

A GOLDEN PRAYER NO. 1391

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, DECEMBER 30, 1877,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*"Father, glorify your name."
John 12:28.*

IN the first part of my discourse this morning I shall strictly keep to my text, as the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and endeavor to show what it teaches us with regard to Him. These are His own words, and it would be robbery to borrow them until first we have seen what they meant as they fell from His lips. Their most golden meaning must be seen in the light of His sacred countenance. Then, in the second part of my sermon, I shall try to point out how the petition before us may be used by ourselves, and I pray that divine grace may be given us that it may be engraven upon our hearts, and that each one of us may be taught by the Holy Spirit daily to say for himself, "Father, glorify your name." I would suggest that these words should be to all the Lord's people in this church, their motto for another year, and indeed, their prayer throughout life.

It will as well behoove the beginner in grace as the ripe believer, it will be proper both at the wicket gate of faith, and at the portals of glory. Like a lovely rainbow, let the prayer, "Father, glorify your name," over-arch the whole period of our life on earth. I cannot suggest a better petition for the present moment, nor indeed for any moment of our pilgrimage. Let us close the old year with it, and open the door of the new to the same note. As for the past, "Father, glorify your name," in the present fulfill this desire unto Your servants and in the future do it yet more abundantly.

I. Let us look, then, at the words, first of all, IN RESPECT TO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

They occur in the following connection. He had wrought a notable miracle in the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The fame of the miracle had attracted many to hear Him, enthusiastic crowds had gathered, and He had become so extremely popular that the Pharisees said, "The world has gone after him." The people were willing to have made Him a king, and a great concourse met Him with branches of palm trees and cried, "Hosanna; blessed is the King of Israel that comes in the name of the Lord."

Our Lord passed in royal but humble pomp through the streets of Jerusalem, riding upon a colt, the foal of an ass. This public manifestation, the renown of the miracle, and the general talk of the populace, led to strangers hearing of Him, and inquiring about Him, so that certain intelligent Greeks of a very respectable order—for their mode of address to Philip shows their superior behavior—asked to be introduced to Him. They would "see Jesus," not, of course merely *see* Him in the streets, for that they could do if they pleased without applying to Philip, but they would have an interview with Him, and to learn more about His teaching and His claims.

I suppose that the sight of these Greeks greatly gladdened the heart of the Savior, for He delighted to see men coming to the light. He seemed to say within Himself, "Behold the nations come to me; the Gentiles arise and seek their Savior." He saw in those Greeks the advance guard of the Gentile world. He looked upon the strangers with delight, regarding them as representative men, the first of myriads who from the ends of the earth and the islands of the sea should come flocking to Him to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Our Lord rejoiced in spirit, His heart was glad within Him, and He began to address Himself to the people round about, and to the Greeks who mingled with the throng. At that very moment the thought flashed across the Savior's mind, "But these nations who are to be born unto Me. and to be saved by Me, cannot be so born without birth-pangs, nor saved unless I endure unspeakable suffering as their

Redeemer.” This fact came vividly before our Lord’s mind, and it rushed over His spirit like a raging torrent. He saw that He could not become the seed corn of a great harvest unless first of all He should fall into the ground and die. He was the one grain of wheat upon whom all depended, and He must lose comfort and life, and be buried in the earth, or else He would abide alone, and bring forth no fruit. He saw the vicarious suffering which lay in His way, and His soul was troubled.

Do not imagine that our Savior dreaded death in itself considered. He was far superior in sacred courage and strength of mind to any of His servants, and yet many of them have welcomed death, and others of them, such as the martyrs, have endured it in its most terrible forms, without fear, even expressing a holy delight in glorifying the name of God by their mortal agony. Our Lord was not less brave than these in prospect of His departure. But never let it be forgotten that the death of Christ was a very peculiar one, and in fact stands alone by itself. His death was the vindication of justice, it was the death of the sin-bearer, it was a sacrificial, substitutionary, expiatory death, and this is very different from the death of a pardoned and justified believer, who passes out of the world resting on the atonement, and supported by a sense of having been reconciled to God by the great sacrifice.

