

YOUNG MAN, IS THIS FOR YOU?

NO. 2003

A SERMON

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BY C. H. SPURGEON,

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people. And this rumor of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.”
Luke 7:11-17.

BEHOLD, dear brethren, the overflowing, ever-flowing power of our Lord Jesus Christ. He had wrought a great work upon the centurion's servant, and now, only a day after, he raises the dead. “It came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain.” Day unto day utters speech concerning His deeds of goodness. Did He save your friend yesterday? His fullness is the same, if you seek Him, His love and grace will flow to you today. He blesses this day, and He blesses the day after. Never is our divine Lord compelled to pause until He has recruited His resources, but virtue goes out of Him forever. These thousands of years have not diminished the abounding of His power to bless.

Behold, also, the readiness and naturalness of the outgoings of His life-giving power. Our Savior was journeying, and He works miracles while on the road, “He went into a city called Nain.” It was incidentally, some would say accidentally, that He met the funeral procession, but at once He restored to life this dead young man. Our blessed Lord was not standing still, as one professionally called in, He does not seem to have come to Nain at anyone's request for the display of His love, but He was passing through the gate into the city, for some reason which is not recorded.

See, my brethren, how the Lord Jesus is always ready to save! He healed the woman who touched him in the throng when He was on the road to quite another person's house. The mere spilling and droppings of the Lord's cup of grace are marvelous. Here He gives life to the dead when He is *en route*, He scatters His mercy by the roadside, and anywhere and everywhere His paths drop fatness. No time, no place, can find Jesus unwilling or unable. When Baal is on a journey, or sleeps, his deluded worshippers cannot hope for his help, but when Jesus journeys or sleeps, a word will find Him ready to conquer death, or quell the tempest.

It was a remarkable incident, this meeting of the two processions at the gates of Nain. If someone with a fine imagination could picture it, what an opportunity he would have for developing his poetical genius! I venture on no such effort. Yonder a procession descends from the city. Our spiritual eyes see death upon the pale horse coming forth from the city gate with great exultation. He has taken another captive. Upon that bier behold the spoils of the dread conqueror! Mourners by their tears confess the victory of death. Like a general riding in triumph to the Roman capitol, death bears his spoils to the tomb. What shall hinder him?

Suddenly the procession is arrested by another, a company of disciples and much people are coming up the hill. We need not look at the company, but we may fix our eyes upon one who stands in the center, a man in whom lowliness was always evident, and yet majesty was never wanting. It is the living

Lord, even He who only has immortality, and in Him death has now met his destroyer. The battle is short and decisive, no blows are struck, for death has already done his utmost. With a finger the chariot of death is arrested, with a word the spoil is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered. Death flies defeated from the gates of the city, while Tabor and Hermon, which both looked down upon the scene, rejoice in the name of the Lord.

This was a rehearsal upon a small scale of that which shall happen by and by, when those who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live, then shall the last enemy be destroyed. Only let death come into contact with Him who is our life, and it is compelled to relax its hold, whatever may be the spoil which it has captured. Soon shall our Lord come in His glory, and then before the gates of the New Jerusalem we shall see the miracle at the gates of Nain multiplied myriad times.

Thus, you see, our subject would naturally conduct us to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which is one of the foundation stones of our most holy faith. That grand truth I have often declared to you, and will do so again and again, but at this time I have selected my text for a very practical purpose, which concerns the souls of some for whom I am greatly anxious. The narrative before us records a fact, a literal fact, but the record may be used for spiritual instruction.

All our Lord's miracles were intended to be parables, they were intended to instruct as well as to impress, they are sermons to the eye, just as His spoken discourses were sermons to the ear. We see here how Jesus can deal with spiritual death, and how He can impart spiritual life at His pleasure. Oh, that we may see this done this morning in the midst of this great assembly!

I. I shall ask you first, dear friends, to reflect that **THE SPIRITUALLY DEAD CAUSE GREAT GRIEF TO THEIR GRACIOUS FRIENDS.**

If an ungodly man is favored to have Christian relatives, he causes them much anxiety. As a natural fact, this dead young man, who was being carried out to his burial, caused his mother's heart to burst with grief. She showed by her tears that her heart was overflowing with sorrow. The Savior said to her, "Weep not," because He saw how deeply she was troubled.

