

◆ FOR HIS GLORY ◆

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The Holy Spirit's work is to conform us to the likeness of Jesus Christ. He is not working us to this or that *human* ideal, but He *is* working us into the likeness of Christ, that He may be the First-Born among many brethren. Jesus Christ is that standard and model to which the Spirit of God, by His sanctifying processes, is bringing us till Christ is formed in us the hope of Glory. It is for the Glory of Jesus that the Spirit of God always works. He works not for the Glory of a church or of a community—He works not for the honor of a man or for the distinction of a sect—His one great objective is to glorify Christ! "He shall glorify Me" is our Savior's declaration, and when He takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to us, we are led more and more to reverence and love and to adore our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.—CHS, 1882

DO YOU KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST?

By C. H. Spurgeon

"And to know the Love of Christ which passes knowledge." Ephesians 3:19.

IT is the distinguishing mark of God's people that they know the Love of Christ. Without exception, all those who have passed from death unto life, whatever they may *not* know, have learned this. Without exception, all those who are not saved, whatever they may know besides, know nothing of this. An ungodly man may know something about Christ's Love; he may believe in the fact of it; he may perceive something of the theory of it. He may even be able to follow Believers in certain expressions of its enjoyments.

But to know the Love itself, to taste its sweets, to realize personally, experientially, and vitally, the Love of Christ as shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit is the privilege of the child of God, and of the child of God, alone! This is the secure enclosure into which the stranger cannot enter; this is the garden of the Lord, so well protected by walls and hedges that no wild boar of the woods can enter. Only the redeemed

of the Lord shall walk here. They, and only they, may pluck the fruits and content themselves with the delights thereof.

We may begin the exercises of this evening with a question of self-examination, and we may continue them throughout the whole sermon, trying to press that question home to your consciences—Do I know the Love of Christ? Have I felt it? Do I understand it? Do I feel it now? Is it now shed abroad in my heart? Do I know that Jesus now loves me? Is my heart quickened, and animated, and warmed, and attracted towards Him through the great Truth of God that it recognizes and rejoices in—that Christ really loves me, and has chosen me, and set His heart upon me?

We have started the first point. Every child of God knows the Love of Christ. We advance another step. All the children of God do not know this Love to the same extent. There are in Christ's family, babes, young men, strong men, and a few who are fathers.

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WELL, DO YOU?

By C. H. Spurgeon

"And to know the Love of Christ which passes knowledge." Ephesians 3:19.

To know the Love of Christ which passes knowledge by contemplation is very high, but there is a higher stage than this. There are times when I almost fear to speak of these things, but there are some reading this, surely, who will understand me, some who have passed through the same state, and will not think that I am dreaming.

There are times when the soul has long contemplated Christ, and there are some who know not only to contemplate, but *to enjoy*. Even on earth, faith sometimes gives place to a present and conscious enjoyment.

There are times with the Believer when, whether he is in the body, or out of the body, he can scarcely tell; God knows, and though not caught up to the third Heaven, he is brought to the very gates, and if not permitted to see Christ on His Throne, he does so see Him on His Cross, that if an infidel should say to him, "There is no Christ," he could say, "I have seen Him;

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THE LOVE OF CHRIST

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Now, as they grow and progress in all other matters, so they most certainly make advances here. Indeed, an increase of Love, a more perfect apprehension of Christ's Love, is one of the best and most infallible gauges whereby we may test ourselves whether we have grown in Divine Grace or not. If we have grown in Grace, it is absolutely certain that we shall have advanced in our knowledge and reciprocation of the Love of Christ!

Many reading this have believed in Jesus, and they know the Love of Jesus, but oh, they know it not as some others here do who have gone into the inner chamber, and have been made to drink of the spiced wine of Christ's pomegranate! Some of you have begun to climb the mountain, and the view which lies at your feet is lovely and passing fair, but the landscape is not such as would greet your eyes if you could but stand where advanced saints are now standing, and could look to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south, and see all the lengths and breadths, and depths and heights, of the Love of Christ which passes knowledge!

To change the figure—the Love of Christ is comparable to Jacob's ladder; some of us are standing on the lower rungs, and there are others who are ascending and who rest half way; others, still, are getting up so high that we can scarcely see them by reason of the dimness of our sight; and there are some, perhaps at this hour, who have just reached the topmost rung of this knowledge, and are now stepping, as it were, into the arms of Christ who awaits them at the top! They have attained unto their perfection. Here they shall find repose. They shall rest in His Love, and with the eternal songs of Heaven, they shall rejoice forever and forever!

Well then, to come first of all to the bottom of the ladder. One of the lowest ways of knowing the Love of Christ may be described as *the doctrinal method*—very useful one, but nothing to be compared to those that we shall have to mention afterwards. If a man would know the Love of Christ, he should endeavor to study the Word of God with care, attention, constancy, and with dependence upon the Spirit's illumination, that he may be enabled to understand aright.

It is well for a Christian to be thoroughly established in the faith once delivered to the saints. It is an ill day for a man when he ceases to hold fast to the form of sound words which was delivered to us by Christ Himself and His holy Apostles. Depend upon it, doctrinal ignorance will always make churches weak! But where saints are fed upon the finest of the wheat, and are made to suck of the honey out of the rock, and to eat of the manna and fatness of Gospel Doctrine, they will, all other things being equal, become the strongest and most valiant Believers on the face of the earth!

There is a tendency in these times to depreciate the value of Gospel Doctrines. Oh, I beseech you, be not led astray by this error! There are in the Word of God certain things really taught. Do not believe that the Bible is a lump

of wax to be shaped just as you please. Do not imagine that "Yes," is right, and that "No," which contradicts it, is right, too! The Lord has written this Book intending to teach us something, and a moderate understanding, sanctified by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, will enable you to know what the Lord does mean to teach you, especially upon such a vital point as this.