Our Lord was called to bear the enormous load of man’s transgressions, over His holy soul the dark shadow of human guilt must pass, and on His sensitive spirit must be made to meet the iniquity of us all. His saints’ deaths are blessed in the sight of the Lord, but He must be made a curse for us that we might be blessed in Him, and as the mind of Christ perceived this clearly lying in the way of that triumph among the Gentiles which gave Him joy, there was a struggle in His soul, and before the assembled people that struggle was manifested.

The Greeks desired to see Jesus, and they did see Him in a very remarkable manner, so that they must have been astounded at the sight. If they expected to see a king they did indeed behold a royal soul, but they saw Him in such grief as falls not to the lot of common men. If they wished to see somewhat of His greatness of spirit and power of mind, they did see it, but it was a power which did not transfigure His face with glory, but filled it with an agony marring all its beauty. I shall not be too bold if I say that Gethsemane was rehearsed in public upon the occasion before us. Our Lord’s soul was troubled, so He says. He felt a sort of adumbration or foreshadowing of that midnight among the olives, in which His soul was “exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.”

It was out of that conflict that our text came, in fact, our text is to His suffering in the midst of the crowd what, “nevertheless not as I will, but as You will,” was to the agony of Gethsemane, or what “It is finished” was to the passion upon Calvary. It was the culminating point, the climax, and the conquest of a great mental battle, and when He had thus spoken He seemed to shake Himself clear of the agony and to emerge from it with the memorials of it still upon Him, but with His face set like a flint to go forward to the bitter and the glorious end, this being now His watchword, “Father, glorify your name.”

I shall want to call your attention, dear friends, briefly here, first, to *the trouble of the Redeemer’s soul*. I always tremble within myself when I try to speak of the inner conflicts of our blessed Lord, for it is so easy to make a mistake and darken counsel by words without knowledge. His person is complex and therefore we readily confuse, yet He Himself is but one, and it is equally dangerous to make over nice distinctions. Loving jealousy of our Lord’s honor makes us feel that we scarcely know how to speak of Him. I remember an earnest admirer of the arts who in pointing with his walking-stick to the beauties of a famous picture pushed his cane through the canvas and ruined it, and it is possible that in our enthusiasm to point out the beauties and points of interest in the life and death of our Lord we may spoil it all. I fear lest in my ignorance I should make sorrow for myself by dishonoring Him for whose honor I would gladly lay down and die. Help me, O divine Spirit!

This much is clear, that our Savior’s heart was full of trouble. He who could still the sea and bid the storms retreat was tempest-tossed in His own soul, and cast about Him for anchorage. He who could drive the fever from its lair, or send a legion of demons into the deep, was nevertheless troubled in spirit and cried, “What shall I say?” Master of all worlds, supreme among the angels, and adored at His Father’s right hand, yet He confesses, “Now is my soul troubled.” Lord of all, yet learned He obedience

by the things which He suffered. How near akin it makes Him to us! How human! How compassed with infirmity! We worship Him, and rightly so, but still He is a man and a mourner. You call Him Master and Lord, and you do well, yet He not only washed His disciples' feet, but His own feet trembled in the rough places of the way. He felt those same commotions of spirit which make our hearts sad within us and cause us to pour out our souls within us. Do not think of the Lord Jesus otherwise than as of a dear brother born for adversity, or a faithful husband sharing all our lot, being bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

Did you cry out in anguish, "Now is my soul troubled"? Then remember that your Lord has used the same words. Are you half distracted? Are you tossed to and fro in your thoughts? Do you ever ask, "What shall I say?" Jesus also understands by sympathy what it is you mean. Do you look around you and feel that you know not what to do, and does your trembling heart suggest that you should pray, "Father, save me from this hour"?—in all this you may see the Well-beloved's footprints—you are not upon a new and strange track, He leads you through no darker rooms than He went through before. With the same afflictions He has been afflicted, there is nothing in them novel or surprising to His sympathetic heart.