Many of my dear young friends may be deeply thankful that they have friends who are grieving over them. It is a sad thing that your conduct should grieve them, but it is a hopeful circumstance for you that you have those around you who do thus grieve. If all approved of your evil ways, you would, no doubt, continue in them, and go speedily to destruction, but it is a blessing that arresting voices do at least a little hinder you. Besides, it may yet be that our Lord will listen to the silent oratory of your mother's tears, and that this morning He may bless you for her sake. See how the Evangelist puts it, "When the Lord saw *her*, He had compassion on *her*, and said unto *her*, Weep not." And then He said to the young man, "Arise."

Many young persons who are in some respects amiable and hopeful, nevertheless, being spiritually dead, *are causing great sorrow to those who love them best.* It would perhaps be honest to say that they do not intend to inflict all this sorrow, indeed, they think it quite unnecessary. Yet they are a daily burden to those whom they love. Their conduct is such that when it is thought over in the silence of their mother's chamber, she cannot help but weep. Her son went with her to the house of God when he was a boy, but now he finds his pleasure in a very different quarter.

Being beyond all control now, the young man does not choose to go with his mother. She would not wish to deprive him of his liberty, but she laments that he exercises that liberty so unwisely, she mourns that he has not the inclination to hear the Word of the Lord, and become a servant of his mother's God. She had hoped that he would follow in his father's footsteps, and unite with the people of God, but he takes quite the opposite course.

She has seen a good deal about him lately, which has deepened her anxiety, he is forming companionships and other connections which are sadly harmful to him. He has a distaste for the quietude of home, and he has been exhibiting to his mother a spirit which wounds her. It may be that what he has said and done is not meant to be unkind, but it is very grievous to the heart which watches over him so tenderly. She sees a growing indifference to everything that is good, and an unconcealed

intention to see the vicious side of life. She knows a little, and fears more, as to his present state, and she dreads that he will go from one sin to another till he ruins himself for this life and the next.

O friends, it is to a gracious heart a very great grief to have an unconverted child, and yet more so if that child is a mother's boy, her only boy, and she a desolate woman, from whom her husband has been snatched away. To see spiritual death rampant in one so dear is a sore sorrow, which causes many a mother to mourn in secret, and pour out her soul before God.

Many a Hannah has become a woman of a sorrowful spirit through her own child. How sad that he who should have made her the gladdest among women has filled her life with bitterness! Many a mother has had so to grieve over her son as almost to cry, "Would God he had never been born!" It is so in thousands of cases. If it is so in your case, dear friend, take home my words to yourself, and reflect upon them.

The cause of grief lies here, *we mourn that they should be in such a case*. In the story before us the mother wept because her son was dead, and we sorrow because our young friends are spiritually dead. There is a life infinitely higher than the life which quickens our material bodies, and oh that all of you knew it! You, who are unrenewed, do not know anything about this true life. Oh, how we wish you did! It seems to us a dreadful thing that you should be dead to God, dead to Christ, dead to the Holy Spirit. It is sad, indeed, that you should be dead to those divine truths which are the delight and strength of our souls, dead to those holy motives which keep us back from evil, and spur us on to virtue, dead to those sacred joys which often bring us very near the gates of heaven.

We cannot look at a dead man, and feel joy in him, whoever he may be, a corpse, however delicately dressed, is a sad sight. We cannot look upon you, you poor dead souls, without crying out, "O God, shall it always be so? Shall not these dry bones live? Will You not quicken them?" The apostle speaks of one who lived in pleasure, and he said of her, "She is dead while she lives." Numbers of persons are dead in reference to all that is truest, and noblest, and most divine, and yet in other respects they are full of life and activity. Oh, to think that they should be dead to God, and yet so full of jollity and energy! Marvel not that we grieve about them.

We also mourn because we lose the help and comfort which they ought to bring us. This widowed mother no doubt mourned her boy, not only because he was dead, but because in him she had lost her earthly stay. She must have regarded him as the staff of her age, and the comfort of her loneliness. "She was a widow," I question if anybody but a widow understands the full sorrow of that word. We may put ourselves by sympathy into the position of one who has lost her other self, the partner of her life, but the most tender sympathy cannot fully realize the actual cleavage of bereavement, and the desolation of love's loss.

