

THREE HOMILIES FROM ONE TEXT

NO. 333

A SERMON
 DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, SEPTEMBER 2, 1860
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 AT EXETER HALL, STRAND

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan.”
Matthew 4:23-25

THE ministry of our most blessed Lord bears upon its own countenance the stamp of truth. “He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” Whatever His enemies might lay to His door, I do not find they were ever able to summon audacity enough to impeach His correctness or suspect His sincerity. We believe that Jesus Christ’s sermons were their own witnesses, the words He uttered had in them so much power to convict the conscience, that there would have been willfulness sufficient for the condemnation of the men who rejected His ministry, even though it had not been attended with supernatural credentials.

Nevertheless, our Lord and Master—that unbelievers might have no cloak for their sin—was pleased to supplement His doctrines with His miracles, so that the works which He did, as well as the words which He spake, might bear witness of Him that He came forth from God. Those miracles were to the men of that generation, the sign, and seal, and warrant, that Jesus was really sent of the Father.

Let us mark here, my brethren, how very different were the seals of Jesus’ ministry from those which were given by Moses. When it was demanded of Moses to prove whether he was sent of God or not, he took the wonder-working rod in his hand and achieved prodigies, but if you will remember, they were all miracles of judgment—not of mercy.

Did he not turn their rivers into blood and slay their fish? Did he not bring a thick darkness over all the land, even darkness which might be felt? Did he not smite their firstborn—ay, and bring the waters of the Red Sea upon the chivalry of Egypt and so sweep them all away? And afterwards, in the midst of the children of Israel, though there were miracles of mercy, yet for the most part were they not miracles of judgment, and did not the people see divers plagues, and divers wonders among them, even when they were in the wilderness? I repeat it—Moses, the type of the law, has his credentials in judgment.

How different with Jesus, He is full of grace and truth, and the seals of His ministry must be works of beneficence, acts of mercy and kindness. He turns not the water into blood, but He turns the water into wine, He slays not their fish, but multiplies a few small fishes and feeds thousands therewith, He does not smite their wheat with hail, and break their sycamore trees with His thunderbolts, but instead thereof, He multiplies their bread, He gives them many blessings. He sends no disease, and boils, and blains, but He heals their sicknesses. Instead of striking the firstborn dead, He heals the dying, and rescues from the grasp of death some who had even gone down to the grave.

This must be ever a hopeful sign to the poor, trembling conscience. Jesus comes with deeds of mercy—these are indeed the warrants of His mission, “And why should He not come to me with deeds of mercy?” Let the poor disconsolate heart ask, “Why should He not work a wonder of mercy in me? If I had to deal with Moses, he might find it needful to smite me with death, to prove himself sent of God, but if Jesus will still prove Himself to be full of grace and truth, may He not work a wonder of mercy in

washing away my sins, in saving my poor soul, clothing it with His robe of righteousness, and making me at last stand among the glorified?"

Having thus prefaced my text, permit me now to come more nearly and closely to it, and I think it will suggest three short homilies, three brief sermons, which I will endeavor to utter, and may God bless them.

And first, it seems to me, in my text there is *a brief homily for ministers upon the work of faith*, then, *a lecture to saints upon their labor of love*, and yet again, *a longer sermon full of encouragement to poor trembling sinners*.

I. My text seems to me to contain A BRIEF AND PITHY HOMILY TO MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL—"Jesus Christ went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom."

Does it not say to us, my brethren in the ministry, that we should be instant in season, and out of season, preaching the Word? Does it not suggest to us, that perhaps we might preach more frequently, and that we might do more good if by journeying about from place to place we commanded a different audience, and so brought more hearers under the sound of the Word, and more hearts under the influence of the truth?

Do ministers of the Gospel preach as often as they might? Is there any precedent in Scripture for preaching two sermons on the Sabbath, and one during the week and doing no more? Ought we not to be more fully given up to our ministry? Should we not often be preaching the Word, and would it not be well with us if we could say with John Bradford, "I count that hour lost in which I have not either with tongue or with pen said something for the world's good and for my Master's honor."

Might we not be less particular about our preparation? Oh how much there is of worldly flesh-pleasing, in our pruning up our sentences, and trying to polish our periods! Might not that time which is spent in studious elaboration be much more profitably spent in public exhortation? and might we not get more power by practicing the ministry than we can by sitting still and endeavoring to catch the sacred spell from books, though written by the wisest of men!