Beloved friends, let me invite you to consider that not only did our Lord thus suffer, but it is joyful to reflect that He suffered all this without sin. Hence it follows that mental conflict is not in itself sinful, even the shrinking back of the flesh from suffering is not necessarily evil, and the question, "What shall I say?" and the apparent distraction of the spirit for the moment as to what shall be its course, are not in themselves criminal.

There could be no sin in the Lord Jesus, and consequently there is not of necessity sin in our inward struggles, though I am very far from venturing to hope that in any one of them we are quite clear of fault. Our Lord's nature was so pure that however much it was stirred it remained clear, but in our case, though the stirring is not sinful, it sets in motion the sin which dwells in us, and we are defiled. Yet I do not believe that all those depressions of spirit which come of sickness, or all those wanderings of mind in the heat of fever, or all the shrinking and drawing back from pain, which are essential to our humanity, are by our heavenly Father set down as sin, though sin is doubtless mixed with them. If they be sinful in themselves, yet surely they are blotted out as soon as written down, for "like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him." He pities rather than censures or condemns.

You do not judge your children hardly for what they say when they are racked with pain or prostrated by weakness, you bear with their little fancies and peevishnesses, and the like, and you never taunt them with their follies afterwards. Neither can I think that our heavenly Father would have us doubt our interest in Christ because in our semi-delirium we could not realize His love, nor would He have us question the grace which is in us because our feverish thoughts were near akin to despair.

When the true heart struggles to love and trust and obey, but the poor brain is tortured with dark thoughts, the conflict is not all sinful, nor any of it necessarily so. There may be an awful struggle in the soul and yet the Father may be glorified, the sin lies not in the conflict but in the defeat, if defeat there be, the guilt is not in the shrinking from pain, but in permitting that natural feeling to hinder us from duty or to lead us to rebel against chastisement. "If it is possible, let this cup pass from me," is not a sinful utterance if it is followed by, "nevertheless not as I will, but as you will."

I feel so glad to think our Lord when He was passing through this inward conflict, spoke out His feelings. It is instructive that He should have done so, for with His strength of mind He was quite capable of preserving a self-contained attitude and keeping His agony to Himself, yet you notice that neither here, in which case He spoke so that others heard Him, nor at Gethsemane, in which case He took three of His disciples to be with Him and went to them again and again for sympathy, nor even on the cross, in which case He cried aloud, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" did He endeavor to conceal His emotion from others. It may be that by this He intended to teach us wisdom, He would show us by His own example that it is well for us not to be too much shut up within ourselves. Smother not your sorrow, tell it out, or it may gather an ungovernable heat. That is the worst of grief

which cannot weep or moan. Draw up the sluices, give a vent to pent up feelings, even though it be but a child who hears your tale it will relieve your mind to tell it. Anything is better than banking up the fires, and concentrating all the heat within the soul. Act not the stoic's part, be not ashamed to let it be known that you are a man, a man who can grieve and be troubled even as others. It may sometimes be well to follow the poet's advice who says—

*“Bear and still bear and silent be,
Tell no man thy misery,”*

but I question if the occasions are very frequent. At any rate, such is not the command of our Lord, nor does His example point in that direction.

In Himself speaking out, our Lord gives us a full permit to speak too. We might have said, “No, I will not tell what is going on within, lest my weakness should seem to dishonor God.” Now we know that our Lord did not dishonor the Father by saying, “Now is my soul troubled,” and by revealing the inward conflict of His soul, neither will the fact of our speaking out our grief necessarily dishonor our God. Jesus wept, and we may weep. Jesus told His sorrow to His friends and you may do the same.

In thus speaking, our Lord affords us the best of help, for His fellow-feeling is a grand support. Did He say, “Now is my soul troubled”? and did He scarce know what to ask? But did He at the last still triumph and resign Himself into His Father's hands? Then, girt about by the selfsame power, we also will encounter the same sorrow after our measure, and endure until we triumph as He did. Even though in the triumph there should be clear evidence of our personal weakness, yet we will not regret it, since by that means our God shall be the more surely glorified by the more distinct revelation of *His* power.