"She was a widow"—the sentence sounds like a knell. Still, if the sun of her life was gone, there was a star shining, she had a boy, a dear boy, who promised her great comfort. He would, no doubt, supply her necessities, and cheer her loneliness, and in him her husband would live again, and his name would remain among the living in Israel. She could lean on him as she went to the synagogue, she would have him to come home from his work at evening, and keep the little home together, and cheer her hearth. Alas! that star is swallowed up in the darkness. He is dead, and today he is borne to the cemetery.

It is the same spiritually with us in reference to our unconverted friends. With regard to you that are dead in sin, we feel that we miss the aid and comfort which we ought to receive from you in our service of the living God. We want fresh laborers in all sorts of places—in our Sunday school work, our mission among the masses, and in all manner of service for the Lord we love! Ours is a gigantic burden, and we long for our sons to put their shoulders to it. We did look forward to see you grow up in the fear of God, and stand side by side with us in the great warfare against evil, and in holy labor for the Lord Jesus, but you cannot help us, for you are yourselves on the wrong side.

Alas, alas! You hinder us by causing the world to say, "See how those young men are acting!" We have to spend thought, and prayer, and effort over you which might usefully have gone forth for others. Our care for yonder great dark world which lies all around us is very pressing, but you do not share it

with us, men are perishing from lack of knowledge, and you do not help us in endeavoring to enlighten them.

A further grief is that we can have no fellowship with them. The mother at Nain could have no communion with her dear son now that he was dead, for the dead know not anything. He can never speak to her, nor she to him, for he is on the bier, “a dead man carried out.” O my friends, certain of you have dear ones whom you love, and they love you, but they cannot hold any spiritual communion with you, nor you with them. You never bow the knee together in private prayer, nor mingle heart with heart in the appeal of faith to God as to the cares which prowl around your home.

O young man, when your mother’s heart leaps for joy because of the love of Christ shed abroad in her soul, you cannot understand her joy. Her feelings are a mystery to you. If you are a dutiful son, you do not say anything disrespectful about her religion, but yet you cannot sympathize in its sorrows or its joys. Between your mother and you there is upon the best things a gulf as wide as if you were actually dead on the bier, and she stood weeping over your corpse.

I remember, in the hour of overwhelming anguish when I feared that my beloved wife was about to be taken from me, how I was comforted by the loving prayers of my two dear sons; we had communion not only in our grief, but in our confidence in the living God. We knelt together and poured out our hearts unto God, and we were comforted. How I blessed God that I had in my children such sweet support! But suppose they had been ungodly young men! I should have looked in vain for holy fellowship, and for aid at the throne of grace. Alas! In many a household the mother cannot have communion with her own son or daughter on that point which is most vital and enduring, because they are spiritually dead, while she has been quickened into newness of life by the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, *spiritual death soon produces manifest causes for sorrow.* In the narrative before us the time had come when her son’s body must be buried. She could not wish to have that dead form longer in the home with her. It is a token to us of the terrible power of death, that it conquers love with regard to the body. Abraham loved his Sarah, but after a while he had to say to the sons of Heth, “Give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.” It happens in some mournful cases that character becomes so bad that no comfort in life can be enjoyed while the erring one is within the home circle.

We have known parents who have felt that they could not have their son at home, so drunken, so debauched had he become. Not always wisely, yet sometimes almost of necessity, the plan has been tried of sending the incorrigible youth to a distant colony, in the hope that when removed from pernicious influences he might do better. How seldom so deplorable an experiment succeeds! I have known mothers who could not think of their sons without feeling pangs far more bitter than those they endured at their birth. Woe, woe to him who causes such heartbreak! What an awful thing it is when love’s best hopes gradually die down into despair, and loving desires at last put on mourning, and turn from prayers of hope to tears of regret! Words of admonition call forth such passion and blasphemy that prudence almost silences them.

