

A REFRESHING CANTICLE

NO. 2794

A SERMON

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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,

AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK,
ON A LORD'S-DAY EVENING, IN THE WINTER OF 1860.

*“We will remember Your love more than wine.”
Solomon's Song 1:4.*

THE Hebrew word for “love” here is in the plural: “We will remember Your *loves*.” Think not, however, that the love of Jesus is divided, but know that it has different channels of manifestation. All the affections that Christ has, He bestows upon His Church; and these are so varied that they may well be called “loves” rather than “love.” The Septuagint translation is, “We will remember Your *breasts*.” Bossuet, and many of the Romanist expositors who have brought much sanctity of thought and fervent appreciation of heart to bear upon this superlative Song, dilate very sweetly upon the word “breasts” as it appears in the Latin Vulgate. I am disposed to be content with our own Version, with the alteration of one letter: “We will remember Your *loves* more than wine.” By this expression we must understand, of course, all the love of Jesus, from the beginning even to the end; or, rather, to that eternity which has no end. We will remember those acts of love of which we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us. It has been told us by inspired prophets, and God has revealed it to us in His Word, by His Spirit, that Jesus Christ loved us from before the foundation of the world. We believe that His love is no passion of modern date—no mere spasm of pity. It is ancient as His glory which He had with the Father before the world was, it is one of the things of eternity. This love divine is not a spring that welled up only a few days ago, but it is an everlasting fountain which has never ceased to flow.

We will remember, O Jesus, that love of Yours which was displayed in the council chamber of eternity, when You did, on our behalf, interpose as the Daysman and Mediator; when You did strike hands with Your Father, and become our Surety, and take us as Your betrothed! We will remember that love which moved You to undertake a work so burdensome to accomplish, an enterprise which none but Yourself ever could have achieved. We will remember the love which suggested the sacrifice of Yourself; the love which, until the fullness of time, mused over that sacrifice, and longed for the hour of which, in the volume of the Book it was written of You, “Lo, I come.” We will remember Your love, O Jesus, as it was manifested to us in Your holy life, from the manger of Bethlehem to the garden of Gethsemane! We will track You from the cradle to the grave, for every word and every deed of Yours was love. You, wherever You did walk, did scatter lovingkindnesses with both Your hands. As it is said of Your Father, “God is love,” so, surely, You are love, O Jesus! The fullness of the Godhead dwells in You; the essence of love, nothing else but love, is Your incarnate person.

And especially, O Jesus, will we remember Your love to us upon the cross! We will view You as You come from the garden of Your agony, and from the hall of Your flagellation. We will gaze upon You with Your hands and Your feet nailed to the accursed tree. We will watch You when You could, if You had willed it, have saved Yourself; but when You did, nevertheless, give up Your strength, and bow Yourself downward to the grave that You might lift us up to heaven. We will remember Your love which You did manifest through Your poor, bleeding hands, and feet, and side. We will remember this love of Yours till it invigorates and cheers us “more than wine”—the love, of which we have heard, which You have exercised since Your death, the love of Your resurrection, the love which prompts You continually to intercede before Your Father's throne, that burning lamp of love which will never let You hold Your peace until Your chosen ones are all safely housed, Zion is glorified, and the spiritual Jerusalem is settled on her everlasting foundations of light and love in heaven. We will remember all Your love, from its beginning

in the eternal past to the eternity that is to come; no, we will try to project our thoughts and imagination, and so to remember that as long as eternity shall continue, even forever and for evermore, so long shall Your love exist in all its glory, undiminished in its luster or its force. “We will remember Your love more than wine.

Nor is this all the love we have to remember. Though we ought to recollect what we have heard, and what we have been taught, I think the spouse means more than this. “We will remember Your loves”—not only what we have been told, but what we have felt. Come, dear hearers, let each one of you speak for yourselves; or, rather, do you think of this for yourselves, and let me speak of it for you. I will remember Your love, O Jesus; Your love to me when I was a stranger, wandering far from God; the love which restrained me from committing deadly sin, and withheld my hand from self-destruction! I will remember the love which tracked me in my course—

“When Satan’s blind slave, I sported with death.”