I will say no more about the trouble of our Redeemer because I would now ask you to fix your thoughts for a minute, upon *the firm resolve* which the text sets forth. There is a battle, but from the very first moment to the last of it there is really no question in the Savior's mind about what He means to do, His purpose was settled beyond disturbance. The surface of His mind was ruffled, but deep down in His heart the current of the Redeemer's soul flowed on irresistibly in the ordained channel. He was even straitened till He had been baptized with the appointed baptism. Observe the question raised, and see how really it was answered in His heart before He asked it. “Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour?”

Must men be unsaved and Jesus be delivered from the lowering storm? If so, yonder Greeks need not ask to see Him, for there will be no “life in a look” at Him. The disciples round about need not cling to Him as their helper, for there is no help in Him unless He dies to redeem the sons of men. Shall men, then, be unredeemed? Shall the blood of atonement be unspilt, and no man ransomed from going down to the pit? Shall He remain alone, the grain of wheat unsown? If He does, He will be happy enough and glorious enough, for heaven is all His own. Does He need men to make Him blessed? Does He require worms of the dust to make Him glorious? Should He remain alone, He will still be God and Lord. But, shall the death penalty be left to be borne by men, guilty men, who deserve to bear it? Shall there be no cross, no Calvary, no open tomb, no resurrection, no gates of heaven set wide open for coming souls? There is the question and you see in the text how resolutely Jesus had settled it.

He says in effect—“Father, glorify Your name by My death; for this purpose have I come to this hour, that by My agony and bloody sweat, by My cross and passion, I may redeem the sons of men. Redeemed they must and shall be, cost Me what it may. I have resolved to bear the penalty and magnify Your law, and I will perform it, though hell itself be let loose against Me and all its waves of fire dash over Me. I will endure the cross and despise the shame, to honor You, My Father.”

Observe right well, that the text indicates *the deep intent* which steadied our Lord's resolve. Why is Christ resolved to die? Is it to save men? Yes, but not as the chief reason. His first prayer is not, “Father, save my people,” but, “Father, glorify your name.” The glory of God was the chief end and objective of our Savior's life and death. It is that the Father's name may be illustrious that Jesus would have souls

redeemed. His passion had for its main intent the exhibition of the attributes of God. And, brethren, how completely He has glorified JEHOVAH'S name!

Upon the cross we see the divine justice in the streaming wounds of the great Substitute, for the Son of God must needs die when sin is laid upon Him. There also you behold infinite wisdom, for what but infallible wisdom could have devised the way whereby God might be just and yet the justifier of him that believes. There, too, is love, rich, free, boundless love—never so conspicuous as in the death of man's Redeemer. Till this day it still remains a question concerning the atonement which of the letters best is writ, the justice, the wisdom, or the love.

In the atonement the divine attributes are all so perfectly glorified that no one crowds out the other. Each one has its full display without in the least degree, diminishing the glory of any other. Our blessed Lord, that the Father might be glorified, pushed on to the end which He had set before Him. Whatever conflict might be within His spirit, His heart was fixed upon bearing to the death our load, and suffering to the end our penalty.

Now, brethren, I will detain you here with but one other thought—it is this, *the grand result* which came of it was that God was in very deed greatly glorified, and to this fact special testimony was given. A voice was heard out of heaven saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." That voice speaks of the past. The incarnation of Christ had glorified the name of God. I am unable to describe to you how much luster the love of God receives from the fact of the Word being made flesh and dwelling among us. It is the mystery of mysteries, the marvel of all marvels that the Creator should espouse the nature of His creature and that He should be found in fashion as a man.