Then have we before us the dead young man carried out to his grave. A sorrowful voice sobs out, “He is given unto idols, let him alone.” Am I addressing one whose life is now preying upon the tender heart of her that brought him forth? Do I speak to one whose outward conduct has at last become so avowedly wicked that he is a daily death to those who gave him life? O young man, can you bear to think of this? Are you turned to stone? I cannot yet believe that you contemplate your parents’ heartbreak without bitter feelings. God forbid that you should!

We also mourn because of the future of men dead in sin. This mother, whose son had already gone so far in death that he must be buried out of sight, had the further knowledge that something worse would befall him in the sepulcher to which he was being carried. It was impossible for her to think calmly of the corruption which surely follows at the heels of death. When we think of what will become of you who refuse the Lord Christ we are appalled. “After death the judgment.” We could more readily go into details as to a putrid corpse than we could survey the state of a soul lost forever. We dare not

linger at the mouth of hell, but we are forced to remind you that there is a place, “where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched.”

There is a place where those must abide who are driven from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. It is an unendurable thought, that you should be “cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death.” I do not wonder that those who are not honest with you are afraid to tell you so, and that you try yourself to doubt it, but with the Bible in your hand, and a conscience in your bosom, you cannot but fear the worst if you remain apart from Jesus and the life He freely gives. If you continue as you are, and persevere in your sin and unbelief to the end of life, there is no help for it but that you must be condemned in the day of judgment. The most solemn declarations of the Word of God assure you that “he that believeth not shall be damned.”

It is heartbreaking work to think that this should be the case with any one of you. You prattled at your mother’s knee, and kissed her cheek with rapturous love, why, then, will you be divided from her forever? Your father hoped that you would take his place in the church of God, how is it that you do not even care to follow him to heaven? Remember, the day comes when “one shall be taken, and the other left.” Do you renounce all hope of being with your wife, your sister, your mother, at the right hand of God? You cannot wish them to go down to hell with you, have you no desire to go to heaven with them? “Come, ye blessed,” will be the voice of Jesus to those who imitated their gracious Savior, and “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,” must be the sentence upon all who refuse to be made like the Lord. Why will you take your part and lot with accursed ones?

I do not know whether you find it easy to hear me this morning. I find it very hard to speak to you, because my lips are not able to express my heart’s feelings. Oh that I had the forceful utterance of an Isaiah, or the passionate lamentations of a Jeremiah, with which to arouse your affections and your fears! Still, the Holy Spirit can use even me, and I beseech Him so to do. It is enough. I am sure you see that the spiritually dead cause great grief to those of their family who are spiritually alive.

II. Now let me cheer you while I introduce the second head of my discourse, which is this, FOR SUCH GRIEF THERE IS ONLY ONE HELPER: BUT THERE IS A HELPER.

This young man is taken out to be buried, but *our Lord Jesus Christ met the funeral procession.* Carefully note the “coincidences,” as skeptics call them, but as we call them “‘providences’ of Scripture.” This is a fine subject for another time. Take this one case. How came it that the young man died just then? How came it that this exact hour was selected for his burial? Perhaps because it was evening, but even that might not fix the precise moment. Why did the Savior that day arrange to travel five and twenty miles, so as to arrive at Nain in the evening? How came it to pass that He happened just then to be coming from a quarter which naturally led Him to enter at that particular gate from which the dead would be borne?

See, He ascends the hill to the little city at the same moment when the head of the procession is coming out of the gate! He meets the dead man before the place of sepulture is reached. A little later and he would have been buried, a little earlier and he would have been at home lying in the darkened room, and no one might have called the Lord’s attention to him.

The Lord knows how to arrange all things, His forecasts are true to the tick of the clock. I hope some great purpose is to be fulfilled this morning. I do not know why you, my friend, came in here on a day when I am discoursing on this particular subject. You did not think to come, perhaps, but here you are. And Jesus has come here too, He has come here on purpose to meet you, and quicken you to newness of life. There is no chance about it, eternal decrees have arranged it all, and we shall soon see that it is so. You being spiritually dead are met by Him in whom is life eternal.

