

FOR HIS GLORY

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I have been called upon this week by several persons to give my aid in trifling matters of politics, finance and social arrangement. "Why," I said to the applicants, "there are hundreds of people who can attend to these matters quite as well as I can." "Yes, sir, but we need your weight and influence." I replied, "My weight and influence belong to another. I am very willing to help you in any good thing if I can do it without diverting my attention from the service of my Master, but my time is not my own. I have to preach the gospel—you can get any blind fiddler to canvass for your candidate. I must attend to my Master's business and let the dead bury their dead."—CHS.



WHY DARKNESS?

By C. H. Spurgeon

"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour."

Matthew 27:45.

And that darkness was a *sacred concealment for the blessed person of our divine Lord*. So to speak, the angels found for their King a pavilion of thick clouds in which His Majesty might be sheltered in His hour of misery. It was too much for wicked eyes to gaze so rudely on that immaculate person! Had not His enemies stripped Him naked and cast lots for His garments? Therefore it was meet that the holy manhood should, at length, find suitable concealment. It was not fit that brutal eyes should see the lines made upon that blessed form by the engraving tool of sorrow. It was not meet that revelers should see the contortions of that sacred frame, indwelt with Deity, while He was being broken beneath the iron rod of divine wrath on our behalf! It was meet that God should cover Him so that none should see all He did and all He bore when He was made sin for us. I devoutly bless God for thus hiding my Lord away—thus was He screened from eyes which were not fit to see the sun much less to look upon the Sun of Righteousness!

This darkness tells us all that *the Passion is a great mystery into which we cannot pry*. I try to explain it as substitution and I feel that where the language of Scripture is explicit, I may and must be explicit, too. But yet I feel that the idea of substitution does not cover the whole of the matter, and that no human conception can completely grasp the whole of the dread mystery. It was worked in darkness because the full, far-reaching meaning and result cannot be beheld of finite mind. Tell me the death of the Lord Jesus was a grand example of self-sacrifice—I can see *that* and much more. Tell me it was a wondrous obedience to the will of God—I can see *that* and much more. Tell me it was the bearing of what ought to have been borne by myriads of sinners of the human race as the chastisement of their sin—I can see *that* and found my best hope upon it. But do not tell me that this is all that is in the cross! No,

(See Mystery on page 3)

Excuse me; I am dying...

but aren't we all?

Spurgeon speaks to living as difficult and death as easy. The last couple of months, my "living," I must admit, has been difficult, but I know the Lord will continue to help me through it.

Of all the promises in the Bible, Ann and I are both resting on Philippians 1:21, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Of course we both realize the power of prayer and thank all of you who are praying for us, for your kind efforts.

If the Lord's plan is to keep me in a rehab nursing facility or hospital for a few more weeks, it is very likely that we will not be able to publish a June **For His Glory**.

I have tried to keep a supply of sermons printed in advance, but the supply ends with the May sermon enclosed with this FHG.

In the meantime, we pray we all will be granted grace to do all we do for the honor and glory of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.—EO/AO

Pray that in His sovereign mercy our Lord and Master will allow millions of Roman Catholics and Muslims to know HIS voice (John 10: 3-4).

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Reasons for Praising God (1)

An Exposition of Psalm 18:46-50

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Verse 46: “The LORD lives!...” David here begins his conclusion to this Psalm. And he concludes it in the same manner in which he commenced it (in vv 1-3)—with praise to Jehovah. He praises Jehovah, first, for what He is in Himself, (v 46a), then for what He is to believers, (v 46b) and finally, for what He has done for them (vv 47-50). Regarding this phrase “Jehovah lives!”

1. The life of God is of the highest sort and includes eternal, conscious mental energy of intellect, emotion, and will.

2. The life of God is underived, as He has life in and of Himself (John 5:26)—“the “Father has life in Himself.”

3. The life of God distinguishes Him above all other so-called gods (1 Thess 1:9)—“you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (cp. Jer 10:10).

4. The life of God is manifested in Jesus Christ (John 5:20)—“His Son Jesus Christ...is the true God and eternal life.” Christ, therefore, declares, “I am...the life” (John 14:6). And saints, therefore, confess, “Christ...is our life” (Col 3:4).

“...Blessed be my Rock!...”

1. Christ is the Rock of righteousness (Deut 32:4)—“He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He” (cp. Psa 92:15).

2. Christ is to believers, “The Rock of my salvation” (2 Sam 22:47, the parallel text)—meaning that He, as their Savior, is “solid as a rock” and that His salvation is, therefore, certain and immutable (Psa 66:2, 6, 7)—“He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be moved.”

—**On the other hand, Christ is to unbelievers “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense”** (Isa 8:14). “And whoever falls on this stone [through unbelief] will be broken; but on whomever it falls [in judgment], it will grind him to powder” (Matt 21:42). “They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed” (1 Peter 2:8).

3. Christ is the Rock supplying nourishment to His people (1 Cor 10:4; Deut 32:13)—“all [Israel] drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them [as in Exo 17:6], and that Rock was Christ.” “He made him draw honey from the rock, and oil from the flinty rock.”

4. Christ is the Rock upon which the Church of God is

founded (Matt 16:18)—Christ speaks of Himself when He says, “on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”

5. Christ is the only Rock (v 31)—“For who is God, except the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?” “For their rock is not like our Rock, even our enemies, themselves, being judges” (Deut 32:31). “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 3:11).

“...Let the God of my salvation be exalted.”

1. Saints exalt God for His eternal purpose and covenant of salvation (2 Sam 23:5)—“Yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For this is all my salvation and all my desire.”

2. Saints exalt God the Father for predestining and choosing them to salvation (Eph 1:3 6)—“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace” (cp. 2 Thess 2:13).