Oh, Bethlehem, you have exceedingly magnified the condescension of God. Angels might well sing, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men." Nor Bethlehem alone, but Nazareth and the thirty years which our Lord spent on earth all illustrate the condescension, the pity, the long-suffering of God. Did God dwell among us thirty years? Did He abide in humility in the carpenter's shop for the best part of that time, and did He afterwards come forth to be a poor man, a teacher of peasants, a friend of sinners, a man of sorrows, despised and rejected of men? Could the holy and the just, the infinite and the glorious thus, as it were, compress infinity into so small a space, and marry deity to such poverty and shame? It was so.

Then tune your harps anew, you seraphs, to tell the amazing love and condescension of "Immanuel, God with us." Well spoke that voice—"I have glorified it." But hearken yet again, for it adds—"and will glorify it again." To my mind that word "again" sounds like certain voices I have heard in the Alps. The horn is sounded and then follows an echo, nay, twice, thrice, and perhaps fifty times the music is distinctly repeated, the voices follow each other in gradually melting strains. The metaphor is not complete, for in this case the echoes increase in volume, instead of diminishing they wax louder and louder.

Lo, Jesus hangs upon the cross and dies, and God is glorified, for justice has its due. He lies in the grave till the third morning, but He bursts the bonds of death. Lo, God's great name is glorified again, since the divine power, truth, and faithfulness are all seen in the resurrection of Christ. Yet a few more days and He ascends into heaven, the Man, the God, and a cloud hides Him from our sight—He has glorified the Father's name again by leading captivity captive. Then comes Pentecost, and the preaching of the Gospel among the heathen, and then is the name of God glorified by the outpouring of the Spirit.

Every conversion of a sinner, and sanctification of a believer, is a fresh glorifying of the name of the Father, and every reception of a perfected one into heaven—and surely they are entering heaven every day, troops of them climbing the celestial hills, drawn upward by almighty love—everyone, I say, in entering into Paradise glorifies JEHOVAH'S name again. And, brethren, by and by, when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, then will the Father glorify His own name again. When in His own time the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the trump of the archangel and the voice of God, and when He shall reign among His ancients gloriously, we shall hear the gladsome acclamation, "Hallelujah, hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigns." And when comes the end, and He shall have

delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father, and God shall be all in all—then shall the eternal echoes roll along the glories of the great Father God. The glorious name of the one JEHOVAH shall through all space and all eternity be magnified, and the prayer of our once suffering but now exalted Savior shall be fully answered, “Father, glorify your name.”

II. Now, brethren and sisters, we will use our text IN REFERENCE TO OURSELVES. May the Holy Spirit, direct us in doing so.

I pray that this text may be our prayer from this time forth, “Father, glorify your name.” Have you, dear hearers, ever prayed this prayer? I trust I am addressing many to whom it is a very familiar desire, and yet I question if any here have ever presented it so earnestly as those from whom it has been forced by suffering and grief. God’s birds often sing best in cages, at any rate, when they have been loose a little while, and their notes grow somewhat dull, He tunes their pipes again if He puts them away awhile and clips their wings.

Now this text, as far as we are concerned, whenever we can use it, indicates *conflict ended*. Sometimes we are in such a condition that we do not know which way to turn. We are in great affliction, it may not be so much outward trouble as distress of mind, which is worst of all. The water has leaked *into* the ship, and that is worse than an ocean outside. The vessel begins to fill. You use the pumps, but cannot keep it under. At such times you cry, “What shall I do? What shall I say? Where can I look? I am oppressed and overwhelmed.” But there is an end of the conflict when you turn round and cry, “Father! Father!”

A child may have lost its way and it may be sobbing its heart out in its distress, but the moment it sees its father it is lost no longer, it has found its way, and is at rest. Though there may be no difference in your position, nor change in your circumstances, yet if you catch a sight of your heavenly Father, it is enough. You are a lost child no more. When you can pray, “Father, glorify your name,” then there is no more question about, “What shall I say?” You have said the right thing and there let it end.