The blessed Savior saw all at a glance. Out of that procession He singled out the chief mourner, and read her inmost heart. He was always tender to mothers. He fixed His eye on that widow, for He knew that she was such, without being informed of the fact. The dead man is her only son, He perceives all the details, and feels them all intensely. Nothing is hid from His infinite mind. Your mother’s heart and yours are both open to Him. O young man, Jesus knows all about you. Jesus, who is invisibly present

this morning, fixes His eyes on you at this moment. He has seen the tears of those who have wept for you. He sees that some of them despair of you, and are in their great grief acting like mourners at your funeral.

Jesus saw it all, and what was more, *entered into it all*. Oh, how we ought to love our Lord that He takes such notice of our griefs, and especially our spiritual griefs about the souls of others! You, dear teacher, want your class saved, Jesus sympathizes with you. You, dear friend, have been very earnest to win souls. Know that in all this you are workers together with God. Jesus knows all about our travail of soul, and He is at one with us therein. Our travail is only His own travail rehearsed in us, according to our humble measure. When Jesus enters into our work it cannot fail. Enter, O Lord, into my work at this hour, I pray You, and bless this feeble word to my hearers! I know that hundreds of believers are saying, "Amen." How this cheers me!

Our Lord proved how He entered into the sorrowful state of things by first saying to the widow, "Weep not." At this moment He says to you who are praying and agonizing for souls "Do not despair! Sorrow not as those who are without hope! I mean to bless you. You shall yet rejoice over life given to the dead." Let us take heart and dismiss all unbelieving fear.

Our Lord then went to the bier, and just laid His finger upon it, and *they that bare it stood still of their own accord*. Our Lord has a way of making bearers stand still without a word. Perhaps today yonder young man is being carried further into sin by the four bearers of his natural passions, his infidelity, his bad company, and his love of strong drink. It may be that pleasure and pride, willfulness and wickedness are bearing the four corners of the bier, but our Lord can, by His mysterious power, make the bearers stand still. Evil influences have become powerless, the man knows not how.

When they stood quite still, *there was a hush*. The disciples stood around the Lord, the mourners surrounded the widow, and the two crowds faced each other. There was a little space, and Jesus and the dead man were in the center. The widow pushed away her veil, and gazing through her tears wondered what was coming. The Jews who came out of the city halted as the bearers had done. Hush! Hush! What will HE do? In that deep silence the Lord heard the unspoken prayers of that widow woman. I doubt not that her soul began to whisper, half in hope, and half in fear—"Oh, that He would raise my son!" At any rate, Jesus heard the flutter of the wings of desire if not of faith. Surely her eyes were speaking as she gazed on Jesus, who had so suddenly appeared. Here let us be as quiet as the scene before us. Let us be hushed for a minute, and pray God to raise dead souls at this time. (Here followed a pause, much silent prayer, and many tears).

III. That hush was not long, for speedily the Great Quickener entered upon His gracious work. This is our third point, JESUS IS ABLE TO WORK THE MIRACLE OF LIFE-GIVING.

Jesus Christ has life in Himself, and He quickens whom He will (Joh 5:21). Such life is there in Him that "he that liveth and believeth in him, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Our blessed Lord immediately went up to the bier. What lay before Him? It was a corpse. *He could derive no aid from that lifeless form*. The spectators were sure that he was dead, for they were carrying him out to bury him. No deception was possible, for his own mother believed him dead, and you may be sure that if there had been a spark of life in him she would not have given him up to the jaws of the grave. There was then no hope—no hope from the dead man, no hope from any one in the crowd either of bearers or of disciples. They were all powerless alike. Even so, you, O sinner, cannot save yourself, neither can any of us, or all of us save you.

There is no help for you, dead sinner, beneath yon skies, no help in yourself or in those who love you best. But lo, the Lord has laid help on one that is mighty. If Jesus wants the least help you cannot render it, for you are dead in sins. There you lie, dead on the bier, and nothing but the sovereign power of divine omnipotence can put heavenly life into you. Your help must come from above.

While the bier stood still, Jesus spoke to the dead young man, *spoke to him personally*, "Young man, I say unto you, Arise." O Master, personally speak to some young man this morning, or, if You will, speak to the old, or speak to a woman, but speak the word home to them. We mind not where the Lord's

voice may fall. Oh that it would now call those around me, for I feel that there are dead ones all over the building! I stand with biers all about me, and dead ones on them. Lord Jesus, are You not here? What is wanted is Your personal call. Speak, Lord, we beseech You!