3. Saints exalt God the Son for redeeming them in salvation “through the blood of the everlasting covenant” (Heb 13:20). They sing on earth in unison with the redeemed in glory, “You are worthy...for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev 4:11).

4. Saints exalt God the Spirit for applying to them all the benefits of salvation purposed for them by the Father and purchased for them by the Son. (To be continued.)

NOTABLE QUOTE OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“Now, if baptism depended upon the character or the office of the baptizer, Jesus would certainly have done it! But to show us that the person baptizing does not impart any grace to the person baptized, our Lord baptized not, but left that work to His disciples.”—1892, Sermon #2277

**PRAY OUR HEAVENLY FATHER
WILL GIVE US A CLEARER
UNDERSTANDING OF HIS HOLY WORD.**

PLEAD FOR GRACE TO BE HOLY

Pray for each other!

MYSTERY OF THE PASSION

(Continued from page 1)

great as this would be, there is much more in our Redeemer's death. God only knows the love of God—Christ only knows all that He accomplished when He bowed His head and gave up the ghost.

There are common mysteries of nature into which it were irreverence to pry, but this is a divine mystery before which we take our shoes off, for the place called Calvary is holy ground! God veiled the cross in darkness—and in darkness much of its deeper meaning lies—not because God would not reveal it, but because we have not capacity enough to discern it all! God was manifest in the flesh, and in that human flesh He put away sin by His own sacrifice—this we all know. But “without controversy great is the mystery of godliness.”

Once again, this veil of darkness also pictures to me the way in which *the powers of darkness will always endeavor to conceal the cross of Christ*. We fight with darkness when we try to preach the cross. “This is your hour and the power of darkness,” said Christ, and I doubt not that the infernal hosts made, in that hour, a fierce assault upon the spirit of our Lord. Thus much we also know, that if the Prince of Darkness is anywhere in force, it is sure to be where Christ is lifted up! To becloud the cross is the grand objective of the enemy of souls! Did you ever notice it? These fellows who hate the gospel will let every other doctrine pass muster—but if the atonement is preached and the truths of God which grow out of it, straightaway they are awakened! Nothing provokes the devil like the cross. Modern theology has for its main goal the obscuration of the doctrine of the atonement. These modern cuttlefish make the water of life black with their ink! They make out sin to be a trifle, and the punishment of it to be a temporary business—and thus they degrade the remedy by underrating the disease. We are not ignorant of their devices. Expect, my Brothers, that the clouds of darkness will gather as to a center around the Cross, that they may hide it from the sinner's view. But expect this, also, that there darkness shall meet its end. Light springs out of that darkness—the eternal Light of the undying Son of God, who, having risen from the dead, lives forever to scatter the darkness of evil!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages* —Sermon #1896, Volume 32—*The Three Hours of Darkness*—Read/download entire sermon at <http://www.spurgeongems.org> .

REFLECTIONS

Gems gleaned by Jim and Kappy Robinette
<http://www.missionafrica.netreflections.html>

THE PRIVILEGES OF PRAYER

A praying man can never be very miserable, whatever his condition is, for he has the ear of God, the Spirit within to compose, a friend in heaven to present, and God Himself to receive his desires as a Father. It is a mercy to pray, even though I never receive the mercy I pray for.—William Bridge (1600?-1670)

Ah! How often, Christians, has God kissed you at the beginning of prayer, and spoken peace to you in the midst of prayer, and filled you with joy and assurance upon the close of prayer!—Thomas Brooks (1608-1680)

SHOULD AN UNBELIEVER PRAY?

Though an unbeliever sins in praying, yet it is not a sin for him to pray. There is sin in the manner of his praying, but prayer, as to the act and substance of it, is his *duty*. He sins not because he prays—that is required of him—but because he prays amiss, not in the manner required of him. There are abominations in the prayers of a wicked man, but for him to pray is not an abomination—it is the good and acceptable will of God, that which He commands.—David Clarkson (1622-1686)

DOES PRAYER MOVE GOD?

Though God is not changed by it (prayer) in Himself, yet the real change that is made by it in *ourselves*, does infer a change in God by mere relation or extrinsically denomination—He being, according to the tenor of His own covenant, engaged to punish the unbelieving, prayerless and disobedient—and to pardon them that are faithfully desirous and obedient. So that in prayer, faith and fervency are so near from being useless, that they as much prevail for the thing desired by *qualifying ourselves for it*, as if, indeed, they moved the mind of God to a real change—even as he that is in a boat, and by his hook lays hold of the bank, does as truly, by his labor, get nearer the bank, as if he drew the bank to him.—Richard Baxter (1615-1691)

FAITH TO WORK MIRACLES

By A.W. Pink—(1886—1952)

During the last century [18th] there have been two cardinal errors made concerning much that is contained in the gospels—errors which have prevailed extensively among professing Christians and which have worked great havoc. Each of those errors concern that interpretation and application of the contents of the four Evangelists as to what does and does not pertain to the Lord's people today. The first of these errors was a *dispensational* one. The view was falsely taken that because our Lord's ministry was confined to Palestine, while the temple still stood in Jerusalem, it was therefore exclusively "Jewish" in its character, and that the saints of our era must turn only to the Epistles of the apostles to the Gentiles for their marching orders. Such an error is refuted by the opening verses of Hebrews (where the ministry of Christ is contrasted from that of the prophets) and by the fact that the great division of time between B.C. and A.D. is dated from the *birth* of Christ, and not from His death or even His ascension.