Now, brethren, concerning this next year upon which we are entering, I hope it will be a year of happiness to you—I very emphatically wish you all a Happy New Year—but nobody can be confident that it will be a year free from trouble. On the contrary, you may be pretty confident that it will not be so, for man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. We have each, beloved friends, some dear faces in which we rejoice, may they long smile upon us, but remember that each one of these may be an occasion of sorrow during the next year, for we have neither an immortal child, nor an immortal husband, nor an immortal wife, nor an immortal friend, and therefore some of these may die within the year.

Moreover the comforts with which we are surrounded may take to themselves wings before another year shall fulfill its months. Earthly joys are as if they were all made of snow, they melt even as the hoar frost, and are gone before we conclude our thanksgiving for their coming. It may be you will have a year of drought and shortness of bread, years lean and ill-favored may be your portion. Ay, and yet more, perhaps during the year which has almost dawned you may have to gather up your feet in the bed and die, to meet your father’s God.

Well now, concerning this approaching year and its mournful possibilities, shall we grow gloomy and desponding? Shall we wish we had never been born or ask that we may die? By no means. Shall we, on the other hand grow frivolous and laugh at all things? No, that would be ill-becoming in heirs of God. What shall we do? We will breathe this prayer, “Father, glorify your name.” That is to say, if I must lose my property, glorify Your name by my poverty, if I must be bereaved, glorify Your name in my sorrows, if I must die, glorify Your name in my departure. Now, when you pray in that fashion, your conflict is over, no outward fright nor inward fear remains, if that prayer rises from the heart, you have now cast aside all gloomy forebodings, and you can thoughtfully and placidly pursue your way into the unknown tomorrow. Pass on, O caravan, into the trackless desert! Still proceed into the wilderness of the future, which no mortal eye has seen, for yonder fiery cloudy pillar leads the way and all is well. “Father, glorify your name,” is our pillar of cloud, and, protected by its shade, we shall not be smitten by

the heat of prosperity, “Father, glorify your name,” is our pillar of fire by night, nor shall the darkness of adversity destroy us, for the Lord shall be our light. March on, you pilgrims, without a moment’s delay because of fear. Tarry not for a single instant, this being your banner and your watchword, “Father, glorify your name.” Torturing doubts and forebodings of the future all end when the glorious name is seen over all.

Secondly, our text breathes a spirit which is *the surrender of self*. When a man can truly say, “Father, glorify your name,” he begins to understand that saying of our Savior concerning the corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying, for that prayer means, “Lord, do what You will with me. I will make no stipulations, but leave all to You. Remember that I am dust and deal tenderly with me, but still glorify Your name. Do not spare me, if thereby You would be less glorious. Act not according to my foolish wishes or childish desires, but glorify Your name in me by any means and by all means.” The prayer means—I am willing to be made nothing of, so that Your will may be done. I am willing to be as one dead and buried, forgotten, and unknown if You may be magnified. I am ready to be buried and sown because I believe that this is the way by which I shall grow and bring forth fruit to Your praise.

This surrender includes obedient service, for our great Master goes on to say, “If any man serves me, let him follow me.” True self-renunciation shows itself in the obedient imitation of Christ. “Father, glorify your name” means waiting the Lord’s bidding and running in His ways. If the petition is written out at length it runs thus—“Help me to copy my Savior’s example, help me to follow in His blessed footsteps! This is my desire, passively to honor my heavenly Father by bearing His will, and actively to glorify Him by doing His will. Lord, help me to do both of these, and never let me be forgetful that I am not my own, but wholly my Lord’s.”

The prayer appears to me to be most properly used when it is made a personal one—“Father, glorify your name *in me*. I am the recipient of so much mercy, get some glory out of me, I pray you.” Beloved, I think you must have noticed in this world that the man who really lives is the man who more than his fellows has learned to live for others and for God. You do not care for the preacher whose object is to display his own powers, you go away dissatisfied after hearing his bravest orations, but if any man shall only desire your soul’s good and God’s glory, you will put up with much eccentricity from him, and bear with many infirmities because instinctively you love and trust the man who forgets himself.