I will remember the love which held back the axe when Justice said, “Cut it down; why cumberst it the ground?” I will remember the love that took me into the wilderness, and stripped me there of all my self-righteousness, and made me feel my weight of guilt, and the burden of my iniquity. Especially will I remember the love which said to me, “Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.” I cannot forget that matchless love which, in a moment, washed my sins away, and made my spotted soul white as the driven snow. Can *you* forget, my brothers and sisters, that happiest of days when Jesus first whispered to you, “I am yours, and you are Mine”? I can never forget the transporting hour when He spoke thus to me; it is as fresh in my memory now as if it had only happened this afternoon. I could sing of it if it were right to stop a sermon for a sonnet; I could sing of that love, passing all measure, which took my soul, and washed it in the precious blood of Jesus, and then clothed it in the spotless robe of His righteousness. O love divine, You do excel all other loves, that You could deal with such a rebellious, traitorous worm, and make that worm an heir of heaven!

But we have more love than this to recollect—all the love that we have felt since then. I will remember the valley of Baca and the Hill Mizar; nor shall my soul forget those chambers of fellowship where You have unveiled Yourself to me. If Moses had his cleft in the rock, where he could see the back parts of his God, we also have had our clefts in the rock, where we have seen the full splendors of the Godhead in the person of Christ. Did David remember the tracks of the wild goat, where he was hunted on the mountains—the cave of Adullam, the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites? We, too, can remember spots equally dear to these in blessedness. “The Lord has appeared of old unto me, saying, Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.” Christian, can you not recollect the sweet exchanges there have been between yourself and your Lord, when you have left your griefs at His feet, and borne away a song? Can you not remember some happy seasons when you went to Him empty, and came away full? Is your heart heavy just now? It has not always been so. There have been times when, like David, you could dance before the Lord; times of holy merriment when, like Miriam, you could strike your timbrel, and say to those around you, “Sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously.” There have been times when Jesus and you have not been strangers to one another, for He has linked His arms in yours, and walked along with you; and there have been other times when your head has been upon His bosom, and you could feel His heart beating with warm love to you.

Thus, then, in the summary of Christ’s loves, which I will now humbly endeavor to pass in review, it will be necessary for me to mention, not only the love we have heard about, but the love we have felt and enjoyed. Do not suppose dear brothers and sisters, that I am able to refresh your memories upon this sacred subject. It is the Holy Spirit’s work to assist you in that matter; but I do trust that the resolution contained in our text will be formed in the heart of every one of you, “We will remember Your loves more than wine,” and that you will have the grace to carry out that resolution.

I. Here then, beloved, we have A RESOLUTION POSITIVELY EXPRESSED: “We *will* remember Your love.”

Why does the spouse speak so positively? Because she is inspired; she is not like Simon Peter when he said, “Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.” She is speaking the truth, for she will not forget the love of her Lord. Why is that? For one very good reason, because she cannot. If the Church could forget Christ’s love to her, she would do so. She is such a forgetful wife that all her Husband’s affections

would be lost upon her, were it possible. But that cannot be; there is something about the love of Christ that makes it adhere to those upon whom it is bestowed; we cannot forget it. It enters into the heart, like wine that seasons the cask, and the scent thereof abides. It pervades the soul; it permeates every faculty; it brings the secret thoughts into obedience to Christ; it flows through every vein of hope and fear, passion and desire. So the spouse could truthfully say to her Lord, "We *will* remember Your love." The virtue was not in her own constancy, but in the tenacity of His affection, wherefore she could not help remembering it.

What is there, in the love of Christ that will compel us to remember it? The things that we recollect best are of certain kinds.

Some that we remember best have been *sublime things*. When we have stood, for the first time, where we could see a lofty mountain, whose snowy summit pierced the thick ebon clouds, we have said, "We shall never forget this sight." When Humboldt, the great traveler, had his first view of the vast prairies of North America, he declared that he could never forget the sensations of that moment. I can imagine how Dr. Livingstone, when he first came in sight of the magnificent falls which he discovered, might well say, "To my dying day, I shall hear the rushing of that tremendous stream of water." I can myself remember an unusually violent thunderstorm, when the lightning flew across the heavens, flash after flash, without a moment's pause, as though a thousand suns were dashing through the sky. I recollect the consternation of men and women when a neighboring house was struck by the lightning, and burnt with a terrific blaze, which could scarcely be seen by reason of the brightness of the lightning. My recollection of that terrible scene will never depart from me. The sublimity of what we have seen often causes us to remember it. So is it with the love of Christ. How it towers to heaven! And mark how brightness succeeds brightness, how flash follows after flash of love unspeakable and full of glory! There is no pause, no interval of darkness or blackness, no chasm of forgetfulness. Its sublimity compels us to remember its manifestation.

