where the first tear of repentance is glistening. In this congregation, every Sabbath day, thank God, some persons are pricked in the heart. Watch for them, brethren.

Those of you who occupy your seats and do not go afield, can do the cause great service by watching at home. There is no need to leave those seats in order to be useful. Around you there are unconverted persons. Each Sabbath morning and evening there come in here strangers, and it may be the Lord will deal with them, only be you on the alert. Speak with them, and try if you can, to use the shorthanded claymore, that if my longer bladed sword may not have reached them, you who are near at hand may send a deadly wound into the very heart of their sins.

O my brethren, words fail me to set before you the ways in which you may show your love to Jesus in the church itself, but I am certain that there is no need for me to speak. Love herself, will teach you. Mothers somehow bring up their children, though there are no colleges for mothers. Love with its instincts makes them wise, and so will Christians with their love to Jesus become wise to serve.

I do believe the less rule and human direction there is in the church, the better. I do not want to say, "Brother, do this, and do that." If you love Christ, you will know what to do better than anybody else can tell you. You will find your own places, the Lord will lead you to them. I might put a square man into a round hole if I had the placing of you, but Christ's love always puts the man into the right position, it tells him what suits his qualifications, it puts him to his work, and what is more, it keeps him to it.

I shall measure your love to Jesus, and measure my own, not by the way in which we can talk, or the way in which we can criticize other workers, but by the way in which we shall henceforth labor for the Lord.

IV. The last point is this, that LOVE IN A CHURCH BRINGS FORTH ALL ITS STORES FOR THE BELOVED.

The church of God has in herself, through the rich love of her Husband, *all manner of pleasant fruits*. This church is a large one, but the same truth will hold good of the smallest church. The Lord never leaves His church without a suitable measure of gifts and graces. If our spiritual nostril and eye

could act this morning, we should discern all the fruits of the Paradise of God in this church, and we should smell the sweet savor of all pleasant things, for some brethren here have the apples of faith, others bear the delicious pomegranates of love, and others yield the charming clusters of hope and joy. There are all manner of pleasant fruits among us. One has one, another has another, and in some hearts there are many fruits united. A church of God, if well cultivated, is rich in multiform displays of the fruit of the Spirit of God.

Some of these fruits are *new*, and oh, how full of savor they are. Our new converts, thank God for them, what a freshness and power there is about their love! Certain moldy old professors have lost their taste all together. They have passed beyond the time in which they were sweet, they have gotten into the sleepy pear state, and are getting rotten. They are chips in the porridge, the taste has gone out of them, if they ever had any.

Alas! some have acquired a nauseous flavor, they are very naughty figs indeed. The new fruits may be sharp, and have more pungency than mellowness about them, but for all that they are choice to the Lord Jesus, whose Soul desires the first ripe fruits. I thank God for youthful zeal. It might with advantage have a little more knowledge mingled with it, yet the zeal is good, and the fervor is good. May we never be without newborn souls.

Then there are *old* fruits, the experience of believers who are ripening for heaven, the well-developed confidence which has been tried in a thousand battles, and the faith which has braved a lifetime of difficulties. These old fruits—the deep love of the matron to Christ, the firm assurance of the veteran believer—there is mellowness about them which the Lord delights in.

All these choice things ought to be *laid up*. Every good thing in a church is meant to be stored up, not to be despised and forgotten. And the point of all is that all in the church ought to be laid up *for our Beloved*.

And now is the time when I earnestly ask, in the name of the Lord Jesus, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, yea by each sacred token of the love you bear your Master, that each one of you should bring forth his pleasant fruits, whether they be new or whether they be old.

We do not bring them forth to buy His love, we know better, for though we should give all the substance of our house for love it would be utterly contemned. We do not bring forth these fruits to secure His love for the future, we know it is an everlasting love that never can be taken away from us. We do not bring them forth because we want to commend ourselves. Ah, no, any beauty we have does not lie in the fruits of our storehouses, but in what He has put upon us, and in what His love sees in us.

Neither do we bring forth these pleasant fruits to feed on them ourselves. Old experiences are moldy things, old manna breeds worms and stinks, and as for any fruits which we have brought forth we take no satisfaction in them ourselves. All we have belongs to Him and to Him alone, and at His feet we would lay the whole. I beseech you, brethren, if you have any love pour it out upon Him. If you have any faith, exercise it for Him. If you have any courage, be bold for Him. If you have any endurance, endure hardness for Him. If you have any grace, any virtue, any gift of His Spirit, anything that is lovely and of good repute, use it for Him.

Now is the day, now is the hour, now His love puts in her claim and serves you with her sacred writs. By the espousals which you have not forgotten, by the covenant which you have oft repeated with Him, by the seals of His table, by your burial with Him in baptism in days gone by, I beseech you now bring forth all your pleasant things for your Beloved. None for anyone else, but all for Him.

I fear we often forget to do all for Him. I know if I preach a sermon, and have any recollection that such and such a passage might please a learned or wealthy hearer, I have failed to please God. If I have any consideration in my mind as to whether I shall gain esteem for excellence of speech I am weak directly. But if I preach for Jesus only, then whoever finds fault my work is sweet *to Him*. And if you pray in the prayer meeting, or teach in the class, or give your contribution to the Lord's work, if you feel you have done it for Him, oh, then you know you have done aright because that is the point which sweetens all.

I believe that many have stolen up to the offering-box, and dropped in what they could give for the Lord's sake, and none have known it, and therefore Christ has accepted it. While others may have given large sums ostentatiously, because others of their standing were giving as much, and therefore, they were not accepted.

I want your aid for the College and the Orphanage, but do not give for my sake, but for my Lord's sake. Put what you give into the pierced hands, make that your treasury. Jesus is your Master. No one else has bought you. No one else has died for you. No one else will receive you until His fond embrace at the last. No one else is preparing heaven for you. No one else can say, "Well done good and faithful servant."

Serve ye Him, then, with both your hands, with all your heart, with every drop of blood in your veins, and every breath in your lungs. Give Him yourself, your whole self, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head, and when you have done that, if He spare you for another half century you will find that you have spent the best life for yourself, though that must not enter into your thoughts.

I have thus spoken to my own dear friends and brethren in Christ, but let me remind those who are not in Christ that nothing of this has anything to do with them. I don't bid *you* do anything for Christ. I cannot. Christ does not want His enemies to work in His vineyard. I do not ask you either to give to Jesus or to work for Him! Why should you? Till you love Him, your services would be a mockery of Him. I hold up no standard to enlist under it men whose hearts are disloyal toward our Captain.

Ah, no, but if your service be rejected, and you feel grieved at heart that it is so, let me whisper this word in your ear—your heart may yet be made right. You may yet come and serve Him. Here is His message to you: "Come now and let us reason together, saith the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." There is the point for you, good friend.

You must begin with being yourself saved, and then when you are saved, you can serve Christ. Christ will have no man work for Him with the view of saving himself, you must first be saved, and then you have not your own salvation to look to. When you have left that with Christ, you can then labor for Him.

A rich English merchant was requested by Queen Elizabeth to take up certain affairs of hers. "Your Majesty," said he, "I am willing enough, but if I do your bidding my business will be ruined." "Sir," said the Queen, "You attend to my business, and I will attend to yours."

Now, sirs, give the business of your soul's salvation to Christ. Let Him save you, and when that is done you can make it your business to serve Him, and He will be glad of such a servant. The Lord bless you, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—ISAIAH 54

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.