The second error is a *practical* one. Here the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme. In the former case an insidious and insistent attempt was made to deprive the saints of a valuable part of their legitimate heritage, taking from them needed precepts and precious promises under the pretext they were the sole property of the Jews. But in the latter case, which is now more fully to engage our attention, promises which were made *to a particular class* have been allocated universally. Promises which belonged only to the apostles and the primitive Christians have been wrongly applied to all believers in general. The result has been that false expectations were engendered, vain hopes raised, wild fanaticism encouraged—and those who have come into contact with this perversion of the truth have seen what tragic effects followed—thousands making complete shipwreck of the faith.

No doubt it will seem to some that we are now treading on delicate ground, for to assure them that some of the promises made by Christ to His disciples, promises which numbers of our readers may have been taught are the legitimate grounds on which to rest their faith, *do not*—in their prime sense—*belong to them at all* must prove disquieting and disappointing. We shall, therefore, proceed cautiously and slowly, and ask you to weigh with extra diligence what follows. "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In My name shall they cast out demons, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17, 18). Now those are the words of the Lord Jesus, but may *we* appropriate them today and expect a literal fulfillment of the same? There are those who answer with an emphatic yes.

Now the verses just quoted respect the miracles which attended the preaching of the gospel in the early days of this Christian dispensation, and it is to be duly noted that those miracles resulted from the exercise of faith. This we think will

be so evident to our readers as to occasion no difficulty. But there are other passages in the gospels dealing with the same subject—similar promises from the lips of the Saviour which may not appear so simple—and it is to them that we now turn. "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt 21:22). This same promise, slightly varied, is found again in, "Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). How often has this promise been appropriated by Christians and earnestly pleaded before God, only to meet with no response? Such have attributed this lack of response to the failure of their *faith*, (or been told that is the cause), instead of perceiving they were resting their faith on an unwarrantable foundation.

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt 21:22). Our first concern should be to ascertain *to whom* those words were first addressed and the circumstance which occasioned them—considerations that are usually of first importance as aids to a true application of a verse, for if the context is ignored, mistakes are sure to follow. The verses immediately preceding record our Lord's cursing of the fig tree and the effect this had upon those attending Him. Verse 20 says, "When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away." Mark tells us, "And Peter (the spokesman of the apostles) calling to remembrance saith unto Him, Master, behold, the fig tree which Thou cursedst is withered away" (11:21). Then it was that Christ replied, "Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt 21:21-22).

It must be borne in mind that at an earlier date Christ had appointed 12 of His disciples to preach the gospel and to perform miracles in confirmation of their commission. "And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits to cast them out and to heal all manner of sickness" (Matt 10:1)—those miraculous powers were primarily what Paul referred to when he spoke of, "The *signs* of an apostle were *worked* among you" (2 Cor 12:12). Luke tells us that, "after these things the Lord appointed other seventy, also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place whither He Himself would come" (10:1), bidding them, "heal the sick" (v 9). The same duly returned and declared, "even the demons are subject unto us through Thy name" (v 17). Thus, it is quite clear that the promise of Matthew 21:22 was made to those who were in possession of *miraculous powers* and was designed for their personal encouragement.

SEEK THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST

Nothing can damn a man but his own righteousness; nothing can save him but the righteousness of Christ. All your sin—your past sin—shall not destroy you if you now believe in Jesus. It shall be cast into the sea forever and you shall begin again as though you had never sinned. His grace shall keep you for the future, and you shall hold on your way an honor to Christ's grace and a joy to your own soul. But if you are disobedient and will not eat of the good of the land, then will I say, as Isaiah said of old, "I am found of them that sought Me not, but all day long have I stretched out My hands to an ungodly and gain-saying generation." God has stretched out His hands. Oh that you were wise and would run into His arms tonight!

I know I am speaking to some self-righteous men—some who say, "It is a shame to tell men they are depraved. *I am not.*" Well, we think if their lives were written it might be proved they were. "It is a shame," they say, "to tell men that they cannot get to heaven by their good works because then they will be wicked." It is an odd thing, though, that the more this truth is preached, the better people are. Preaching good works as the way to heaven always makes drunkards and thieves, but preaching faith in Christ always produces the best effects. Dr. Chalmers, who was no fanatic, says, "When I preached mere morality I preached sobriety till they were all drunkards. I preached chastity till it was not known anywhere. I preached honesty till men grew to be thieves. But," he says, "as soon as ever I preached Christ, there was such a change in the village as never was known."

Well, we believe that self-righteousness will destroy you, my friend, and we therefore tell you, honestly and plainly that you might as well hope to get to heaven by flying up in a balloon as to get there by your good works. You may as soon sail to India in a sieve as get to glory by your own goodness. You might as well go to court in cobwebs as seek to go to heaven in your own righteousness. Away with your rags, your filthy, rotten rags! They are only a harbor for the parasites of unbelief and pride. Away with your rotten righteousness, your counterfeit gold, your forged wealth! It is of no worth, whatever, in the sight of God. Come to Him empty, poor, and naked! It grates on your proud ear does it? Better, I say, to lose your pride than to lose your soul!

Why be damned for pride's sake? Why carry your head so high that it must be cut off? Why feed your pride on your soul's blood? Surely there is cheaper stuff than that for pride to drink! Why let it suck the very marrow out of your bones? Be wise! Bow, stoop, stoop to be saved!

And now, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, the man, the God, I do command you, as His messenger and His servant—and at your peril reject the command—"Believe, repent and be baptized, every one of you." "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved," "for he that believes and is baptized shall be saved. He that believes not shall be damned." God add His blessing, for His name's sake. Amen.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, —Sermon #374, Volume 7—*THE INTEREST OF CHRIST AND HIS PEOPLE IN EACH OTHER*—Read/download entire sermon at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.

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NOTABLE QUOTE OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

"If a penitent should come and ask me, "What must I do to be saved?" I would say, "Christ must save you—believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." I would neither direct to prayer, nor reading of the Scriptures, nor attending God's house—but simply direct to *faith*—the naked faith on God's gospel!—CHS—Volume 1, Sermon #34.