Do not, I beseech you, say, "Oh, it does not much matter what Doctrines I hold." You are as much responsible for using your judgment as you are for using your hands and your feet! God never did free a conscience from His jurisdiction. Conscience is free, but not before God. You have a right to your convictions as far as *I* am concerned, but if your convictions are wrong, you have no right to them before *God!* There are certain things that are Truths of God, and there are others that are contradictions; see that you get fast hold of Wisdom, and that you do not let her go!

There is a tendency, however, on the other hand in certain quarters, to make "doctrinal" knowledge *everything*. I have seen, to my inexpressible grief, the Doctrines of Grace made a huge stone to be rolled at the mouth of the sepulcher of a dead Christ, and I have seen sound Doctrine, so called, made as a very seal to seal in the dead Christ, lest by any means the energy of His Grace should come out for the Salvation of sinners!

Oh, what is Doctrine, after all, but a throne whereon Christ sits, and when that throne is vacant, what is the throne to us? It is the Monarch and not the throne who we reverence and esteem! Doctrines are but as the shovel and the tongs of the altar, while Christ is the smoking Sacrifice. Doctrines are Christ's garments; verily, they all smell of myrrh, and cassia, and aloes out of ivory palaces, whereby they make us glad, but it is not the garments we care for so much as for the Person, the very Person of our Lord Jesus Christ!

And therefore, while I entreat you, (and I hope not to be misunderstood here), while I entreat you to be very jealous and earnest in attaining unto a clear doctrinal knowledge of the Love of Christ to His people, yet, when you have got it, do not say—"I am the man! I have attained to eminence; I may now sit still and be content." Sirs, this is but the threshold; this is but one of the first arches of a long vista of glorious Truths of God; this is but the lowest step of the ascent! You have but sat down on the lowest form in the school; you have much to learn! Oh, be not wise in your own conceits, lest you lose the blessed things which as yet have not been discovered by you!

Verily, it is a sweet thing to know Christ's Love in the Doctrine, and to understand that it is without beginning; that it existed when as yet this world had not been made; when sun, and moon, and stars slept in the mind of God, like unborn forests in an acorn cup; when as yet the solemnity of silence had never been startled by the songs of seraphs, and the wings of cherubs had never stirred the unnavigated ether! It is delightful to believe that, "Before the daystar knew its place, or planets went their round, the saints in bonds of Sovereign Grace, were one with Jesus found!"

Equally precious is it to know the Doctrine that this Love is without end. When all we see around us shall have passed away, as the foam dissolves into the waves that bear it, the Love of Christ to His people shall be the same! And on, and on, and on

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LOVE OF CHRIST

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throughout eternity He shall never cast them from His heart! Sweet, too, is it, passing sweet, to know that He loves them without change, and without limit; that He loves them because He will love them; that He loves them not for anything in them, but simply because He has so much Love in His heart that He must let it out, and that He ordains to let it flow forth to them that they may rejoice in it!

All this is precious but, O Brothers and Sisters, if you only know these things as they stand in the creed book—if you only understand them as you find them in the catechism, I tell you that you know nothing yet as you ought to know! If this is all your knowledge, you have just begun to learn! May God help you to go further, and to mount to higher and clearer regions than these. It is a blessed privilege to know Christ doctrinally, but it is only the beginning, the steppingstone to something better, even as love longs for intimacy.—(Adapted from Sermon #455, Volume 8—“THE LOVE OF JESUS—NONE BUT HIS LOVED ONES KNOW”—by the Grace of God, for all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons in Modern English, and more than 570 Spanish translations, all free of charge, visit: www.spurgeongems.org)

DO YOU REALLY?

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my eyes have looked upon Him, and my hands have touched Him after a spiritual sort.”

There are many such rapturous seasons as this on record in the biographies of good men. I shall quote but one or two, and I hope there are some reading this who have known them in their own experience. In the life of Mr. Flavel, who was one of the most temperate of the Puritans, and one not at all given to anything like fanaticism, there is an event mentioned which once occurred to him.

He said that being once on a journey alone on horseback, the thought of the Love of Christ came upon him with great power, and as he rode gently along the road, the thought seemed to increase in force and strength, till at last he forgot all about earth, and even where he was. Somehow or other his horse stood still but he did not notice it; and when he came to himself, through some passerby observing him, he found that he had bled very copiously during the time.

Getting off his horse, he washed his face at the brook, and he said, “I did verily think as I stood there, that if I was not in Heaven, I could hardly hope to be more blessed in Heaven than I was then.” He mounted his horse and rode on to a place of lodging where he was to pass the night. Supper was brought in, but left untasted on the table. He sat all night long without sleep, enjoying the Presence of Christ, and he says, “I was more rested that night than with any sleep I ever had, and I heard and saw in my soul, by faith, such things as I had never known before.”

The like occurred to Mr. Tennant, who was a man who

spent many hours in private, and sometimes, when it was time to preach, he was quite unable to stand unless first carried into his pulpit, when he would put his hands out and lean there, and say such glorious things of Christ, that those who looked upon him verily thought that they looked upon the face of an angel!

Rutherford, too, is another specimen. When he preached about Christ, he preached so wonderfully, that on any other subject he was not at all like himself; and the Duke of Argyle was once so warmed when Rutherford got upon that subject, that he cried out in church—“Now, Man, you are on the right strain! Keep to it.” And he did keep to it, and the little man’s thin voice seemed to swell with supernatural grandeur when he began to talk of his precious, precious Lord Jesus, and to extol, and exalt Him who was the Bridegroom of his soul, his Brother, and his blessed Companion!

“Oh, these are flights of the imagination,” you say. Yes, they may be, indeed, Beloved, but if you could get them sometimes, you would come back to the world’s cares and troubles like giants refreshed with new wine, caring nothing for anything that might happen! Christ would be so sweetly and blessedly within you, that you could bear the burden, and think nothing of it, and though the grasshopper was a burden before, you could now carry it right readily.