Is it not after all the fact that the blacksmith's arm is made strong, not by studying a book upon nerves and upon anatomy, but by using his hammer, and is not the minister to achieve power in his ministry rather by the exercise of it than by any learning or teaching that he can ever procure? Might it not be perhaps, less for our honor, but more for our Master's glory, if we preached more frequently and itinerated more widely, and here and there, and everywhere, preached the word of Jesus?

I know some brethren who have remained in one place so long without having ever gone from it that the people know the very tones of their voice, and they go to sleep under it almost necessarily. If these brethren, without giving up their charge, would spend many weekdays in going abroad to preach in the streets, in the highways and hedges, to preach under God's blue sky, it would do their very voice good.

Oh, there is no place like it when you have a little hillock for your pulpit, ten or twenty thousand people gathered around you, and the heavens for your sounding board! Whitefield used to call it his throne, and well indeed he might, for there is a marvelous power which thrills through the soul of a man when—there unshackled and free—he stands with thousands of earnest eyes gazing upon him, to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ.

If I can only convince ministers that the work to which they are called is not restricted to their pulpits, but that they ought to come out of their pulpits and preach the Gospel to every creature—I shall feel that this short homily has been worthy of being expounded. I do not believe if we preach in our own pulpits from the first of January to the last of December, that we shall clear our heads from the blood of men, provided that is we have voice and strength equal to the labor. You are not to sit still and expect sinners to come to you. Soldiers of Christ are not everlastingly to lie in the trenches. Up, men and at them—up and charge upon your foes! If you would win souls, you must seek them.

The sportsman knows that his game will not come to the window of his house to be shot. The fisherman knows that the fish will not come swimming up to his door. Do they not go abroad and seek

their prey? And so must you and I. If we would win souls, we must not stand forever in one place, but wherever there is found opportunity—be it in an uncanonical place, ay, be it in a place that has been desecrated to the service of Satan—even there let us preach the name of Jesus, and we shall see greater things than it is ever possible for us to behold by going on in our old way of routine—standing in our square hut of a thing called a pulpit, and hoping to win souls by prophesying there.

I sometimes wish that some of our congregations were without chapels, or that they might be driven out of them, for some of them have stuck inside their own doors down a court, till nobody knows there is a church there at all, and when good might have been done to the neighborhood they have been content to dwell there with spiders and cobwebs, and never to come forth to make a stir in the world.

Why, if the hundred and fifty Baptist churches of London, let alone all the members of other denominations, did but feel that they are not to be bounded within four walls, and that their work is not to be done in regular spheres, but everywhere—surely there would be better days for London, and we should have to rejoice that God had made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the people.

II. And now I turn to my second homily, which is not for ministers particularly, but FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN GENERAL.

We read in the twenty-fourth verse—“And they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.”

Let the emphasis rest upon those few words, *“They brought unto him all sick people.”* We have here assembled my brethren, a very large number of persons who know the truth as it is in Jesus, and who love it in their own hearts, for they have felt its power, and they bless God that they know it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

To you I speak, men and brethren. Now that you are yourselves redeemed and converted, there is a great work laid upon you. Ye are the salt of the earth, ye are the light of this world, ye are a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid. Your business is from this time forth to do battle against the powers of darkness, and to seek, as much as lies in you, to pluck sinners as brands from the awful burning.

I would stir up your pure minds, by way of remembrance, upon this solemn duty. Do you exercise it as you should? Are you all of you longing to be the winners of souls? Have you all the laudable ambition of being fathers and mothers in Israel, by bringing others to that cross which is so precious to you?

*“D’ you gladly tell to sinners round,
What a dear Savior you have found?
Point them to His redeeming blood,
And say, ‘Behold the way to God’?”*

Some of you can say, “Yes,” but none of us can say that we have done as much, and as well as we ought to have done. Permit me to give you a thought which may perhaps help you, my Christian brethren, henceforth in your work of faith, and labor of love, for the redemption of the souls of men. Let me tell you that, if you would have souls saved, you must bring them to Jesus.