Now, what you see in preachers I beg you to try and consider in yourselves. If any of you are living for yourselves you will be un-loveable, if you even act under the ambition to be loved you will miss your mark, but if you will love for love’s sake, if you will seek to be Christ-like, if you will lay yourselves out to glorify God, to increase His kingdom, and to bless your fellow men, you will live in the highest and noblest sense. Seek not your own greatness, but labor to make Jesus great and you will live.

Christians live by dying. Kill self and Christ shall live in you, and so shall you, yourself, most truly live. The way upward in true life and honor is to go downward in self-humiliation. Renounce all, and you shall be rich, have nothing and you shall have all things. Try to be something and you shall be nothing, be nothing and you shall live, that is the great lesson which Jesus would teach us, but which we are slow to learn. “Father, glorify your name” means let the corn of wheat be buried out of sight to lose itself in its outgrowth. O self, you are a dead thing, be you laid deep in the sepulcher. You rotten carcass, for such you have become since Jesus died for me, you are an offense to me! Away with you! Do not poison my life, mar my motives, spoil my intents, hinder my self-denials, and defile the chastity of my heart. You prompt me to make provision for the flesh, away with you, away with you! “Father, glorify your name.”

In our text, in the next place, *a new care is paramount*. The man has forgotten self, and self is buried like a grain of wheat, and now he begins to care for God’s glory. His cry is, “Father, glorify your name.” Oh, if you can get rid of self you will feel in your heart a daily intensified longing to have the name of God glorified. Do you not sometimes feel sick at heart as you gaze upon this present generation? My soul is pained within me often when I see how everything is out of joint. Everything is now denied

which from our youth we have regarded as the sacred truth. The infallibility of Scripture is denied, the authenticity of one portion is challenged, and the inspiration of another called in question, and the good old book is torn to pieces by blind critics. Eternal verities against which only blaspheming infidels used to speak are now questioned by professed ministers of Christ. Doctrines which our sires never thought of doubting are now trailed in the mire, and that by those who profess to be teachers of God's Word. "Father, glorify your name" comes leaping to our lips because it is burning in our heart—burning there in holy wrath against the treachery of men. Indignation arises from our jealousy, and our eager spirits cry, "Oh, that God would glorify His name!" To many of us this is our heaviest care.

Brethren, we desire the Lord to glorify that name in ourselves by preventing our impatience in suffering, and keeping us from faintness in labor. We beseech our heavenly Father to destroy our selfishness, to cast out our pride, and to overcome every evil propensity which would prevent His getting glory out of us. Our soul is even as the clusters of the vine which belong to the owner of the vineyard, our whole nature is as the fruit for which the great vinedresser waits. Here fling me into the wine vat. Let every cluster and every grape be gathered and pressed. Great Lord, cast me into the wine vat of Your service, and then squeeze from me every drop of the essence of life. Let my whole soul flow forth to You. Let the ruddy juice burst forth on the right and on the left, and when the first rich liquor of my life is gone, then even to the utmost lees let me be pressed, till the last drop of the living juice which may bring glory to You shall have come forth. Fling all away that will not turn into Your glory, but use all that can be used, to the utmost glorify Your name.

O great Father of my spirit, the care of Your child is to glorify You, for if You be a father you should have honor from Your children. "Honor your father" is the first commandment with promise, and it is precious in our eyes. From our inmost hearts we pray, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come."

Now, see how *that desire is divested of all sorrow* by our casting it upon God. The prayer is not, "Father, help me to glorify Your name," but it is, "Father, glorify your name,"—thyself. Your glory is too much for me to compass, do You glorify Your own self. In Your providence so arrange my position and condition as to glorify Your name. By Your grace so sustain me, and sanctify me, that I may glorify You. I cannot do it, but You can, and the care which I was glad to feel I am glad also to bring by faith to You. "Father, glorify your name."