Well, I have taken you up to where not many go in these times, but I hope there are some who will yet ascend there till they shall even embrace Christ, and who will sit down at His Table till they shall know Ralph Erskine’s blessed sickness of love, and in the conscious enjoyment of a precious Savior, shall say in the words of the spouse, “Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick with love; His left hand is under my head, and His right hand does embrace me.”—(Adapted from Sermon #455, Volume 8—“THE LOVE OF JESUS—NONE BUT HIS LOVED ONES KNOW”—by the Grace of God, for all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons in Modern English, and more than 570 Spanish translations, all free of charge, visit: www.spurgeongems.org)

“Oh, how I wish that my Lord and Master would lay hold on some of you worn-out sinners, you who have been set up by the devil as standards of sin! O that the Prince of the kings of the earth would compel you to say, ‘His Love conquers even me!’”—CHS

**PRAY THAT OUR FATHER WILL
DRAW MANY ROMAN CATHOLICS
TO HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST.
ASK HIM TO USE BROTHERS ALLAN
ROMAN IN MEXICO CITY,
AND PAUL FERRIE
IN NORTH DAKOTA.**

The Doctrines of Grace

Their Third Point—Limited Atonement (1)

By Daniel E. Parks, Pastor

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The five points of the Doctrines of Grace are generally identified by the acrostic **TULIP**:
Total Depravity **U**nconditional Election **L**imited Atonement **I**rresistible Grace **P**erseverance of the Saints.

We will now observe the Doctrine of the third point.

I. Limited Atonement Defined. The Biblical Doctrine of the *Atonement* deals with the work of God the Son in the Salvation of the people predestined and chosen to Salvation by God the Father. The adjective, *Limited*, denotes that the atoning work of Christ was for benefit of only the Father's Elect, not for all mankind.

The Doctrine of Limited Atonement is set forth in Ephesians 1:4-7. The people predestined by the Father to be His adopted children were chosen by Him in eternity past, and in His only begotten Son to be holy and righteous (vv 4-6; cp. 2 Thess 2:13). But the *Election* of this people was not their *Salvation*. Rather, Election only marked out who would be saved. The Salvation of God's Elect was worked through the atoning work of their Savior, Jesus Christ, during His Incarnation in redeeming them, and obtaining their forgiveness (v 7).

Theologians of the 17th Century referred to this Doctrine as the *Satisfaction of Christ*. This term is still thought by many to more accurately and adequately express what Christ did in the work of Salvation, especially as the Second Adam (Rom 5:12 ff). The First Adam broke the Covenant of Works into which he had entered with God (Gen 2:15-17) and, thereby, brought the penalty of death upon himself and the whole human race, whom he represented. But Christ, the Second Adam, fulfilled all the requirements of that broken Covenant, and thereby, obtained the Salvation of all God's Elect, whom He represented.

Indeed, all who are in Christ obtain, through His satisfaction, more than they ever lost in Adam's transgression (Rom 5:20)—“where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.” All in Adam died, but all in Christ receive Divine Grace (v 15). All in Adam received the judgment resulting in condemnation to death, but all in Christ receive the Grace resulting in justification of life (vv 16, 18). All in Adam are under the reign of death, but all in Christ reign in life (v.17) and under the reign of Grace through righteousness to eternal life (v 21). All in Adam were made sinners by his disobedience; but all in Christ are made righteous by His obedience (v 19).

The obedience of Christ resulting in satisfaction and atonement is two-fold. First, in His *prescriptive* or *active* obedience, Christ, throughout His life, and also in His death completely and perfectly obeyed every Precept of God's Law (1 Peter 2:22)—“He committed no sin.” He therefore could confess, at the end of His life, to His Father, “I have finished the work which You have given Me to do” (John 17:4). Second, in His *penal* or *passive* obedience, Christ, throughout His life, and especially in His death, obediently bore all the sanctions imposed by God's Law against His people because of their transgressions (Isa 53:4-7)—“... He was wounded for our transgressions...Yet He opened not His mouth...” He therefore could shout in victory in His dying breath, “It is finished!” (John 19:30). He had satisfied all that God required of Him as the Substitute of His Elect, and therefore obtained atonement for them.

Because the atoning work of Christ was performed as a Substitute and vicariously, the Doctrine of Limited Atonement is also identified as the Doctrine of *Substitutionary and Vicarious Atonement*. A *substitute* is one appointed or accepted to act or to suffer in the place of another. And the substitute's actions or sufferings are *vicarious* (from Latin *vices*—“stead”) in the sense that they are discharged in the place and stead of the other. Accordingly, the prescriptive or active obedience of Christ was a vicarious obedience and His penal or passive obedience was a vicarious suffering.

More particularly, the Divine Son of God became also the Son of Man in order to assume the legal obligations of His people and to make atonement for them by obeying God's Law as their Substitute, and vicariously (Gal.4:4f). Their guilt was imputed to Him in the sense that it was charged to and punished in Him (Isa 53:4-5a, 6, 8b). Having satisfied the Justice of God against His people as their Substitute and vicariously, He secured the Salvation of all for whom He died (Isa 53:11, 5b). He expiated their sin by canceling its debt (Heb 9:26), and propitiated God by removing His displeasure from them (2:17).

Some refer to the Doctrine of Limited Atonement as *Particular Redemption*. This term denotes that the redeeming work of Christ was for a particular people—those for whom He was “the Mediator of the New Covenant.” And it denotes that this particular people was, by Him, actually redeemed—He “having obtained eternal redemption” for them (Heb 9:11-15).

II. Limited Atonement Contrasted. The foremost view in contrast and opposition to the Doctrine of Limited Atonement is identified, usually, as *unlimited atonement* (because it is not limited to any particular persons) and *general atonement* (because it is for all men in general). The three foremost groups espousing unlimited atonement are Universalists, Pelagians, and Arminians.

1. Universalists are consistent in their Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement. They believe Christ died for all without exception, and all without exception therefore will be saved (despite texts such as Matthew 7:13). Universalism is the dominant view

(See *Limited Atonement* on page 5)

LIMITED ATONEMENT

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of theological liberals.