“Young man,” said He, “Arise,” and *He spoke as if the man had been alive*. This is the Gospel way. He did not wait till He saw signs of life before He bade him rise, but to the dead man He said, “Arise.” This is the model of Gospel preaching, in the name of the Lord Jesus, His commissioned servants speak to the dead as if they were alive. Some of my brethren quibble at this, and say that it is inconsistent and foolish, but all through the New Testament it is even so. There we read, “Arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.” I do not attempt to justify it, it is more than enough for me that so I read the Word of God.

We are to bid men believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, even though we know that they are dead in sin, and that faith is the work of the Spirit of God. Our faith enables us in God’s name to command dead men to live, and they do live. We bid unbelieving man believe in Jesus, and power goes with the Word, and God’s elect do believe. It is by this word of faith which we preach that the voice of Jesus sounds out to men. The young man, who could not rise, for he was dead, nevertheless did rise when Jesus bade him. Even so, when the Lord speaks by His servants the Gospel command, “Believe and live,” is obeyed, and men live.

But the Savior, you observe, *spoke with His own authority*—“Young man, *I say unto you*, Arise.” Neither Elijah nor Elisha could thus have spoken, but He who spoke thus was very God of very God. Though veiled in human flesh, and clothed in lowliness, He was that same God who said, “Let there be light, and there was light.” If any of us are able by faith to say, “Young man, Arise,” we can only say it in *His* name—we have no authority but what we derive from *Him*. Young man, the voice of Jesus can do what your mother cannot. How often has her sweet voice wooed you to come to Jesus, but wooed in vain!

Oh, that the Lord Jesus would inwardly speak to you! Oh, that He would say, “Young man, Arise.” I trust that while I am speaking the Lord is silently speaking in your hearts by His Holy Spirit. I feel sure that it is even so. If so, within you a gentle movement of the Spirit is inclining you to repent and yield your heart to Jesus. This shall be a blessed day to the spiritually dead young man, if now he accepts his Savior, and yields himself up to be renewed by grace. No, my poor brother, they shall not bury you! I know you have been very bad, and they may well despair of you, but while Jesus lives we cannot give you up.

The miracle was wrought straightway, for this young man, to the astonishment of all about him, sat up. His was a desperate case, but death was conquered, for he sat up. He had been called back from the innermost dungeon of death, even from the grave’s mouth, but he sat up when Jesus called him. It did not take a month, nor a week, nor an hour, no, not even five minutes. Jesus said, “Young man, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak.”

In an instant the Lord can save a sinner. Ere the words I speak can have more than entered your ear, the divine flash which gives you eternal life can have penetrated your breast, and you shall be a new creature in Jesus Christ, beginning to live in newness of life from this hour, no more to feel spiritually dead, or to return to your old corruption. New life, new feeling, new love, new hopes, new company shall be yours, because you have passed from death unto life. Pray God that it may be so, for He will hear us.

IV. Our time has gone, and although we have a wide subject we may not linger. I must close by noticing that THIS WILL PRODUCE VERY GREAT RESULTS. To give life to the dead is no little matter.

The great result was manifest, first, in the young man. Would you like to see him as he was? Might I venture to draw back the sheet from his face? See there what death has done? He was a fine young man. To his mother’s eye he was the mirror of manhood! What a pallor is on that face! How sunken are the eyes! You are feeling sad. I see you cannot bear the sight. Come, look into this grave, where corruption

has gone further in its work. Cover him up! We cannot bear to look at the decaying body! But when Jesus Christ has said, "Arise," what a change takes place! Now you may look at him. His blue eye has the light of heaven in it, his lips are coral red with life, his brow is fair and full of thought. Look at his healthy complexion, in which the rose and the lily sweetly contend for mastery. What a fresh look there is about him, as of the dew of the morning! He has been dead, but he lives, and no trace of death is on him.