And now, brethren, if you can pray in that fashion, *your confidence will come back to you*, if you have been greatly distracted, calm peace will visit you again, for now you will say, "I will bear the Lord's will, and will be content therewith. I cannot quarrel with my Master's dealings any more, for I have asked Him to glorify His name, and as I know that He is doing it, I cannot murmur. How can I struggle against that which is really glorifying my Father?" Your heart will cease to question and to quake, and nestle down beneath the eternal wings, in deep and happy peace. Filled with patience, you will take the cup which stood untasted, and grasp it with willingness if not with eagerness. "It is to glorify God," you will say, "Every drop of this cup is for His glory," and therefore you will put the chalice to your lips and drink straight on, and on, and on till you have drained the last drop, and find that "It is finished."

I know you will not fail to do this if your soul has really felt the power of this prayer—"Father, glorify your name." Why, sometimes it seems to me that it were worth while to pray to be burned at a stake, to the death, if by martyrdom we could glorify God. I do not desire such a death, and yet from one point of view I have often envied martyrs those ruby crowns which they cast at the feet of their dear Lord. How honorable in them to have glorified God by so much suffering. Surely he is the grandest creature God has made who glorifies Him most.

And who is he? Not the tall archangel of whom Milton sings, whose wand might make a mast for some great admiral, but the most insignificant nobody who has long laid upon her bed of weariness, and there has praised the Lord by perfect patience—she, though apparently the least, may be the greatest glorifier of the Father. Perhaps the tiniest creature God has made will bring Him more glory than

leviathan that makes the deep to be hoary and causes the waters to boil like in a pot. That which most thoroughly yields itself to God, that which most completely annihilates itself into the eternal All—is most glorifying to Him. May God of His infinite mercy, bring us to this self-annihilation, this care for His glory only. Strive after it, beloved, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

One word to those of you who will have no sympathy with this sermon. You know that hymn in which the inquirer asks?—

*“If I find Him, if I follow,
What reward is here?”*

and the answer is—

*“Many a labor, many a sorrow,
Many a tear.”*

Very discouraging this, is it not? You who look for mirth and selfish pleasure turn away in disgust. Yet the lines are very true. Jesus Himself said, “Except a man take up his cross and follow me, he cannot be my disciple.” But mark you, the day will come when those who were willing to suffer for Christ will be counted to be the only sane persons who ever lived, and when those who looked to the main chance, and cared for self, and disregarded God, and faith in Christ, and love for their fellow men, will be regarded as having been mere idiots and drivellers.

Hear you this parable. It is spring time, and yonder is a farmer walking the furrows and sowing his seed. Those who know nothing of husbandry mock at him for his wastefulness with his grain. He is far too prodigal of good food. He is the wise man, is he not, who locks his granary door and preserves his corn? Why should he go and fling it into the cold, thankless mold? Wait you till the end of June when the bloom is on the wheat. Wait you till July and August have brought the months of harvest, and you shall see that he who gave his wheat to die shall, amidst the shouts of, “Harvest home,” be reckoned to have been wise and prudent. While he who kept the door of his granary bolted, through his sluggishness and selfishness, shall then be seen to be only fit for Bedlam, for he has no harvest save a mass of tangled weeds.

Scatter you, scatter you your lives for others! Give yourselves up to Jesus. He who in this respect hates his life, shall find it, but he that keeps it shall lose it. Still, O you ungodly, if you live to yourselves, God will yet have glory and even glory out of you. You shall not rob Him of His honor, nor tear a jewel from His throne. God will be glorified by you and in you in some form or other. Your everlasting lamentations, because of your great selfish mistakes, will vindicate the wisdom and the justice of God to all eternity. In a future state, though you gnaw the flesh of your right arms for very anguish and sorrow and passion, you will be obliged to own that the warnings of the gospel were true, and that God is just. Your well-deserved griefs shall help to make up the burden of that song which shall eternally celebrate the wisdom and goodness of God, for you will have to confess that Jesus was right and you were wrong, that to believe in Him and to be His disciple was the right thing, and that to despise Him, and to live unto yourself, was what He told you it would be—namely, destruction and ruin. God grant His blessing for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—JOHN 12:12-41

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—1035, 699, 663

Taken from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software. 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.