2. Pelagians and Arminians are inconsistent in their Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement. (*Pelagianism* is named for Pelagius [c.354-c.418], a British ascetic who migrated to and taught in Rome. *Arminianism* is named for Jacobus Arminius [real name Jacob Harmensen or Hermansz (1560-1609)], a Dutchman who taught in the university in Leyden]. Like Universalists, they aver Christ died for all without exception, thereby making it possible for everyone to be saved (*hypothetical* universalism). But they condition Salvation upon faith (*conditional* universalism). They deny Christ's death secured the Salvation of *anyone* because it is not efficacious unless and until the sinner makes it so through an act of his freewill. And they believe many, if not most, for whom Christ died will perish (*inconsistent* universalism).

A foremost difference between these two groups is that Pelagians outright deny the Doctrine of Substitutionary Atonement. Pelagius did so on the mistaken belief that vicarious punishment is intrinsically immoral. Indeed, he denied every aspect of the Biblical Doctrine of Imputation—the imputation of Adam's guilt to his race; the imputation of the guilt of God's Elect to Christ, and the imputation of Christ's Righteousness to His people. Pelagianism was virtually eliminated through the efforts of Augustine of Hippo (354-430). But it is found today among Campbellites (disciples of Alexander Campbell [1788-1866], a Scot who migrated to America in 1809). The Arminian claim to believe in Substitutionary Atonement is hollow, as it denies the Biblical Doctrine (as set forth in Isaiah 53 and explained above).

Pelagians and Arminians often claim, "We do not, in any way, limit the atoning work of Jesus Christ." Actually, both Holy Scriptures and the Pelagian/Arminian schools preach Limited Atonement, but with different limitations. Scriptures limit the *extent* of the Atonement, but not its *result*. That is, Scriptures teach the Atonement was limited to the Elect, and that it forever secured the Salvation of everyone for whom it was made. Pelagians and Arminians, on the other hand, limit the *result* of the Atonement, but not its *extent*. That is, Pelagians and Arminians teach Christ made atonement for everyone—including those already in Hades (as in Luke 16:19ff), but secured the Salvation of no one!

We may illustrate these differences by imagining a bridge of Salvation from earth to Heaven across the abyss of Hell, and built by the atoning work and Righteousness of Jesus Christ. Holy Scriptures declare this bridge is limited in its *width*, but not in its *length*. It is wide enough to accommodate only those who will believe in Christ, but it stretches all the way across the abyss to Glory, and guarantees the Salvation of all who traverse it. Pelagians and Arminians, on the other hand, declare this bridge is limited in its *length*, but not in its *width*. It is wide enough for all humanity, but it does not reach all the way to Glory and must be completed by those who would traverse it.

All these erroneous views of Christ's Atonement have this in common: **They deny the satisfaction of Christ!** Universalists deny the *extent* of Christ's satisfaction. Pelagians and Arminians deny *both the extent and the application* of Christ's satisfaction.

(To be continued, Lord willing).

Study of Ephesians 4:30a

DO NOT GRIEVE THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD—PART 1

Every verse in the Bible is important, But some verses in the Bible bring us into contact with subjects that are the most important. And the reason they are the most important is that the subjects they address are so central to the Christian life. The verse before us today is one of those. The subject is of vast practical significance for every person who calls him or herself a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:30 says: "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." In handling this verse, we need to think about its context, and about the actual statements it makes.

The first point I would like for us to consider is one that has been wonderfully demonstrated by Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones in his sermon on this passage. What we have in this verse sets Christianity apart from all other ethical systems in the world. It demonstrates that Christianity is a unique ethical system.

We will see this if we look at the verse in its context. Just think of where we have been in our study of this Epistle in recent months. This statement about not grieving the Holy Spirit comes right in the middle of a list of commands to the Christian about how he is to live. Verse 25 tells us to put away lying, and to speak the truth. Verse 26 tells us not to be guilty of sinful anger. Verse 28 tells us not to steal, but to work hard and be material generous toward others. Verse 29 tells us not to let corrupt speech come out of our mouths, but instead to speak only that which will edify.

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A VERY SHORT HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

By C. H. Spurgeon

This detestable iniquity of fearing God and serving idols will not die out—it multiplies itself, scattering its own seed on all sides and so from generation to generation it lives on—whole nations fear the Lord, and serve other gods! The greatest curse perhaps that ever visited the world came upon it in this way. Certain vain-glorious preachers desired to convert the world at a stroke, and to make converts without the work of the Holy Spirit. They saw the people worshipping their gods, and they thought that if they could call these by the names of saints and martyrs, the people would not mind the change, and so they would be converted. The idea was to Christianize heathenism!

They virtually said to idolaters, “Now, good people, you may keep on with your worship, and you can be Christians at the same time! This image of the Queen of Heaven at your door need not be moved.; light the lamp, only call the image, ‘Our Lady,’ and, ‘the Blessed Virgin.’ Here is another image. Don’t pull it down, but change its name from Jupiter to Peter.” Thus, with a mere change of *names*, they perpetuated idolatry! They set up their altars in the groves and upon every high hill—and the people were converted without knowing it—converted to a baser heathenism than their own! They needed priests, and, lo, there they were, robed like those who served at the altars of Jove! The people saw the same altars, and sniffed the same incense; they kept the same holy days, and observed the same carnivals as before, and called everything by Christian names!

Hence came what is now called the Roman Catholic religion which is simply fearing God and serving other gods! Every village has its own peculiar saint, and often its own particular black or white image of the Virgin, with miracles and wonders to sanctify the shrine. This evil worked so universally that Christianity seemed in danger of extinction from the prevalence of idolatry—and it would have utterly expired had it not been for God, and had He not, therefore, once more, put forth His hand and raised up reformers who cried out, “There is but one God and one Mediator between God and man.”