“But,” say you, “they must come themselves.” Yes, I answer, they must if they shall ever be saved, but before they will ever come themselves, *you* must bring them. You notice in the text, those men who had the palsy could not walk to Christ, but others brought them. Many of those poor demoniacs would not come, but they bound them hand and foot and made them come. Doubtless, some of the lunatics struggled very hard not to be brought, but they would bring them. And people that were very near death’s door, who could not stir hand or foot, and were unconscious, they were brought too. The loving earnestness of their friends supplied the lack of strength in themselves, they could not come, but their friends could bring them.

And now you say you have little power to do good, but I think in this matter you have far more power than you dream of. You can bring sick souls to Christ. Do you ask me how? I answer, first by prayer. If you should select some one person, and lay his case specially before God in prayer, and never cease your supplications till you were heard for that one, you will have reason to attest that God is verily one that heareth and that answereth prayer, and if you should have sufficient faith to carry five or six, nay, to carry a whole family on the loving arms of your prayer up to the mercy seat of God, you will find that in answer to your fervent cry, they will assuredly be saved.

Oh! there are many of us here who were brought to Christ by our mothers. We knew it not, but they were carrying our names, like the high priest of old, upon their breasts before the Lord, while we were living in sin and indulging in iniquity. There are men here who were converted to God instrumentally by their sisters, for when they were going on in all their gaiety and frivolity, a loving sister was weeping for them, or pleading with God both night and day, that her brother might live.

And I do not doubt hundreds of you have been brought to God by your minister, because your minister has made you the object of prayer, and has pleaded with God for you. And many of you by the elders of the church—by the deacons, or by others, who, looking upon you as a congregation, have fixed their eye on some one and said, “That interesting young man, I will make him a matter of prayer—that intelligent father of a family who has stepped in, but who only comes occasionally, he shall be the subject of my petition.”

In fact, I think it probable that when the records of eternity shall be unfolded, it shall be found that every soul that came to Christ was brought instrumentally by some other—not perhaps by any visible means—but some other person praying for that man, and God heard that prayer, and so that soul was saved.

Have you any sick in your house? Bring them out on the bed of prayer to Christ. Mother, bring out your sick son and your sick daughter! Wife, bring out your demoniacal husband who seems as if he were possessed of the devil. I say to one and another among you, bring out that friend of yours who acts as if he were mad with sin, like a very lunatic. Bring them all out as they did of old, and plead this day with Christ for their salvation.

I think I see that day when Jesus walked through the streets of Capernaum. No sooner did He rise in the morning, than, stepping abroad, He saw a bed here, and a mattress there, and a couch there, multitudes assembled with all manner of sick folks—some of them leaning on crutches and saying, “When will the morning come?”—and there was a good deal of struggling as to who should get the best place, and who should be nearest to Him as He came abroad.

At last, you would hear if you were half a mile from the house where Jesus is residing, you would hear a buzz—“He is coming out! He is coming out!” And then, He would come forth from His house, and touching some lunatic, He would cool his fevered brain, and the man would fall at His feet and begin to kiss Him, but ere he could pay his homage, Christ would have touched some palsied or paralytic man, and he would be cured, and going onwards, drowsy, fevers, devils, all fly before Him.

And then, you would see a great crowd as they all came behind Him, some of them waving the crutches they no longer required, some blind man holding up in the air the bandage he used to wear to conceal that horrid eye of his, out of which he could not see, yea, and all of them crying, “Blessed be the name of the Son of David; blessed be his name!” Oh! I am sure had you been there that day, if you had a sick daughter, you would hire any help to bring her out, you would have said, “Let her be brought out and He will heal her.”

And so it is today. Jesus is here this morning, and here you be—sick upon beds—the beds of your indifference and carelessness, here you are subject to many sins, and lusts, and passions. The Master walks among you—Now Christians! Now Christians! lift up your prayers, now bear upon your arms of faith, these poor cripples, lame, deaf, and dumb souls, and cry, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on them.” And His walk of love of old, shall be eclipsed in the grandeur of His walk of lovingkindness and tender mercy which He shall exercise today.

In addition however, to the arms of prayer, take care that you bring your relatives to Christ on the arms of your faith. Ah! faith is that which puts strength into prayer. The reason why we do not receive the answer to our supplications is because we do not believe we shall be heard. You remember my sermon the other Sabbath morning from the text, “Whatsoever things ye shall desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them.”