Again, we are pretty sure to recollect *unusual things*. If we were asked whether we remembered that the sun had risen, we might say, "It is not a matter of memory at all. I feel certain that it did, though I did not see it." But if we are asked if we ever saw an eclipse, "Oh, yes!" we reply, "we recollect that; we remember watching it, and how disappointed we were because it was not as dark as we expected it to be." Many people do not notice the stars much, but who forgets a comet? Everybody recollects that phenomenon of nature because it is unusual. When we see something strange, uncommon, out of the ordinary way, the memory at once fixes upon it, and holds it fast. So is it with the love of Christ. It is such an extraordinary thing, such a marvelous thing, that the like was never known. Ransack history, and you cannot find its parallel. There is but one love that is like it, that is the love of the Father to His only-begotten Son. Besides this, there is nothing to which we can compare the love of Christ to His people. That constellation of the cross is the most marvelous that is to be seen in the spiritual sky; the eye, once spellbound by its charms, must retain its undying admiration, because it is the greatest wonder of wonders and miracle of miracles which the universe ever saw.

Sometimes, too, things which are not important in themselves are fixed on the memory because of *certain circumstances* which happen in association with them. The country people often say, if you ask them whether they recollect such-and-such a year, "Ah, Master! It was the year of the hard frost, wasn't it?" Another time they will say, "Why, yes! That was the year when the blight fell upon our gardens, and all our potatoes were of no use, and we were nearly starved that winter." Circumstances help to make us recollect facts. If something particular in politics should happen on our birthday, or our wedding day, or on some other notable occasion, we would say, "Oh, yes! I recollect that; it happened the day I was married, or the day So-and-So was buried." Now, we can never forget the love of Christ because the circumstances were so peculiar when, for the first time, we knew anything at all about it. We were plunged in sin and ruin; we were adrift on the great sea of sin, we had no hope, we were ready to sink, and no shore was near; but Jesus came and saved us. We can never forget those circumstances; with some of us, they were truly awful, beyond all description. Therefore, we cannot forget the time when Jesus' love first dawned upon our minds.

I think, my dear friends, I might give you twenty reasons why it would be impossible for the children of God to forget the love of Christ to them; but above and beyond every other reason is this one, *Christ will not let His people forget His love*. If, at any time, He finds them forgetful, He will come to them, and

refresh their memories. If all the love they have ever enjoyed should be forgotten by them, He will give them some fresh manifestations of love. "Have you forgotten My cross?" He asks; "then I will cause you to remember it afresh, for at My table I will manifest Myself to you as I have not done of late. Do you forget what I did for you in the council chamber of eternity? Then I will remind you of it, for you still need a Counselor, and I will come to your relief just when you are at your wits' end, and I will give you wisdom. Have you forgotten that I called you to Myself when you were a stranger? I will bring you back from your wanderings, and then you will recollect Me again." Mothers do not let their children forget them if they can help it. If the boy has gone to Australia, and he does not write home, his mother writes to him, "Has my John forgotten his mother?" Then there comes back a sweet epistle which lets the mother know that the gentle hint she gave him was not lost. So is it with Christ; He often says to one of His forgetful children, "What! Is your heart cold to Him who loved you so much that He could not live in heaven without you, but must necessarily come to earth, go out into the wilderness, up to the cross, and down to the grave in order to find you?" You can be sure that He will have our hearts; prone to wander, He knows that they are, and we feel it ourselves, but He will have them. Oh, that He would drive the nail of the cross right through your hearts, that it might be forever fastened there! Painful might the process be; some sharp affliction might tear your flesh; yet, if that would bring you near your Lord, and keep you near Him, you might thank Him even for the affliction, and love Him all the more because of it.