Brave voices called the Church back to her allegiance and to the parity of her faith. As for any of you who are trying to link good and evil, truth and falsehood, together—beware of the monstrous birth which will come of such an alliance—it will bring on you a curse from the Most High!—(Adapted from Sermon #1622, Volume 27—MONGREL RELIGION—by the Grace of God, for all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons in Modern English, and more than 570 Spanish translations, all free of charge, visit: www.spurgeongems.org)

ANOTHER “INVITATION” FROM BROTHER SPURGEON

You have heard me preach like this before, have you not, a good many times? Yes, and I am sometimes fearful lest God’s people should grow tired of this kind of sermon; but then *you* need it over and over again. How many more times will some of you need to be told this? How many more times must the great Mercy of God be set before you? Are we to keep on inviting you, again, and again, and again, and go back with no favorable answer from you? I have been questioning myself in the night watches about this, and I have said, “These people are unconverted. Is it my fault? Do I fail in telling them my Lord’s message? Do I mar the Gospel? Well,” I thought, “if it is so, yet I will charge them not to be partakers of my *fault*.” Brothers and Sisters, God’s Mercy is so rich that even when the story of it is badly told, it ought to influence your hearts! It is so grand a thing that God should be in Christ reconciling the world to Himself by a wondrous Sacrifice, that if I stuttered and stammered you ought to be glad to hear it! Or even if I told you in terms that were obscure, you ought to be so eager to know it that you would search out my meaning! In secret correspondence a cipher is often used, but inquisitive people soon discover it, ought there not to be more interest taken in the Gospel? But, my Friends, I do not speak obscurely. I am as plain a speaker as one might meet in a day’s march, and with all my heart I set Christ before you and bid you trust Him! Will you do so this morning? Or will you not? See how dark it is outside, even at noon? God has hung the very heavens in mourning! Never fear, the sun will soon break forth, and light up the day; and even so—

*“Our hearts, if God we seek to know
Shall know Him and rejoice!
His coming like the morn shall be,
As morning songs His Voice.
So shall His Presence bless our souls,
And shed a joyful light;
That hallowed morn shall chase away
The sorrows of the night.”*

—(Adapted from Sermon #1283, Volume 22—CONVERSIONS ENCOURAGED—by the Grace of God, for all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons in Modern English, and more than 550 Spanish translations, visit: www.spurgeongems.org)

Letters to Mike Gendron of Proclaiming the Gospel:

ptg@pro-gospel.org — www.pro-gospel.org — PO Box 940871, Plano TX, 75094

George J., Internet, writes—After watching your program on our access cable channel I am convinced more than ever that the Catholic Church is the one, true, universal church of our Lord. I am sure He is outraged by the hate that you have against His church. And He would never condone the abuse of His Blessed Mother that you have demonstrated. I see the similarities of your tactics and those of the terrorists. Like you, they do despicable things in the name of God. In both cases, God is the furthest thing from what is preached. Like other newly founded churches, each was founded by a man, just like your “ministry.” Only the Catholic church was founded by Jesus Christ. May our Blessed Mother Mary intercede to our Lord to save you from yourself. May you come to see the errors of your teachings, and the harm you do, and cease from serving your own selfish and misguided needs. I do not wish to receive a response from you. I have heard more than enough.

N. C., E Syracuse, NY, writes—What a great God we have! I’m so glad I spoke to you yesterday. I would be going down the deceptive path of ecumenism if I hadn’t gone to Word of Life and heard you speak the Truth of God. It was an awakening for me, and it turned me around to seek the Truth and truly opened my eyes to give me discernment. I remembered when you said, “Catholics *accept* Jesus every time they receive communion.” But I didn’t understand the difference between, “accept,” and, “trust,” until yesterday when you told me to use biblical integrity, and “trust” Jesus. So, after we talked, I looked in the concordance for all the verses with “accept.” I did not find anyone “accepting” Jesus for Salvation! I will start asking Catholics to trust Jesus because, since they already, “accept,” Jesus, I’ve told them nothing new. Wow! Thanks Mike! I always get the Truth of God from you.

M. W., Preston Hollow, NY, writes—

Everywhere the Apostle Paul went there was either a riot or a revival. Yet our evangelical pastors persist in a gospel designed to avoid offending the Gospel perverters and consequently fail to get the revival they seek. Salvation is a free gift, but there are two ways to reject a gift. One is by outright rejection, and the other is by seeking to pay for it. All the Glory goes to the Gift-Giver, and God says He will not share His Glory with anyone (Isa 42:8; 48:11). Adding rituals to it makes the work of Christ of no effect (Gal 5:4). As a former RC, I pray for my lost RC loved-ones day and night, and understand their blindness, but what about evangelicals who should be more aware? They remind me of the 5 virgins of Matthew 25 who had the oil, but they slept. Mike, thanks for being our watchman on the wall, and remember as you encounter controversy, it is to be expected because the enemy has been awakened.

A. H., Glenview, IL, writes—The Roman Catholic Church is using all means to advertise Catholicism in films, TV, radio, mailings, money drives on PBS to bring Christians back to Rome. The devil is working very hard through this religious institution. It is of no surprise to me that born-again Christians are unaware of this, and therefore condemn your ministry. Be encouraged, God is in control!

A. B., Sharpsburg, GA, writes—As a former Catholic who was saved eight years after hitting rock bottom, I am very thankful to the Lord for you and your ministry. My life changed dramatically as Jesus became the new focus of my life. He delivered me from many things, least of not was my addiction to alcohol. Soon my mother started having friends in the Catholic Church write me letters, and send me literature from people such as Scott Hahn. Since that time I have tried to talk to my mother about the Truth of God, but as many have experienced, this has been a strain on our relationship even though she always calls me a good Christian man. I asked her, how can a good Christian man be condemned to Hell over 100 times by the Council of Trent? So she went to talk to her local priest, and this is her quote: “I met with Father Tom regarding the so-called curses you believe are upon you from the Council of Trent. He stated the Council of Trent is no longer in effect, and was superseded by Vatican II. There are no curses! Many times people use ancient history to justify their position against the Catholic Church. He also suggested that in the future we discuss the weather.” This priest either doesn’t know his own doctrine, or he is just telling my mother anything to calm her down!