If you can exercise faith for a dead soul, that dead soul shall be quickened and receive faith itself. If you can look to Christ with the eye of faith for a blind soul, that blind soul shall have sight given it and it shall see. There is a wonderful power in *vicarious faith*—faith for another. Not that anyone of you can be saved without faith yourself, but that when another believes for you, and on your account, quotes the promise before God for you, you may be unconscious of it, but God hears and answers that faith, and breathes on your soul, and gives you faith to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I do not think Christians exercise enough this power. They are so busy with faith about their troubles, faith about their sins, faith about their personal experience, that they have not time to exercise that faith for another. Oh but surely that gift was never bestowed upon us for our own use merely, but for other people.

Try it, Christian man, try it, Christian woman, see whether God is not as good as your faith when your faith is exercised concerning the soul of your poor neighbor, of your poor drunken kinsman, or of some poor soul who hitherto has defied every effort to reclaim him from the error of his ways. If we can bring souls by faith, Jesus Christ will heal them.

And I might add here, that in the ministry of the Gospel there is great need that ministers should bring souls to God by faith. How often you hear the question put, “What is the reason of such and such a man’s power in preaching?” I will tell you what is the reason of any man’s power if it is worth having. It is not his retentive memory, it is not his courage, it is not his oratory, but it is his faith. He believes God is with him and acts as if it were so. He believes that his preaching will save souls, and preaches as if he believed it. He staggers not at the Word himself, and does not mince and try to prove what he says, but speaks out boldly what God has sent him to speak, knowing that what he says is true and must be received.

And then, he believes that the Word will be blessed and it is blessed, and then men still wonder and say, “Why is it?” It is faith. That is the secret of any man’s success. I refer you, if you want proof, to the lives of all those who God has ever blessed. Look at Paul or Peter in the canon of Scripture, look at such men as Martin Luther and John Calvin in the annals of church history. Why you could not catch them doubting at any moment. Look at Luther when he comes up into the pulpit. He is a man who has no neck. He has got his head set right down on his shoulders. He believes with his heart and speaks with his mouth. His convictions and his utterances are in the closest alliance.

Then people say, “What a dogmatist he is!” Of course, and a man must be if he would do any good. Hear how he preaches! He knows he is right, and he does not allow a momentary doubt upon it. He talks to men as if he were sure that God had given him a message for them, and the people believe that God has given him a message, and it is proven that it is so.

But some other of the reformers might have come and occupied his place, and the reformation would have been a failure, because with more wisdom and perhaps more love than he had they would have had less faith, and their preaching would have had less effect. The fact is we want to feel within our ministry that the power lies very much in the faith which is exercised in it. I do believe that the true minister of Christ, though he cannot heal the sick, ought to preach with as firm a faith in the authority and power of his ministry through the Holy Ghost, as did Peter and John when they said, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk.”

Some ministers dare not say this. They cannot preach to dead sinners. They do not like to exhort them, because, say they, “The sinner has not any power.” Whoever thought he had? But there is power in your ministry to make them live if God sent you. Your business is to say, “Ye dry bones live.” not because there is power in your voice, but because your voice is the echo of JEHOVAH’s voice. Speak

JEHOVAH's truth by the high warrant of JEHOVAH Himself, and you must believe that those dry bones will live, for live they must, before the power of faith nothing is impossible.

Earnestly would I pray for all of us who preach the Word that we may have this power to bring souls before Jesus, not looking to their free will, not looking to their soft hearts, above all not looking to our own power of speech, but looking to the power of the Gospel as we speak it, and believing that there is in it a power still to cast out devils, still to quicken the dead, and still to heal the sick, and we shall find it to be so.

Oh, my brethren, think not that the preaching of the Word is on a level with mere lecturing or talking upon subjects that may be of thrilling interest. The moment a man preaches God's truth, if God has sent him, he is gifted with a power which no learning or eloquence can confer upon another man whom God has not called.

A man preaches with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, his every word is a thunder stroke—one tremendous lightning blast amongst the sons of men—and God owns him and God blesses him, or if God does not own him and does not bless him, he has good reason to believe that God never sent him—that he is not a servant of God—that the Lord has not raised up nor qualified him for the salvation of the souls of men.

My homily then just is this, that it should be the business of every Christian man—of ministers perhaps in particular—but of all in their measure, to *bring* those who won't *come* to Christ, and to bring them to Christ by their prayers, by their faith, and by their authoritative and believing preaching knowing that God has ever sanctioned prayer for others, and has accepted faith and heard that faith, and in reply to it, has given faith to the unbelieving one.