A Study of Ephesians

THE BELIEVER'S BOLD ACCESS TO GOD (2)

Last time we began considering some of the life-changing truths of God taught in Ephesians 3:12—"in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him." We reviewed some of the processes common to conversion and saw that the new convert finds in Christ the only remedy for his sinful condition. He rejoices that the blood of Christ can cover all his sin and that God views him as perfect in Christ. But we also saw that as a believer grows and begins to see more of the vileness of his sin and more of the holiness of God, he might tend to question whether he is truly saved. Our verse gives the solution.

Twice in this short verse, Christ is alluded to. Where is sin? It is not mentioned. Why? Because sin is not important? Of course not! The point here is that sin, horrible as it is, is no longer a barrier between the believer and God. Why? Because it has all been paid for! And as far as God is concerned, it is removed from the believer as far as the East is from the West. Now, if that is *God's* view of it, why should we continue with the false idea that somehow it is more humble to say we cannot have assurance of our salvation because we are so sinful? Do you see how that denies the gospel?

Yes, I am sinful. But what has that to do with my acceptance with God? We are accepted by God, today, not because we are now less sinful than we used to be, though we certainly long for that to be true. But we are accepted by God, now, for the same reason we were accepted by Him when we first believed on the Lord Jesus Christ—because Jesus took ALL of our sin away, and clothed us with His own perfect righteousness! Now God sees the believer clothed in the beauty of Christ.

Do you see, then, dear brothers and sisters, that it all comes down to a matter of *focus*? If we focus on *ourselves* we will never have assurance and boldness in coming to God in prayer. And it is very unlikely that we will have much joy in the Christian life. Focusing on ourselves is like focusing on the *sewer*. All we will see when we look at ourselves are more reasons to be discouraged. Old sins will raise their ugly heads, and new sins will keep popping up.

But when we look unto Jesus and focus upon *Him* there is an entirely different perspective. For then you see that all your sins are forgiven and you are clean before God. Then you see that, for Jesus' sake, God smiles on you and loves you more intensely than you can imagine. You go to God in prayer, not hanging your head and wondering if you will get through, but with boldness and confidence that God is your heavenly Father and is deeply interested in every word you say to Him!

"But," one might say, "if I really live like *that* I'm going to get spoiled and sloppy in my Christian living. I am going to take God's grace for granted. I need to stay focused on my sin so that I will try harder not to sin." Dear friends, the reason for our sloppy Christian living does not come from not enough focusing upon our sin, but from not enough *looking at our Savior*. What we need is not a greater determination to be better, but a clearer view of the One who loved us and gave Himself for us. When that happens, our hearts will melt and our love and devotion to Him will flourish and flow. It is while looking at Christ that our zeal will become white-hot and we will serve the Lord with gladness. It is by looking to Him that we will fight against sin as we never fought against it before. Again, dear friends, it is a matter of *focus*. Christ must be our focus. This focus on Christ will give us boldness in coming to God in prayer, and a deep assurance, and joy and confidence that we are received.

How far do you suppose a person would get if he decided he wanted to talk with the President of the United States, and he walked over and tried to prance up the steps of the White House and have a little chat with him? Well, we know that the security guards would have him quickly in custody. Why? He had no right of access! And that's how it is for anyone who does not have Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord when he attempts to approach God's presence in prayer. That person has no right of entrance.

Sometimes when the world is facing a crisis for which there seems to be no solutions, you will hear talk of prayer. When people are at their wit's end, they often mention praying. But how do they pray? There is no mention of Jesus Christ. They are simply praying with the hope that if there is someone out there called God, He might look upon the situation and do something. But such prayers are meaningless. *Christ is the ONLY means of access to the Father*. There is no possibility of prayer without Him. He, Himself, said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Ah, but when a person has Christ, he not only has access, but he also has boldness and confidence in coming to God! Friends, do you see that this is the greatest thing a person can have in this life? Go to God through Jesus Christ and He will meet with you! And as you do, you will know more and more of His glory and comfort, and love and compassion. We must come as we are *invited* to come. We must come with boldness, knowing that we have access and with confidence that we will be heard.

In our prayer life our confidence grows as we focus upon Jesus and become more convinced of His sufficiency to carry us through this life and into eternity. If you study Him—if you simply believe that He is all He says He is—you can, with confidence, *enjoy* Him. The writer of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 10:19-22, "Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

May we be able to say with the hymn writer, "Jesus, I am resting, resting, in the joy of what You are; I am finding out the greatness of Your loving heart."—PF

SALVATION 101

By Charles H. Spurgeon

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”

Luke 18:13.

Brothers and sisters, we must remember that A SENSE OF SINNERSHIP CONFERS NO RIGHT TO MERCY. You will wonder why I mention this self-evident truth, but I must mention it because of a common error which does great mischief. This man was very sensible of his sin inasmuch that he called himself, A SINNER, but he did not urge his sense of sin as any reason why he should find mercy. There is an ingenuity in the heart of man, nothing less than devilish, by which he will, if he can, turn the gospel, itself, into a yoke of bondage. If we preach to sinners that they may come to Christ in all their anguish and misery, one cries—“I do not feel myself to be a sinner as I ought to feel it! I have not felt those convictions of which you speak, and therefore, I cannot come to Jesus!” This is a horrible twist of our meaning! We never meant to insinuate that convictions and doubts and despondencies conferred upon men a *claim* to mercy, or were *necessary* preparations for grace. I want you, therefore, to learn that a *sense of sin* gives no man a right to divine grace.