J. J., Houston, TX, writes—Before we got married four years ago, my wife converted from Catholicism, and joined the Baptist Church we were attending. Since then I have often questioned the authenticity of her conversion. She is troubled by a lot of the differences between Catholicism and Evangelicals. She has become more and more reluctant to go to church with me, and often indicates her desire to go back to the Catholic Church. I have done a lot of research, studying the Catholic Catechism, comparing it to the Bible, and reading about church history. It is blatantly obvious to me that the Catechism is a bold face lie! I know I can’t approach her that way, and I know that I have to approach her with gentleness and respect. I have recently discovered your web site and it is very helpful and encouraging. I know that God can do anything, and with prayer a true conversion of my wife

(Continued on page 8)

LETTERS TO BROTHER MIKE GENDRON

(Continued from page 7)

is possible. I have been fervently preparing myself to defend the true faith with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and would like to be on your prayer list. Please pray that my wife will see the Truth, and that God will use me as His instrument to be adequately equipped to defend the faith.

J. L., Manassas, VA, writes—While returning from a trip, I saw a sign for the *Grotto of Lourdes* National Shrine. Located high up on a hill is a statue of the Catholic Mary, made of a gold color that brilliantly reflects the sun rays, standing on a high tower. I was saddened that such a beautiful location was devoted to idolatry rather than giving glory to our wonderful Lord Jesus. I was able to slide some *Proclaiming the Gospel* tracts underneath the windshield wipers of some vehicles with Catholic bumper stickers. I pray that the Lord will grant repentance to those individuals.

Mary H., Internet, writes—I am interested to know why you believe Catholics are not Christians. I happen to be both. We believe in Christ as Messiah, that He died and rose for us, and that we will someday be with Him in Heaven. If you want to know what we believe, ask us instead of judging us. Only He knows us well enough to judge our lives. NO ONE ELSE!!! I don't want this to sound like a hate letter. I have friends of all faiths, and instead of witnessing to those who are already believers, we need to focus on those who ARE NOT!

Brother Mike answers—If you define a Catholic as one who adheres to the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, then it is impossible for a Catholic to also embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ! No one can believe two diametrically opposed gospels simultaneously. Catholics must repent of Rome's gospel of works and sacraments, and believe the Gospel of Grace to be a Christian (1 Cor 15:1-4). Having said that, there may be born-again Christians in the Catholic Church who have yet to come out of their apostate church to worship God in Spirit and truth (John 4:24). As these new converts are discipled in the Truth of God's Word, and are taught to observe ALL that Christ commanded, they will leave and not participate in the serious sin of idolatry any longer (Mat 28:19-20). The Judaizers believed as you do—that Christ was the Messiah, that He died and rose from the dead, and that they would someday be with Him in Heaven. However, because they distorted the Gospel by adding requirements for Salvation (as the Roman Catholic Church has also done), Paul condemned them (Gal 1:6-9). We are all called to make judgments using the Bible as our final court of appeals. When I ask Catholics how they hope to be forgiven and reconciled to God, and they respond without mentioning the name of Jesus, I make a judgment. When I read the Catechism of the Catholic Church and see teachings that oppose and nullify the Gospel of Grace, I make a judgment. Paul judged Peter for not acting in line with the Truth of the Gospel (Gal 2:11-14). Scripture tells us to judge righteously, and that we will be judged by the same standard we use to judge others (Prov 31:9;

Mat 7:2). We are to judge the teachings of others, and expose deceivers (2 Peter 2:1; Eph 5:11). Hopefully you will now judge the teachings of your priests and popes with the Word of God because God's Word is what will judge *you* on the last day (John 12:48).

D. R., San Diego, CA, writes—I sent an e-mail regarding your ministry to two ladies in my Bible Study (one has a degree from Dallas Theological Seminary) because I see a trend with them to join together with Catholics, and to be tolerant regarding doctrinal issues. It's obvious that I need to learn how to convey the Truth of God in love, and be willing to suffer and pay the cost to defend the faith. I know yours is not an easy ministry; yet I know there are times it must be very rewarding as well. May God bless your ministry abundantly, and may those who are in the darkness see the Light of their Salvation. Your newsletter helps me so much.

B. W., Marshall, VA, writes—It is teacher appreciation week, and I can think of no better time to heartfully thank you for broadening my knowledge of Scripture, sharpening the cutting edge of my discernment with love, and doing all with such patience, and kindness, and wisdom. Truly you are fulfilling a great need for this generation. May the Lord grace your efforts even more in the years to come.

R. K., Lewisville, TX, writes—My soul grieves each time I read the letters you receive from the foolishly ignorant brute beasts whose only defense is an institution of man, and not the Word of God. Might our Holy God give them a heart to seek out His Truth for themselves. Keep persevering in your ministry of Truth based on the Word of God and not man! Satan is well aware of man's bent to rob God of His Glory by contributing something of ourselves for Salvation. It is humbling to admit that we are like the Publican who would not even raise his head, but beat his breast saying, "have mercy on me, oh God, for I am a sinner."

**Jesus Christ is the ONLY way
to God the Father!
Not Mary. Not Mohammed.
Not a future Messiah.
Jesus Christ
is the ONLY way!
(John 14:6).**

A. W. PINK ON GOD'S KEEPING US

God has many ways of keeping us, but they may be reduced to two: by His Spirit, or His Providence. The one is inward, the other is outward. By the Power of the Holy Spirit the evil within us is restrained: "I also *withheld* you from sinning against Me" (Gen 20:6). By the Spirit, Divine Grace is imparted to us: "I will put My fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from Me" (Jer 32:40). By His Providences He removes occasions to and objects of sin: "For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; *lest* the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity" (Psa 125:3). "God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above that you are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor 10:13).

The fact that we are unable to keep ourselves should work in us the spirit of dependency. Our daily confession should be, "O our God, will You not judge them? For *we* have *no* might against this company that comes against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon *You*" (2 Chron 20:12). Our daily prayer should be, "*Lead us not* into temptation, but *deliver us* from evil." The fact that God is able and willing to keep us, should inspire confidence, deepen assurance, and fill us with praise: "I know whom I have believed, and *am persuaded* that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Just as the diver, encased in his watertight suit is surrounded by water, but preserved from it, so the Believer, living in this evil world is kept by the mighty Power of God, His arm encircling us.—A. W. Pink from Exposition of the Gospel of John Published by Zondervan Publishing House, 1945, Grand Rapids, MI

"If the Scriptures do thoroughly direct men to know God in Christ, and save their own souls, why should we look any further? But they do not only furnish every private Christian with this knowledge, but the man of God, who is to instruct others, he, too, needs look no further, but is furnished out of the Scripture with all things necessary to discharge his office. Therefore here we fix and rest—we have a sufficient rule and a full record of all necessary Christian Doctrine" (THOMAS MANTON—1620-1677).