II. Now let us advance another step, and look at THE COMPARATIVE RESOLUTION: "We will remember Your love *more than wine.*"

Why is "wine" mentioned here? I take it to be used here as a figure. The fruit of the vine represents the chief of earthly luxuries. "I will remember Your love more than the choicest or most exhilarating comforts which this world can give me." We have many things which we might compare to wine, in the good and in the bad sense, too—good, because they cheer, and comfort, and invigorate; bad, because, when we rely upon them, they intoxicate, they overthrow, and cast down to the ground. We very readily remember the good things of earth for a season. When creature comforts abound with us, and we have happy and merry days, we recollect them; and when nights of darkness come upon us, we remember the days of our brightness, and we talk of them. It is so with the widow bereaved of her husband; she remembers the days of her happiness, when the partner of her joys was with her; she recollects his affectionate words, and his sweet deeds of love. In the case of the mother bereaved of her child, she recalls the love that child had to her, and the solace it was to her when her little one slept on her bosom. Have you become poor? Then the "wine" that you recollect is the wealth you once possessed; you remember how you had no need to tramp over weary miles, and to shiver in the wintry cold. Now that your pain has come, you recollect your former joy, and it makes your present pain all the more painful. This "wine" may be, to a minister, the joy of being successful; and there may come to him days when his chapel will be half-empty, and then he will look back, with regret, upon the joys he once possessed. The spouse says, "We will remember Your love more than all earthly comforts." She cannot help doing so; if she could, she would recollect the world rather than heaven; she would have a remembrance of creature comforts, and she would be forgetful of her Lord.

The fact is the impression which the love of Christ makes on the true believer is far *greater and deeper* than the impression which is made by anything earthly. Mere mortal joys write their record on the sand, and their memory is soon effaced; but Christ's love is like an inscription cut deeply into marble, the remembrance of it is deeply engraved in our hearts. The joy of the creature is something like a lithograph cut lightly on the stone; when the stone is cleaned, the picture is gone; but the love of Christ is like the steel engraving, it is deeply cut, and cannot be easily erased. Earthly joys tread with light feet, and leave but a faint impression; but the love of Christ treads into the very core of our soul at every footstep, and therefore it is that we remember it better than we remember any earthly pleasure.

Earthly comforts, too, like wine, leave but a *mingled impression*. In the cup of joy there is a dash of sorrow. There is nothing we have here below which is not somewhat tainted with grief. Solomon has warned us against the sparkling wine: "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it gives his color in the cup, when it moves itself aright. At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder." Even friendship, the very cream of joy, trembles on the confines of disappointment, as it is written, "Cursed be the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm." But in Christ's love there is nothing for you to ever

regret; when you have enjoyed it to the full, you cannot say that there has been any bitterness in it. When you have come forth from the secret chamber of communion with your Lord, you have realized the purity of His love, there has been nothing to qualify your enjoyment of it. When you have been to a party of your friends, you have said, “I have been very happy, *but*—I could not enjoy myself there six days in a week;” but when you have been with Christ, you have felt that you could enjoy yourself in that way to all eternity; you could not have too much of such fellowship, for there was nothing in it to mar your happiness. True, there is the remembrance of your sin, but that is so sweetly covered by your Lord’s forgiveness and graciousness, that His love is indeed better than wine. It has had all the good effects of wine, but none of its ill results.

Equally true is it that the remembrance of earth’s comforts, of which wine is the type, must be but *transient*. If the sinner could live many days, and have much wealth, would he remember it when he entered the unseen world? Ah! He might remember it, but it would be with awful sighs and sobs. You know how Abraham spoke, across the great gulf, to the rich man in hell, “Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and you are tormented.” But we can say, of the love of Christ, that it is better than wine, for we shall rejoice to remember it in eternity—

*“There, on a green and flowery mount,
Our weary souls shall sit
And with transporting joys recount”—*

What shall we recount? Dr. Watts says—

“The labors of our feet;”

but I do not think so; I believe we shall recount the labors of Him who lived and died for us. That is what we shall talk of in heaven; sure I am that this is the theme of all the music and songs of Paradise—

*“Jesus, the Lord, their harps employ,
Jesus, my Love, they sing!
Jesus, the life of all our joys
Sounds sweet from every string.”*

Do you not see, then, why this comparison is made in our text? We remember Christ’s love more than the best earthly comforts, because they make but a feeble impression, a mingled impression, a marred impression, and their impression, at best, is but transient; but the love of Christ is remembered as something that is better than wine.