If a deep sense of sin entitled men to mercy, *it would be a turning of this parable upside down*. Do you dream that this publican was, after all, a Pharisee differently dressed? Do you imagine that he really meant to plead, “God be merciful to me because I am humble and lowly”? Did he say in his heart, “Lord, have mercy upon me because I am not a Pharisee and am deeply despondent on account of my evil ways”? This would prove that he was, in his heart of hearts, a Pharisee! If you make a righteousness out of your *feelings*, you are just as much out of the true way as if you made a righteousness out of your *works*. Whether it is work or feeling, anything which is relied upon as a *claim* for grace is an antichrist! You are no more to be saved because of your conscious miseries than because of your conscious merits! There is no virtue either in the one or in the other. If you make a Savior of *convictions*, you will be lost as surely as if you made a Savior out of *ceremonies*! The publican trusted in divine mercy and not in his own convictions. And you must do the same.

To imagine that an awful sense of sin constituted a claim upon mercy would be *like giving a premium to great sin*. Certain seekers think, “I have never been a drunk, or a swearer, or unchaste, but I almost wish I had been, that I might feel myself to be the chief of sinners and so might come to Jesus.” Do not wish anything so atrocious! There is no good in sin in any shape or fashion! Thank God if you have been kept from the grosser forms of vice. Do not imagine that repentance is easier when sin is grosser—the reverse is true. Do believe that there is no advantage in having been a horrible offender. You have sinned enough—to be worse would not be better. If good works do not help you, certainly *bad* works do not! You that have been moral and excellent should cry for mercy and not be so silly as to *dream* that greater sins would help you to readier repentance! Come as you are and if your heart is hard, confess

it as one of your greatest sins. A deeper sense of sin would not entitle you to the mercy of God—you can have no title to mercy but that which mercy gives you. Could your tears flow *forever*—could your grief know *no respite*—you would have no claim upon the sovereign grace of God who will have mercy on whom He will have mercy!

Then, dear friends, remember, if we begin to preach to sinners that they must have a certain sense of sin and a certain measure of conviction, *such teaching would turn the sinner away from God in Christ to himself*. The man begins at once to say, “Have I a broken heart? Do I feel the burden of sin?” This is only another form of looking to *self*. Man must not look to himself to find reasons for God’s grace. The remedy does not lie in the seat of the disease—it lies in the Physician’s hands. A sense of sin is not a *claim*, but a *gift* of that blessed Savior who is exalted on high to give repentance and remission of sins. Beware of any teaching which makes you look to *yourself* for help! You must, rather, cling to that doctrine which makes you look only to Christ! Whether you know it or not, you are a lost, ruined sinner, only fit to be cast into the flames of hell forever. Confess this, but do not ask to be driven mad by a sense of it. Come to Jesus just as you are, and do not wait for a preparation made out of your own miseries. Look to Jesus and to Him alone.

If we fall into the notion that a certain sense of sin has a claim upon God, *we shall be putting salvation upon other grounds than that of faith*—and that would be false ground. Now, the ground of salvation is—“God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” A simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the way of salvation! But to say, “I shall be saved because I am horribly convicted of sin and driven to desperation,” is not to speak like the gospel, but to rave out of the *pride of an unbelieving heart*. The gospel is that you believe in Christ Jesus; that you get right *out of yourself* and depend alone on Him! Do you say, “I feel so guilty”? You are certainly guilty, whether you *feel* it or not! And you are far more guilty than you have any idea of. Come to Christ because you are guilty, not because you have been prepared to come by looking at your guilt! Trust nothing of your own, not even your sense of need.

A man may have a sense of disease a long time before he will get healing out of it. The looking-glass of conviction reveals the spots on our face, but it cannot wash them away. You cannot fill your hands by putting them into your empty pockets and feeling how empty they are! It would be far wiser to hold them out and receive the gold which your friend so freely gives you. “God be merciful to me a sinner” is the right way to put it, but not, “God be merciful to me *because* I sufficiently feel my sinnership, and most fittingly bewail it.”—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, —Sermon #1949, Volume 33.

NOTABLE QUOTES OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“The church needs to be built up with men who have been pulled down!”—1892, Sermon #2260

“Did you ever meet some poor man who said to you, ‘Bless your heart, you led me to the Savior’? Did you ever see a woman look you in the face with unspeakable love and say to you, ‘You are my father in Christ Jesus. You brought me to the Savior’s feet’? If you once knew this joy, you would always be hungering after more of it! You would never be fully satisfied with what you have done and would be ever wanting to do yet more and more!”—1892, Sermon #2288

“Oh, if some of you get saved, tonight, when you get home, there will be a difference in your house! Ah, and within a day or two, even your cat will know that there is a change in you! Everybody in the house will know that you are different from what you were. When a man who has been a drinker gets saved, or one who has been accustomed to use bad language, or one who has given way to passion, or a Sabbath-breaker, or a godless, Christless wretch—when he gets converted, it is as if hell were turned into heaven and the devil transformed into an angel! God make it so with any such who are here, by the working of sovereign grace!”—1892, Sermon #2275

“Prayer is a downright mockery if it does not lead us into the practical use of means likely to promote the ends for which we pray.”—1891, Sermon #2233

“Do you remember what is on the seal of the American Baptist Missionary Society?—An ox with a plow on one side and a halter on the other, ready for either—ready to *serve*, or ready to *suffer*. You have not come to the highest style of readiness till you are ready for whatever the will of God may appoint for you!”—1892, Sermon #2285

“You may speak to Christ, yourself! You may confess your sins, yourself. You need no priest—you need a Mediator between your soul and God—but you do not need a mediator between your soul and Jesus! You may come to Him where you are and as you are. Come to Him now! Tell Him your case! Plead with Him for mercy. He does not need my help. He does not need the help of the Archbishop of Canterbury! He does not need the help of anybody—He, alone, can meet your case! Just put your case into His hands, and then if you have no man to be your helper, you need not lie down and fret about it, for He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him!”—1892, Sermon #2269