(Continued from page 5)

But that is not all. Let us notice what comes immediately after verse 30. There are many more instructions. In the conclusion of Chapter 4 we read, "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph 4:31-32). But in Chapter 4 many other specific areas of Christian living are addressed.

Verse 30, then, clearly has to do with all that is around it. It relates to verses 25 and following, and it relates to verses 31 and following almost to the end of the Epistle. This truly is a verse of central importance. It gives us the answer to the questions, "WHY are we to do the things listed in this section of the Epistle. Why are we not to lie, but speak the truth? Why are we not to let the sun go down upon our wrath? Why are we not to steal but to work hard and give? Why are we not to let our speech be corrupt, but to speak only what is edifying? Why are we to put away all bitterness and malice? Why are we to be kind and forgiving toward one another?"

The answer to each of these questions is indicated in our verse. If we do the things prohibited, and if we do not do the things commanded, we GRIEVE THE HOLY SPIRIT. This is what separates Biblical Christianity from all other ethical systems.

Think about this with me for just a moment. Many ethical systems in the world encourage their followers to live a good life. They tell them not to lie or steal, or to use bad language. Many ethical systems promote kindness and forgiveness. Does that make them Christian? Not at all! The followers of Ghandi or even adherents of the Universalist Unitarians would promote many of the teachings of Ephesians 4:25 and following. But ONLY biblical Christianity tells its followers to do something, or not to do something because it either pleases or grieves the Holy Spirit of God!

What this means is that the believer in Jesus Christ is to be one who lives his whole life in reference to God. His starting point for everything is God; what he thinks, does, and says are to be considered in terms of whether or not they are pleasing to God. The Believer does not live a good or moral life simply because it is the nice thing to do, or because it pleases people, or because it will keep him out of trouble. The main consideration for whether or not the Believer does anything or doesn't do anything should be: "Is this pleasing to God?"—PF

(More next month, Lord willing).

THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY!

By C. H. Spurgeon

Oh yes, the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace, by teaching men to love, transforms them, and makes new creatures of them. I have seen it hundreds of times. There are some here, but I will not speak of them, but of cases parallel to theirs. They have been to a place of worship, and they have been preached to about their duty; and they have read the Bible, and have thought it was all about what was required from their own efforts. But all the while they have felt no obedience of heart, no love to Christ, and no joy in God. But those same persons have heard the Gospel, and found that there is nothing to do, that Jesus Christ has done it all; that sin was put away by His death, and Righteousness was worked out; and they have taken what God has presented to them, and believed in Jesus, and been saved!

And from that very moment the difference has been evident! They have cried, "I never felt any love to God before, but now I do. I love Him with all my soul for what He has done for me!" You hear them say, "I used to go to the House of God as a matter of duty, and I might almost as well have been away, for it was no enjoyment to me. But now I go as a matter of privilege, and I take my Bible with me, and sing God's praises with all my soul, because He has done so much for me." Those people will tell you that whereas they resolved to be good, and to give up vice, and to practice virtue, they never did it till they believed in Jesus—and when they believed in Him, love to Him made service easy, and sin hateful, and they became new creatures in Christ Jesus by the Spirit's Power!

There is the heart of it all. If you want to get rid of the guilt of sin, you must believe in Jesus. But equally, if you would be rid of the chains of sin, the tyranny of your passions, the domination of your lusts, you must believe in Him. From His side there flows not merely blood, but water—blood to take away your criminality, and water to take away your tendencies to sin, so that from now on you shall not serve sin, or live any longer in it. It is all there in that pierced heart; it is all there in that crimson fount opened on Calvary's bloody tree! Look to Jesus, and you shall be saved! This is it in a nutshell. "There is life in a look at the Crucified One."

I may never have an opportunity of preaching this Gospel to some of you again. It may be the first time you have heard it, and perhaps the last. O Sirs, I charge you accept it, and may the Spirit of God compel you to do so! We will meet in Heaven if it is so, but if you put it from you, you are like a man who flings away the only lifebelt that can keep him alive in the angry flood. You put from you the only medicine under Heaven that can heal your soul, for I am holding up before you the only Gospel in the world! If any man preaches any other Gospel, let him be accursed! Intolerant? I am content to be as intolerant as my Master, and He bade me say, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. He that believes not shall be damned."

"But may I not be saved some other way?" No, Sir. "But may I not reject with impunity this which you have preached?" No, Sir. At your peril is it, and before God I will put it right plainly before you. You must believe in Jesus, and if you reject Him, your blood is upon your own head, for there are no other ways of Salvation. The Lord grant that you may receive it, for Jesus' sake. Amen. —(Adapted from Sermon #1145, Volume 19—THE GREAT JAIL—AND HOW TO GET OUT OF IT—By the Grace of God, for all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons in Modern English, and more than 570 Spanish translations, visit: www.spurgeongems.org).

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TO BE HOLY,

and

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WHO ARE PERSECUTED
FOR HIS SAKE.

WHAT AN AWESOME GOD WE HAVE!