I have to hurry over these different points; but if you enjoy hearing about this subject as much as I delight in preaching upon it, you would not mind listening to me all night long, and I should not mind preaching right through the night. Surely, this is a theme that sets one’s tongue at a happy liberty. “My tongue is the pen of a ready writer” if I can but feel the love of Christ shed abroad in my heart.

III. Now, thirdly, I am to speak of THE PRACTICAL EFFECTS OF REMEMBERING CHRIST’S LOVE.

If we remember the love of Christ to us, the first practical effect will be that *we shall love Him*. Can I remember Your love to me, O my sweet Lord, and not love You in return? Surely, Dr. Watts was right when he wrote—

*“Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all Your quickening powers,
Come, shed abroad a Savior’s love,
And that shall kindle ours.”*

True is it, O Jesus, that there is no light of love in our hearts except the light of Your love! It is the holy fire from Your altar that must kindle the incense in the censer of our hearts. There is no living water to be drawn out of these dry wells; you, O Jesus, must supply them from the bubbling spring in Your own heart! When my heart is conscious of Your love, it loves You in return.

Another practical effect of remembering Christ’s love will be, *love to the brethren*. When we remember Christ’s love as we ought, we shall not meet one of Christ’s brethren without falling in love with him directly. Christ has some very poor brethren, and some very unhandsome ones. David sent to inquire whether there were any left of the house of Saul to whom he might show kindness for Jonathan’s sake. Ziba told him that Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth who was lame on his feet. What did David

do when he heard this? Did he say, "I will have nothing to do with him; I do not want a lame fellow like that stumbling about my palace"? Oh, no! He might be lame on his feet, but he was Jonathan's son; so David sent for him, and said to him, "You shall eat bread at my table continually." Did you ever know one of Christ's beloved who was lame on his feet? There is a little lameness, somewhere or other, about all of them; and if we only love those saints who are very holy, it will seem as if we only loved them for their own sakes; but if we love Christ's deformed and crippled children, that looks like loving them for His sake. And, I think, if you could remember what a clumsy child you were yourself, you would not look with such disdain upon any of God's other children. Ministers have much to bear in connection with some of their people. One man's judgment is so keen that you are always afraid of saying something amiss in his presence; another man's temper is so hot that you cannot meddle with him for fear you should provoke a quarrel; another man is so worldly that although he has the grace of God in his heart, it seems to be only like a spark in damp tinder. Christ has many very unseemly children; yet if we can but see that they are Christ's, if they have only a little likeness to Him, we love them directly for His sake, and are willing to do what we can for them out of love to Him. The remembrance of the love of Christ to us will, I repeat, always kindle in us a love towards all the brethren.

The next effect will be *holy practice*. When we remember the love of Christ to us, we shall hate sin. Feeling that He has bought us with His precious blood, we shall abhor the very name of iniquity. When Satan tempts us, we shall each one say, "Get you gone; for I will have nothing to do with you; I remember Christ's love to me." Have you ever heard the story of the Indian woman, who, when she was enticed by some great chief, who wished to lead her astray, made to him this noble answer, "I know no one in the world to be beautiful or attractive but my husband"? So will the believer say, when he is tempted, "I know of nothing that is good but Christ; I know of no one who is so fair as He is; so be gone, black Satan, my heart is given wholly to Christ, and I will have nothing to do with you."