“The things that God will honor, man must first despise! You run the gauntlet of the derision of men and afterwards you come out to be used of God.”—1891, Sermon #2216

“I like to go to that table every week and my own solemn conviction is that that is none too often. If there is any rule about it in Scripture, there certainly is no rule for going once a month, much less for once a quarter! If there is any rule, it is that on the first day of the week, when we meet together, we should break bread in memory of our Savior’s dying love! I commend it to our brothers and sisters to consider whether they keep the feast as often as they should, remembering our Master’s wondrous passion and death. It may be that they lose much spiritual benefit because their place at the Lord’s Table is empty—when it should be filled.”—1892, Sermon #2288

“All religion which is not spiritual is worthless. All religion which is not the supernatural product of the Holy Spirit is a fiction.”—1891, Sermon #2203

“They tell me that ‘creeds are dead.’ Yes, yes! It is a pleasant thing to hear an honest confession—they *are* dead to dead men! I hold nothing as the truth of God that I can put away on a shelf and leave there. My creed is part of my being! I believe it to be true, and believing it to be true, I feel its living force upon my nature every day! When a man tells you that his creed is a dead thing, do not deny it for a minute—there is no doubt of the fact. He knows about himself better than you do. Oh, dear friends, let *us* never have a dead creed! That which you believe, you must believe up to the hilt! Believe it livingly, believe it really—for that is not believed at all which is only believed in the letter, but is not felt in the *power* of it!”—1892, Sermon #2267

“If luck has actually done anything for you, then by all means worship luck and pay homage to it! But it is not so. Luck, fortune and chance are the devil’s trinity! If things have gone well with you, it has been so because it has pleased the Most High to favor you. I pray that you may not be unmindful of the heavenly blessing, but thank your God and bless His name.”—1892, Sermon #2252

“Listen to Christ’s tender words, ‘No man comes to the Father but by Me.’ There is no way to election except through redemption.”—1916, Sermon #3544

LEAN HARD!

By Octavius Winslow (1808 - 1878)

*“Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain you.”
Psalm 55:22 .*

It is by an act of simple, prayerful faith that we transfer our cares and anxieties, our sorrows and needs to the Lord. Jesus invites you to come and lean upon Him—to lean with all your might upon that arm that balances the universe—and upon that bosom that bled for you upon the soldier’s spear!

But you doubtfully ask, “Is the Lord able to do this thing for me?” And thus, while you are debating a matter about which there is not the shadow of a shade of doubt, the burden is crushing your gentle spirit to the dust! And all the while Jesus stands at your side and lovingly says, “Cast your burden upon Me and I will sustain you. I am God Almighty. I bore the load of your sin and condemnation up the steep slope of Calvary, and the same power of omnipotence, and the same strength of love that bore it all for you, then, is prepared to bear your need and sorrow now.

“Roll it all upon Me! Child of My love! Lean hard! Let Me feel the pressure of your care. I know your burden, child! I shaped it—I poised it in My own hands and made no proportion of its weight to your unaided strength. For even as I laid it on, I said I shall be near, and while you lean on Me, this burden shall be Mine, not yours. So shall I keep My child within the encircling arms of My own love.

“Here, lay it down! Do not fear to impose it on a shoulder which upholds the government of worlds! Yet come closer! You are not near enough! I would embrace your burden, so I might feel My child reposing on My breast. You love Me! I know it. Doubt not, then. But, loving Me, lean hard!”

—Submitted by Brother Rick Kinsley, Lewisville, TX—Pray our Master’s Holy Spirit will lead and comfort him as he serves Him in ministering to inmates in Texas prisons.

PRAY FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS
IN PRISON; PRAY OUR HEAVENLY FATHER
WILL SEND MEN WHO WILL PREACH
THE WHOLE GOSPEL
TO SERVE AS CHAPLAINS IN OUR JAILS
AND PRISONS.

GAVE YOUR HEART TO CHRIST, DID YOU?

By C. H. Spurgeon

I am continually hearing from converts and others, the expression, “*I gave my heart to Christ,*” as a description of conversion. Now I do not find fault with that expression, for we must give our hearts to Christ—but very seriously, let me say that I am afraid that that phrase will do much mischief unless it is well guarded and looked after.

The gospel is not, “Give your hearts to Christ, and you shall be saved.” The gospel is, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ”—that is, TRUST Him—“and you shall be saved.” When you do *that*, you will be sure to give Him your heart, by-and-by, if not at once. Salvation is not by *your* giving anything to Christ, but by Christ giving something to you!

I am glad that you have given your heart to Christ—but have you learned, first, this lesson—that He gave His heart *for* you? We do not find salvation by giving Christ anything! That is the *fruit* of it, but salvation comes by *Christ giving us something*—did I say *something*—by Christ giving us *EVERYTHING*! By His giving us Himself!

I used to notice that a good deal of Sunday school teaching to the children was, “Dear child, love Jesus.” That is not the way of salvation! The way of salvation is to *trust* Jesus. The *fruit* of salvation is that the dear child *does* love Jesus, but that is not the way of salvation. The way of salvation is to take Christ, to trust Christ.

When you are saved, the proof of it will be that you will give your heart to Christ, but do not let us turn things upside down lest, beginning with a little blunder, we should go on to some great error and set up, again, the ruinous doctrine which once sank the world in darkness—the doctrine of an imaginary salvation by our own works!