Is there anyone here of so cold a heart that he is saying, "Whom shall I bring to Christ?" I hope not, for whenever a man asks what he shall do, I feel I could say with Pharaoh, "Ye be idle, ye be idle." There is so much to be done that the question should be, "What out of a hundred things shall I do?" not "Where shall I find something to do."

Are all your children saved—all of them—every one? If not, bring them in your arms before God in prayer. Are you happy enough to have every child of yours bound up in the covenant of the Lord? Bring them all, your relations, your aged father, your ungodly mother, if such you have. Bring them before Christ. You cannot heal them, but Christ can. Your business is to lay their case before Jesus Christ, and to feel that Jesus Christ is looking on them, and that if it be His gracious will, He will save them, and if you have brought these, are there no inmates of your house still ungodly that you can bring to Him in prayer?

And if you be so happy as to have a church in your house, and not one in it who is not saved, bring them, I beseech you, your neighborhood—those who live in the same street, or court, or alley—bring those who sit in the same pew with you on Sunday, or dwell in the same part of this great city. And—oh if it should ever come to pass!—that all these be saved, look across the sea and bring before God in prayer those teeming myriads of souls that as yet sit in darkness, and in the valley of the shadow of death. Plead with God for sinners who are under Popish night, or have but the moonlight of Mohammedanism, or those who are in blacker darkness still, bowing down before their gods of wood or of stone.

O church of God! if you had but faith to bring out your sick, what wonders might be wrought! Oh, if the church could but lay China and India before her Lord, believing that He had power to save—if she would bring out Italy, and France, and Spain, and lay them, as it were, like sick men in their beds before Jesus Christ, earnestly believing in His power to heal them! Alas! we have not power to believe in Christ yet, but when we have power to believe, we shall never find Christ's power to be inferior to our power to believe Him.

May the Lord yet increase His people's confidence, until their prayers shall extend for the conversion of the islands of the sea, until they shall bring the whole world, with all its hideous deformities and infirmities, and lay it there like a poor paralytic on his couch, and in one tremendous cry

say, “O Lord, let thy kingdom come, and let thy will be done on earth, even as it is in heaven,” and it shall be done. Faith shall achieve it. God shall own the cry of faith, and the world shall yet become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

III. I have now some little time reserved for my main business this morning and oh, may God make the last part of the sermon very, very useful, to those who hitherto have been strangers to Him. The last part of my text is A SERMON ADDRESSED BY WAY OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO POOR SINNERS—to those who never have undergone a change of heart—have never been regenerated and passed from death to life.

Sinner, look on my text and take encouragement, for as Jesus Christ healed all sorts of diseases, so He is able at this day *to heal all sorts of sins*. Great physicians generally have some specialty. One man is famous for his cures of deformed feet, another has peculiar gifts with regard to diseases of the heart, and some seem to be greatly successful in their treatment of the eyes. But Jesus Christ is a physician who is equally skillful in all cases, His love and His blood are precious medicines that are able to cure all diseases—whatsoever sort they may be, however long they may have been endured, and how deeply soever rooted they may be in the human system.

Christ is able to cure all sorts of sins. Are you today possessed with the fever of lust? He can cool your hot blood, and make you chaste and honest. Do you suffer today from the dropsy of drunkenness? He can cure you of it, and you shall no more go to your cups to wallow therein. Are you now today blind, or deaf, or dumb, after a spiritual sort? He can remove all these infirmities. Do you suffer from stone in your heart? He can take the stony heart away and give you a heart of flesh.

Whatsoever be your disease—though you have become a very lunatic in your sin—such that the laws of your country have had to hold you fast in prison, and though now you are so wild that men call you a very devil in iniquity—so that you are become a demoniac—He has power to heal you now. Oh, cast yourself on your face before him and cry, “Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” Oh, Jesus, stop and look upon some of all sorts and let them be saved.

Do you know, sinner, whatever may have been your peculiar vice, there is a pattern in the Bible for you—a pattern of mercy to show that just such a one as you has already been saved. John Bunyan says in his, “Grace Abounding”—“Whenever I hear of a poor drunkard saved, I always say, ‘Then the door is open for every drunkard.’ If I hear of a great adulterer, a great thief, or a great harlot being saved, then I say, ‘Those who are of a like sort with these men and women may take heart and say, “Then the door is open for me.”’”