Another effect of remembering the love of Christ will be *repose of heart in time of trouble*. When we have, for a while, lost the light of God's countenance; when we are like the apostle in that great storm at sea, and are in a place where two seas meet, and our vessel is already broken by the violence of the waves, when darkness increases our fears, or daylight reveals fresh dangers, then is it especially sweet to remember the love of our Lord. In such a time as that, the tried believer can say, "He did love me once, and His love never changes. Though I cannot now see the light of His countenance, I know that He is still the same as He always was. I remember the garden of delights where He revealed His love to me, and the banqueting house where He gave me such choice fare; and I feel persuaded that He has not forgotten His poor spouse, but that He will come to her again, and once more lift her out of the mire, set her feet upon a rock, put a new song into her mouth, and establish her goings." A constant remembrance of Christ's love to us will make us always cheerful, dutiful, holy. Dear Lord, grant us this gift; for if You will enable us to remember Your love more than wine, You will give us all good things in one. Let Your good Spirit but keep us up to this good resolution, and we shall be both holy and happy, honoring You and rejoicing in You.

IV. Lastly, I would put before you A FEW PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS AS TO PRESERVING A DEEPER AND MORE SINCERE REMEMBRANCE OF CHRIST'S LOVE than you have hitherto done.

The old Puritan divines frequently compared their hearers to the Egyptian dog that ran to the Nile, and drank, and then ran away; they came up to the meeting house, and heard the minister, took a little sip of the gospel, which sufficed them, and then they were off! One preacher said that he wished they were like the fishes; not come and lap at the stream, as the dog did, but swim in it, and live in it. There are too many, in this age, who are content with hearing a little of Christ's love; a sip by the way is all that they seem to need. But it would be far better if you could come up to Rutherford's ideal, "I would have my soul sunk over its masthead in a sea of love to Christ. I would be sunk fifty fathoms deep in the mighty shoreless ocean of His love, so that there might be nothing left of me, and that I might be swallowed up in love to Christ, and in Christ's love to me."

I expect dear brethren and sisters, that, your complaint is that you cannot recollect good things as you gladly would. I know very well how you feel. You hear a sermon, and become, for a while, absorbed in holy meditation; but you have to return to your shop early tomorrow morning, and you only left it as late as twelve o'clock on Saturday night. There are six days for the world, and only one for heaven; it is no wonder that you find the sermon so difficult to remember. You remind me of a person going out into a

garden on a dark night, carrying a lighted candle. If the wind should blow, there is such a careful shielding of the light with the hand, lest it should be blown out. In like manner, it is but a feeble light that you bear away from the public ministry, and there are ten thousand winds blowing around you, and trying to put it out. You must indeed be careful to keep it alight all the week in your recollection. Let me give you a little practical advice as to how you may keep constantly in your mind a remembrance of Jesus Christ's love.

One of the first things I would recommend to you is *frequent meditation*. See if you cannot more often get a quarter of an hour all alone, that you may sit down, and turn over and over again the love of Christ to you. Remember that souls grow more by meditation than by anything else. The cattle go round the fields, and eat the grass; that is like hearing the Word. But, afterwards, they lie down in a quiet corner, and chew the cud; that is like meditating upon what we have heard. Get a quarter of an hour, if you can, to masticate and digest the Word. "A quarter of an hour!" says someone; "why, I could not get five minutes!" I would not be hard with you, dear brother, but I think you could; days can sometimes be pulled out either at one end or at the other. If you cannot lengthen the day at the night end, cannot you pull it out at the morning end? Is there not a possibility of a little saving of time at some hour during the day? You will do none the less work for allowing time for meditation and prayer. Our old proverb says, "Prayer and provender hinder no man's journey," and I believe that prayer and meditation hinder no man's work. Do try to get a little time to think about your soul. What, so much time to be occupied with this dusty, sinful world, and so little time to be devoted to that which relates to heaven! So much time to be employed concerning meat, and drink, and clothes, and so little time to be given to thoughts of our precious Savior and all His loveliness! Get a little time alone, beloved, for that will help to keep you right. You would not forget your Master's love nearly as much as you do if you would secure more time for meditation upon it.