NOTABLE QUOTE FROM CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“David did one thing more before he died—*he gave a solemn charge to others*. He charged Solomon, the princes and all the people to carry out the work of building the temple. I revere the man who, in his old age, when there is weight in every syllable that he utters, concludes his life by urging others to carry on the work of Christ! It is something to gather about your last bed young men who have years of usefulness before them and to lay upon their consciousness and their heart the *duty* of preaching Christ crucified—and winning the souls of men for the Lord.”—1892, Sermon #2261

Letters to Mike Gendron of Proclaiming the Gospel:

ptg@pro-gospel.org ~ www.pro-gospel.org ~ P.O. Box 940871, Plano, TX 75094

C. & C. W., Greeley, CO, write—Your newsletter has really been an eye-opener to me. My husband's sister professed to be a Christian most of her life, but then a few years ago she married a Catholic man who made it clear that he would raise his children Catholic. She decided to become a Catholic, also. Reading your material has really reinforced our need to pray for their salvation. My husband has been reading your book, *Preparing Catholics for Eternity*, to be better prepared to talk with them. They always become very defensive when we bring up this topic. Please pray!

H. H., Riverview, FL, writes—If you are still kicking when God calls me home, I request that you conduct my funeral along with two others I've chosen. It will be a last shot at evangelizing my family and friends. You can contrast Catholicism with the gospel and tell them point blank that I wanted them to hear and ponder the gospel because that's all that matters.

G. K., Woodman, WI, writes—I have so appreciated all of your articles on revealing the depth of deceit in the Catholic Church. My heart is burdened for the many Catholics who live in our area so I pass out your articles to them. When one day they stand before our Lord and give an account—they will be unable to say they never had a Mike Gendron revealing the Truth to them. You encourage me greatly in my ministry.

T. M., Calipatria, CA, writes—*May God alone be glorified as He opens hearts to receive His truth!* May the Lord continue to use you as a beacon of light to direct the lost from Rome to *The Way*. Your ministerial endeavors are reaping fruit of eternal significance. We are of a kindred spirit. Many from our humble flock embrace your stance against the "Antichrist" of church history. O my beloved brother Mike Gendron, I praise God for witnessing His continual progressive illumination of your mind to a progressive knowledge of your spiritual heritage. May He provide you with many more fruitful journeys into the heart and soul of Pauline thought and life. May the Lord richly bless your preaching and teaching.

J. V., Broussard, LA, writes—After reading your newsletter for a number of years now, I have come to one conclusion—Mike Gendron for President!

T. C., Whangarei, New Zealand, writes—Greetings from New Zealand. Where did you get the Bible from? Jesus did not write a book nor command his disciples to write. Scriptures do not contain the whole religion of Jesus. I know enough of the gospel. I have no need of you.

B. H., Eagan MN, writes—My husband and I were Eucharistic Ministers and greeters and completely involved in the Catholic Church for many years. Once when I was in Catholic school, I asked the teacher a question about the Book of Revelation. She told me that I shouldn't be reading the Bible—only priests are able to interpret the writings. I felt like I had done something wrong. But I figured the Bible was written for the common man, not some elitist bureaucrats, so I decided to read it. I began questioning every word the priest said and soon found out that he could not be trusted. I began looking for another church, but can't find one that teaches only the Bible. Can you help me find a biblical church?

C. & J. J., Lily, GA, write—I set everything else aside as soon as I receive your newsletter and read it all the way through. I praise the Lord that He has called you to minister not only to those entrapped within the Catholic Church, but also to those within the body of Christ who so desperately need to learn discernment in these latter days. We pray the Lord will bless, guide and protect you as you run the race.

Cheri R., Internet, writes—I was raised a Methodist, then AOG, then joined the Catholic Church after a year of orientation to make sure it was what I wanted. After visiting your web site I was angry and hurt. Our traditions keep the gospel alive. Stop judging the RCC. You are not qualified to judge. You left it and you don't even understand it. You are corrupting the body of Christ like a cancer that needs to be cut out. I pray for chemotherapy of a divine nature to cleanse you from harming the Body. Become productive instead of destructive. May God change your hardened heart and bring you back.

L. S. Wellington, NV, writes—As a former Catholic, I was deceived into thinking that attending mass and being a moral person could help me avoid purgatory. Such a place horrified me. I was never certain of going to heaven. But on the blessed day when I believed the gospel of Jesus Christ, that salvation is by grace through faith alone, I was born-again! That was 30 years ago and I've never stopped thanking Jesus Christ for dying in my place, so I could live forever with Him. Mike, thank you for your ministry; most Catholics become so angry and defensive when being told the truth of God's Word. So in spite of all the insults hurled at you and the vicious letters you receive, please continue with the most important work you have been divinely called to do. And you do it so well! Thank you for being obedient to His call and for being "a voice crying in the wilderness."

“THERE STOOD BY THE CROSS OF JESUS HIS MOTHER”

(Read John 19:25-27)

Written in July, 1990 by Bob L. Ross—Pilgrim Publications

At the hour of His death, the Lord Jesus Christ thought of His earthly mother. And nearest to Him at this time of His crucifixion was His mother. One of the greatest experiences of life is the love shared by a mother and her children. Jesus knew that love with His mother, Mary, and it was one of the main features mentioned by the Scriptures in His hour of suffering. She did not forsake Him, and He did not forget her.

Of all the relationships of this life, I count the relationship with my mother as the grandest, most comforting, and most encouraging of them all. And if I had my life to begin again, and could choose from all women of the world to be my mother, I would choose to have the one which I have had. I could not conceive of how I could ever find another who so completely met the ideal qualifications of that word, “mother.” Remarkably, she died on July 1, her 88th birthday. Among some of the keepsakes which I found sometime ago, as I looked through some of my Mom’s collections, was the following letter which I wrote to her in 1967. It was a blessing to me to find that she had kept this letter in her purse, as if it meant so much to her. Here is how it reads:

“Dear Mama,

I read a statement a few days ago in a magazine about ‘mothers’ which said that a mother is someone we don’t know how to appreciate until it is too late to let them know it. This prompted me to write this letter and just let you know that I may not know how much to appreciate you, now, but I do love you a lot and appreciate you and all you’ve done for me. If I’ve done anything of any lasting value, I know you will have most of the reward for it, considering how much you have encouraged me. Many times I think of how hard you’ve worked, and it makes me feel obligated to try to do my best, too. I am always conscious that you are pulling for me and would do anything for me.