Why, you know if you are ever sick and meet with an advertisement in a paper—perhaps a wrong one—of some person whose case was just like yours—if upon application, you should meet with this man and he should say, “Yes, my symptoms were the same, my disease lasted just as long, I was just as sad and sick, and wasting as you are. I went to such a doctor and he has healed me.” Oh! it makes you feel as if you were half-cured already. “Then, sir,” say you, “my case is not altogether hopeless, he has healed the like of me, he can heal me.”

Oh! sinner, take this I beseech you to your soul as a comfort, there have been sinners saved that were just like you, and there are some in heaven who were once just such as you are, and when you shall come to heaven you will not be one by yourself, but there will be those who will tell you they have sinned as you have sinned, that they have rebelled as you have rebelled, and yet mercy saved them.

Oh, there be many in heaven that are like the stars in the sky called Gemini, the twins. There are many sacred clusters—Pleiades of great stars—divine constellations of men who plunged into like sin and like iniquity, all redeemed and made to shine in the firmament of heaven as stars forever and ever. Be of good cheer, sinner. I wot not who you are, nor what has been your sin, but there has been a sinner like you saved—just like you—and why may not you? Oh! may it be true in your case, that you may be saved.

Christ not only healed sinners of all sorts, but He healed incurable sinners—people who had diseases which were not within the reach of the physicians’ skill. The palsied and the lunatic especially, were

considered in the East to be quite beyond all medical power, and it is believed by many eminent commentators that nearly all the diseases which Jesus Christ healed were those which were called the laughter of physicians, because they put all surgical skill, all medical power to scorn. Jesus Christ healed incurable diseases, and He is able to heal even incurable sinners.

“Why,” says one, “that is just what I am, I believe I am incurable.” There have been many incurables that have been cured here. When I look at my church book and see the story of many, many souls, I cannot help looking upon this Exeter Hall as having been a hospital for incurables.

Why there have been sinners that never entered into a place of worship for five and twenty, thirty, or forty years, swearers, blasphemers, men who had committed every crime in the catalog of iniquity, yet here sovereign grace met with them. They sit here this very day, and if it were the proper time and place, they would stand up and say “That is true, I was one of the incurables, but free, rich grace, renewed my heart and changed my soul.”

And now, you incurable soul—you incorrigible dog—you who have gone on so long that friends and companions give you up—there is hope yet, there is hope yet. Yet may you break your fetters—yet live—yet become a Christian, and rejoice with the people of God. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

You remember when Christ died, He told His disciples to preach to all nations beginning at Jerusalem, because there were the biggest sinners in Jerusalem. There were the men there who had pierced His side, they had put that sponge full of vinegar to His lips. “Begin with them,” said He, “Begin with them,” and so Jesus loves to begin with you.

Believe me, when my Master sends me out fishing, He does not bid me go and fish for minnows, but harpoon you who are like great whales and leviathans in iniquity. Oh, Spirit of God, send in the shaft this morning, and may some incurable soul this day begin to think that if there is mercy for him it is time for him not to despise the mercy, but to turn to God with full purpose of heart. Jesus healed incurable diseases.

Let us proceed to add that Jesus healed diseases from all countries, and so He can heal sinners of all lands. “There followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, from Decapolis, from Jerusalem, from Judea, and from Jordan.” Here are people assembled this morning from all lands. I look about me, and I can very easily discern some score of American brethren from across the sea. A great many, of course, dwell in London, but there is a representation perhaps, here of every county in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland—some from all parts—brethren from Germany, some of all people come together here to listen to the Word of God. And be it sweet in your ears, you of many languages and countries, who as yet have never found the Savior, that He is able to save without any distinction of race or clime, or time, or place.

There is one fountain for us all, my brethren, one robe of righteousness, and that too, always of the same fashion for every one of us. There is one precious name at which we all must bow, and one sure salvation upon which we all must build. Oh! that we may all build upon Christ, and all find Jesus precious today!

Have you come from the far West, my brother, and have you never thought of Jesus yet? Oh! think of Him today. Perhaps the Lord brought you across the Atlantic to save you, and He will send you back a new man. Have you come from the busy haunts of New York, where every man is bustling, and seeking to make his own fortune? Mayhap you are come to make your fortune. Perhaps you may this day win the pearl of great price. Oh! I pray God it be so. Lord, hear this prayer, may some soul find Jesus now.