Many children of God, even when driven away from the outward means of Grace, have, nevertheless, enjoyed such visits of God, such inlets of Divine Love, that they have wondered from where such joy could come! In the wilderness, waters leap forth as do streams in the desert! Believers are not dependent upon *circumstances*; their joy comes not from what they have, but from *what they are*—not from *where* they are, but from *Whose* they are—not from what they enjoy, but from that which was suffered for them by their Lord. It is a singular joy, then, because it often buds, blossoms, and ripens in winter time, and when the fig tree does not blossom, and there is no herd in the stall. God's Habakkuks rejoice in the God of their Salvation! It is a singular joy, too, because it is quite consistent with spiritual conflict. He that is an heir of Heaven may cry, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And yet, before the sigh is over, he may sing, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."—CHS

REFLECTIONS

Gems gleaned by Jim Robinette

Calling to the Ministry

The title to the *exercise* of the ministerial office is, in ordinary circumstances, conferred by Christ through the call of the church. There is a distinction, and a most important one in the argument to be drawn between the title to the *possession* of the ministerial office, and the title to the *exercise* of the ministerial office. The former, or the right to the office, is the gift immediately of Christ; His call, directly addressed to the individual, gives him this first right. The latter, or the right to the exercise of the office, is also the gift of Christ; not, however, immediately or directly bestowed, but conferred through the regular and outward appointment of the church.

The first, or a right to the ministerial office, is one involved in the call of the Savior Himself, addressed and announced to the individual by the bestowment upon him of those special gifts and Graces of a spiritual kind which alone can qualify him for the office. The second, or a right to the exercise of the office, is involved in the call of the church, when, by ordination and regular investiture, he is outwardly set apart to the discharge of the duties connected with the office.

The warrant both to possess and exercise the office is complete only then when he has received both the direct call of Christ, and the outward call of the church. The one of these, or the inward call addressed to him from His Lord in Heaven, gives a warrant and title to the possession of the ministerial office; and that title is made good to the effect of conferring the right—not to the possession, but over and above that—to the exercise of the ministerial office, when it is recognized by the church as coming from its Divine Head, and when the church, in deference to His choice thus intimated, proceeds to give the outward call, and by ordination solemnly to set apart the individual so chosen to the office of the ministry.

The distinction of the old divines, formerly adopted in regard to the residence of church power, is the very distinction to be adopted in the case before us of a right to the ministerial office. That right may be regarded as existing '*in esse*,' and it may be regarded as existing '*in operari*'; and in all ordinary cases the one of these must supplement the other before a man is entitled to assume the power of discharging the duties of the ministry.

The right '*in esse*' is conferred immediately by the call of Christ, expressed to the individual through the bestowment on him of the special gifts and Graces suitable for office. The right '*in operari*' is conferred by Christ, too, but in ordinary circumstances only through the call of the church to the same individual, recognizing in him the choice of Christ, and proceeding, by the solemn act of ordination, to set him apart to the office of the ministry.

Until this formal and outward call of the church is superadded to the inward call of Christ, the individual's title to the ministerial office, both for the possession of it, and for the exercise of it, is not, in ordinary circumstances, complete.

I do not stop at present, because I shall refer to it afterwards, to inquire what *extraordinary* circumstances may justify or demand. But on all ordinary occasions, the right to the ministerial office '*in esse*' and the right to it '*in operari*' must be conjoined; and the call of Christ and the call of the church must unite before a man is justified in entering upon the work of the ministry. The outward investiture by ecclesiastical ordination is necessary for the work of the ministry besides the call, inward and sovereign, of Christ to the office of the ministry. The one ought to be added to the other before a man may regularly enter upon ecclesiastical duties in the Church.

That in ordinary circumstances a minister ought to be ordained to his office by those who have been in office before, is an assertion which is justified both by Scripture injunction and Scripture example. The practice of ordination, through which an individual is admitted to the exercise of the ministry, is one very distinctly sanctioned and required by apostolic authority. The imposition of hands by the office-bearers of the church was not a mere empty and unmeaning ceremony, but the last and crowning act by which the previous call of Christ to the individual was recognized and given practical effect to, and he was set apart to the work of the ministry."—From Church of Christ—Volume I, by James Bannerman (Students Reformed Theological Library; Banner of Truth Trust—Edinburgh) First Published 1869 . Pages 430-431.

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Our prayer for you:

¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height—
¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

(Eph 3:17-19 NKJV)



Pray for our Brethren in prison.

In This Issue...

...and, Lord willing, *every* issue, our *only* purpose is to honor Jesus Christ.

PLEASE DON'T TRAMPLE ON MY REDEEMER'S TEARS!

By C. H. Spurgeon

"There is no peace, says my God, unto the wicked." Oh what joys you wicked might have had! The delights of pardoned sin, the bliss of conscious safety, the joy of communion with God—the rapture of fellowship with Christ Jesus, the heavenly expectation of infinite Glory—all might have been yours! But you have put them away from you. The Lord says of you, as of Israel of old, "O that My people had hearkened unto Me, and Israel had walked in My ways! I would soon have subdued their enemies, and turned My hand upon their adversaries."

God would have revealed to you, by His Spirit, brighter things than eyes have seen, and sweeter joys than ears have heard—for if you had been willing and obedient you would have eaten the fat of the land of His Promises! You are losers! You are awful losers by not being reconciled to God, and you will be worse losers yet, for that false peace which now stands you in the stead of true peace, and beguiles and fascinates you will depart like the mirage of the desert, and leave you on the arid sands of despair to seek rest, and find it not!

Soon shall a terrible sound be in your ears of the approaching vengeance of God, and there shall be for you no place of refuge! When the Lord thought of what they had lost, He cried, "Oh that you had known!" I feel ashamed to repeat His Words because I cannot repeat them in the tone He used. Oh, to hear Jesus say these words! I think it might melt a heart of stone!

But no, I am mistaken, even that would not do it, for those who did hear Him were not melted nor reclaimed, but went on their way to their doom as they had done before! How hardened are the men who can trample on a Redeemer's tears! What wonder that they find a Hell where not a drop of water can ever cool their parched tongues tormented in the flame! If men are resolved to be damned, it is evident that the tears of the best, the most perfect of men cannot stop them!

Woe is me! This is deeper cause for tears than all else besides, that men should be so desperately set on mischief that nothing but Omnipotence will stop them from eternal suicide!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software,—Sermon #1570, Volume 26—*The Lamentations of Jesus*—Read/download entire sermon, more than 570 Spanish translations at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.