While you are looking at him he begins to speak. What music for his mother's ear! What did he say? Why, that I cannot tell you. Speak yourself as a newly-quickened one, and then I shall hear what you say. I know what *I* said. I think the first word I said when I was quickened was, "Hallelujah." Afterwards, I went home to my mother, and told her that the Lord had met with me. No words are given here. It does not quite matter what those words are, for any words proved him to be alive.

If you know the Lord, I believe you will speak of heavenly things. I do not believe that our Lord Jesus has a dumb child in His house, they all speak *to* Him, and most of them speak *of* Him. The new birth reveals itself in confession of Christ, and praise of Christ. I warrant you, that his mother, when she heard him speak, did not criticize what he said. She did not say, "That sentence is ungrammatical." She was too glad to hear him speak at all, that she did not examine all the expressions which he used.

Newly-saved souls often talk in a way which after years and experience will not justify. You often hear it said of a revival meeting, that there was a good deal of excitement, and certain young converts talked absurdly. That is very likely, but if genuine grace was in their souls, and they bore witness to the Lord Jesus, I for one would not criticize them very severely. Be glad if you can see any proof that they are born again, and mark well their future lives. To the young man himself a new life had begun—life from among the dead.

A new life also had begun in reference to *his mother*. What a great result for her was the raising of her dead son! Henceforth he would be doubly dear. Jesus helped him down from the bier, and delivered him to his mother. We have not the words He used, but we are sure that He made the presentation most gracefully, giving back the son to the mother as one presents a choice gift. With a majestic delight which always goes with His condescending benevolence, He looked on that happy woman, and His glance was brighter to her than the light of the morning, as He said to her, "Receive your son." The thrill of her heart was such as she would never forget.

Observe carefully that our Lord, when He puts the new life into young men, does not want to take them away with Him from the home where their first duty lies. Here and there one is called away to be an apostle or a missionary, but usually He wants them to go home to their friends, and bless their parents, and make their families happy and holy. He does not present the young man to the priest, but He delivers him to his mother.

Do not say, "I am converted, and therefore I cannot go to business any more, or try to support my mother by my trade." That would prove that you were not converted at all. You may go for a missionary in a year or two's time if you are fitted for it, but you must not make a dash at a matter for which you are not prepared. For the present go home to your mother, and make your home happy, and charm your father's heart, and be a blessing to your brothers and sisters, and let them rejoice because "he was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

What was the next result? Well, all the neighbors feared and glorified God. If yonder young man who last night was at the music-hall, and a few nights ago came home very nearly drunk, if that young man is born again, all around him will wonder at it. If that young man who has got himself out of a situation by gambling, or some other wrong-doing, is saved, we shall all feel that God is very near us. If that young man who has begun to associate with evil women, and to fall into other evils, is brought to be pure-minded and gracious, it will strike awe into those round about him. He has led many others astray, and if the Lord now leads him back it will make a great hubbub, and men will inquire as to the reason of the change, and will see that there is a power in religion after all.

Conversions are miracles which never cease. These prodigies of power in the moral world are quite as remarkable as prodigies in the material world. We want conversion, so practical, so real, so divine, that those who doubt will not be able to doubt, because they see in them the hand of God.

Finally, note that it not only surprised the neighbors and impressed them, but the rumor of it went everywhere. Who can tell? If a convert is made this morning, the result of that conversion may be felt for thousands of years, if the world stands so long, ay, it shall be felt when a thousand thousand years have passed away, even throughout eternity. Tremblingly have I dropped a smooth stone into the lake this morning. It has fallen from a feeble hand and from an earnest heart. Your tears have shown that the waters are stirred. I perceive the first circling upon the surface. Other and wider circles will follow as the sermon is spoken of and read. When you go home and tell what God has done for your soul, there will be a wider ring, and if it should happen that the Lord should open the mouth of one of this morning's converts to preach His word, then no one can tell how wide the circle will become. Ring upon ring will the word spread itself, until the shoreless ocean of eternity shall feel the influence of this morning's word.

No, I am not dreaming. According to our faith so shall it be. Grace this day bestowed by the Lord upon one single soul may affect the whole mass of humanity. God grant His blessing, even life for evermore. Pray much for a blessing. My dear friends, I beseech you, for Jesus Christ's sake, pray much for me. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—LUKE 7

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—257, 233, 448

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.