And oh, my farming friend, you have come up today, have you? You came up yesterday to attend your market, and you have come today to listen to the Word. I pray that you may go back to your family with a new heart, and though you used to be a brandy drinker, and often to frighten your poor wife when you came home late, I pray that you may have to say to her, “Blessed be God, I am a new man.”

I trust it will turn out to be so, and that you will have to say, “It was that Sunday that I spent in that Hall that the Lord came, and though I struggled hard He would have me, though I seem to shut both my eyes and heart against Him, yet in came the Word, and like as a hammer it broke the iron crust of my soul, and then like a fire melted the very vitals of my spirit, till the tears ran down my hardened cheeks.” Again, I say, be it so and unto God shall be all the glory.

If you have come from the very end of the earth today, from a land where you have seldom if ever heard the Gospel, oh, that you may hear it now, and like the Ethiopian eunuch go back to tell to others the message which you have heard with your own ears and received in your own heart. Christ knows, then, no distinction between sinners, they may be of every land.

Furthermore, Jesus Christ healed sinners without any limitation in numbers. They brought to Him, as you will perceive, all sorts of sick people, and all manner of diseases. “And there followed him great multitudes.” The physician was just as able to heal a thousand as fifty. When the crowd grew and increased till probably they covered acres of ground, He walked in among them, and as the sick lay there the healing virtue never stayed. It was like the widow’s oil, it lasted as long as it was wanted. And as many vessels as there were to fill, on flowed the oil and never stayed, till at last the vessels were full of mercy.

So is it today. Here is a crowd gathered together, a great multitude. Christ is as able to save a multitude as to save one. The same word which is blessed to one sinner, may be blessed to fifty sinners. Old Trapp says, “Though there was such a great crowd, we do not find that any one of them kept the other back, and so though there may be as great a multitude as ever coming to Christ, there is plenty of room for them.” It is not like a place of worship that is too small, where some must turn away, but here is room enough for all who come, enough for all who seek, enough for all who trust, enough for all who believe. No sinner was ever empty sent back, who came to seek mercy for Jesus Christ’s sake.

Upon none of these points must I stay long. Jesus Christ healed all these, but He received nothing for all that He did, except the fame, and the honor, and the gratitude of their loving hearts. So today, poor sinner, Jesus will take nothing at your hands, and it is a mercy for you, for you have nothing to give. If you had to wait for salvation till you could fashion one good work, you would have to wait forever, for when you have brought one that looked like the real silver of good works, you will find it is some poor albata plate, and when you do begin to rub it with a little self-examination, the bare metal will soon appear, and the thin film of silver soon rub away.

I tell you, man, you could never find a good thought that you have ever had that would not be so mixed with sin and infirmity as to take all its goodness away. But Jesus wants nothing from you, He bids you come and welcome. Rutherford says, “All the saints in heaven sit rent free, they never bought their thrones, and they do not pay for them even now.”

Poor sinner, I tell you, when you come to Christ, you must come without toll, without let, without hindrance.

*“All the fitness He requireth,
Is to feel your need of Him;
This He gives you,
'Tis His Spirit’s rising beam.”*

He does not ask experience of you—He does not ask grace and fruits of you, He will give you all these for nothing. If you come to Him just as you are, covered with the rags of your sin, ay, and perhaps with rags literally too, He will receive you. Though you have dived into the kennels of sin and vice, and are smothered with the mire of iniquity—He will wash you clean, He will clothe you with the robe of righteousness—He will put away your sins and save your souls. A *gratis* Gospel—a Gospel of grace—the Gospel which asks nothing of us but gives all to us. This is the Gospel that I preach now. Look to Jesus and be saved.

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so will I lift up Christ. Behold His wounds—His pierced hands, His bleeding feet, behold His side open for you! Sinner, His death must be your life—His wounds must be your healing. Trust, I beseech you, in what He did, repent of the sin committed, but trust Christ for merit which He has performed. The moment your soul trusts Christ—that moment your sins are all forgiven you. The moment you put your arms about the cross, that moment you are saved, ay, and saved beyond risk of being lost. Oh, that now you might say:

*“Just as I am, without one plea,
But that His blood was shed for me;
And that He bids me come—
Oh Lamb of God, I come.”*

May God now add His own blessing, and may Jesus walk among us still to heal, for His own name’s sake. Amen.

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.