Another means of remembering Christ's love is this. *Take care that you are not content with what you knew of Christ's love yesterday*. You want to know a little more about it today, and you ought to know still more about it tomorrow. Some Christians do not commune with their Lord nearly as often as they ought. I wonder how they manage to live on in such a fashion. They get a little manna once a month and they try to live on that until another month comes round. They meet with their Savior, perhaps, at the communion table—and not always then—and they are content to live from day to day without having fellowship with Him. Be not you one of that order of Christians. Seek for daily—no, more than that—continual communion with the Lord Jesus Christ. You are to pray for daily bread; then, surely, He who bade you do that must mean that you should seek to be fed daily with Himself, who is the Bread of heaven. I do not like to hear people talk about what they knew of Jesus five or six years ago, unless they can also tell something of what they know of Him now. What would you think of a wife who said, "My husband spoke kindly to me some years ago; and I saw him five years ago, but I have not seen him since"? You would say, "How can the woman live, if she is a loving wife, without seeing her husband? Is he in the same house with her, and yet has he not spoken to her all that while?" The Lord Jesus is always near to you, and do you mean to say that you can live without fellowship with Him? Yes, you can, for some of you do; but I pray you not to live so any longer, for it is a poor, starving way of dragging on a miserable existence. You have just enough religion to make you wretched; you have not enough to make you happy, get a great deal more of it. Drink deeply at the heavenly spring of fellowship. If you learn a little more about Christ every day, you will not be likely to forget what you already know of Him.

Then, again, as another way of keeping in your heart what you do know—*take care, when you have a sense of Christ's love, that you let it go down deeply*. If there were a nail so placed that it would slacken its hold a little every day for six days, if I had the opportunity of driving it in the first day, I would try to drive it in right up to the head, and to clinch it. So, if you have not much time for fellowship and communion with Christ, if you have only a short season for meditation, try to drive the nail well home. Do not be content with merely thinking about Christ, seek to see Him before your eyes as manifestly crucified. See Him as He groans in the garden, and do not be content unless you can groan with Him. See Him as He hangs upon the cross, and do not rest satisfied until you can feel that you are crucified with Him. Realize your fellowship with Him as He rises from the tomb, for this will help very much to keep you right.

I have heard the story of a man, who was passing by a house where a poor idiot lad, with a piece of sandpaper, was scouring away at a brass plate. The man asked what he was doing, and he replied, "I am

trying to scour the name out.” “Ah!” said the other, “You may scour away as long as you like, but you will never be able to do that.” And so, I think, I see the devil scouring away at some of you, trying to get the name of Jesus out of your heart. Scour away, Satan, if you like; but you will never get it out, for it is too deeply cut. If Christ’s name is engraved upon your heart, Satan may try to get it out, but he will never succeed in doing so; it shall never be obliterated, but shall shine all the more brightly for his attempts to remove it.

Let me add one more direction. When any of you meet together, it is always a good thing to *make Christ the theme of your conversation*. Oh, what a deal of idle gossip there is even on Sundays! Many people do not go out on Sunday afternoon, so they must talk about something. They do not like to talk about their trade; that would be too secular, they fancy. They do not like to talk about strictly sacred things; that might appear hypocritical, they think. So they begin, “Have you ever heard So-and-So preach?” “Yes, I did once.” “Did you like him?” So, from one, they go on to others, and ministers and their sermons become the bones that they pick on Sunday afternoons. They feel that they must have some theme for their conversation not quite sacred, nor wholly secular. I would advise you to talk more about the Lord Jesus Christ than you have been known to do; you will be less likely to forget His love if you are often talking of Him. Let the music of His name ring in your ears all the day long; and if you would have it ring in your ears, it must ring from your tongue. Whenever you have the opportunity, tell out the marvelous story of His great love to you; so will your own memory be refreshed, and others, listening to your testimony, will also get a large, and, it may be, an everlasting blessing.

May God now grant to you, my dear hearers, that you may retain a sense of Christ’s love to you, if you have ever enjoyed it! If you never have, may God now give it to you! If you have never come to Christ, come to Him now. Remember that Jesus loves sinners. Those who are now farthest from Him, when they once return to Him, shall know that He loves them. If you, “take with you words,” and come to Him, groaning and sighing, He will not cast you out. He stands now with open arms, and freely invites you. Come to Him, I beseech you. As His ambassador, I entreat you to come; if you do so, He will fold you to His bosom. All that the heirs of heaven can have, you shall have. All that the glorified saints are now enjoying shall yet be your privilege also. You shall one day walk with Christ in white, and see His face, and be with Him in Paradise, and be blessed throughout eternity. May God grant us His grace now, that our text may become the cheerful sonnet of our experience, “We will remember Your love more than wine.”

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

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