Some day, some how, I hope there will be some way I can show a similar love to you, although I know I can never repay you for what you have meant to me. I just wanted to let you know that I do appreciate you and remember you many times during the day. Love, Bob”

For most of her life, my mother never laid upon me any of her burdens, but rather she was constantly looking for something she could do for me. She was greatly interested in the Christian work in which I have been engaged for 37 years, beginning in 1953. One of the first things she ever did for me was to have a little room added to our home so I could have a room for a small library and a place to study the Bible and other Christian books. She bought many of the first books which I wanted to study and I never lacked for her assistance in any area of need.

Following my leaving home in 1955 to pursue the various Christian endeavors that have since presented themselves to me, she has always given me her blessing, her prayers, her encouragement and her support. Through all the years she made it a practice to keep in touch with me, my family, and my work, and to be supportive in every possible way.

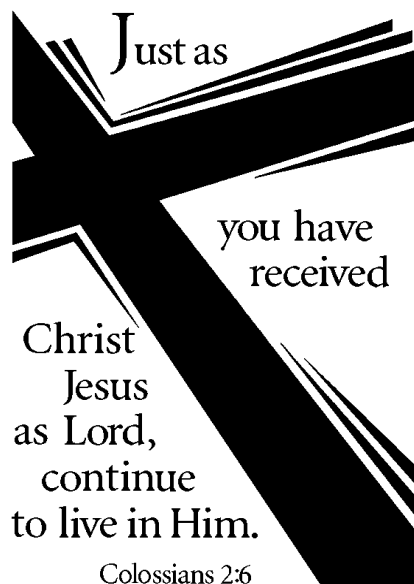
In the 63rd and final volume of C. H. Spurgeon’s great sermon set entitled the METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE PULPIT, which I published over a 12-year period, I wrote an introduction in order to express my appreciation upon the completion of this work. The first person whom I named, in expressing my appreciation to the various people who had helped, was my mother. Actually, it was Mother who furnished me the money with which I bought the old original set of these books in a used book store in Chicago in 1955. Of course, at that time neither she nor I had the slightest thought that one day I would put this old set of Spurgeon’s sermons back into print. Without her support then, and later, there would probably have been no reprint of the entire original Spurgeon 63-volume sermon series.

I could go on and on with stories about her interest in and support of me and my work. As I said, during the healthy years of her life she never put any burdens upon me, but was rather helping me. However, that time did come when I could, in turn, do something for her and Dad in the difficult years of their lives. And so, for the past eight years [1982-1990], at various times and in stressful periods of poor health, it has been my privilege to express my feelings for Mom and Dad in more ways than mere words.

After Dad’s three-year struggle with physical decline ended in 1985, circumstances were such that Mom came to live with me the last five years of her life. I am sure that either or both of my brothers, Keeton and David, would have taken care of Mom to the best of their abilities had not I been in what seemed to be more favorable circumstances to assume this responsibility. I am grateful that both of them have more than once expressed their approval of my caring for Mom during the years, and this has been a great satisfaction to me to know I have had their support.

These have by no means been the happiest years of Mom’s life, nor the easiest years of my life. She suffered heart failure in 1984, broke her arm the same year, had eye operations in 1985, and a few other hospitalization periods for other health reasons. Also, in having to move from Tennessee to Texas in order for me to take care of her, she naturally suffered the loss of many friends, neighbors and relatives who were left behind. She never forgot these people, however, and was always delighted to have a card, letter or phone call from such friends. I would like to call the roll of the many who have kept “in touch,” but there are so many, I know someone would be overlooked—you know who you are—and I want you to know that she often talked about you and all the others she left behind in Tennessee, recalling happier days of the years gone by.

For HIS Glory
Prison Ministry
Emmett and Ann O'Donnell
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This is the **May 2006** issue with some changes. Emmett is still unable to publish a new issue for **May 2016**. Your prayers are greatly appreciated. Ann

In This Issue...

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

MAY WE ALL BE AS "SPURGEON'S DOGS"

By C. H. Spurgeon

If God means to use you, you must get to be full of praise. Listen to what David says, "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Your name: the righteous shall compass me about; for You shall deal bountifully with me." May God give to my brothers and sisters here, who are being tried for their good, and afflicted for their promotion, divine grace to begin to praise Him! It is the singers that go first—they who can praise best shall be fit to lead others in the work.

Do not set me to follow a gloomy leader! Oh, no, dear sirs, we cannot work to the tune of "The Dead March in Saul"! Our soldiers would never have won Waterloo if that had been the music for the day of battle! No, no! Give us a *Jubilate*—"Sing unto the Lord who has triumphed gloriously; praise His great name again and again." Draw the sword and strike home!

If you are of a cheerful spirit, glad in the Lord and joyous after all your trials and afflictions, and if you can rejoice more because you have been brought so low, then God is making something of you, and He will yet use you to lead His people to greater works of grace!

I have talked to three kinds of people tonight. May God grant each of you grace to take what belongs to you! But if you see any of the *first* sort before you go out of the building—any who are in the cave of gloom under a sense of sin. If you want to go to the Communion Table but feel that you ought to stop and comfort them, mind that you do the latter!

Put yourself second! There is a wonderful work to be done in these lobbies and in these pews after a Worship Service. There are some dear brothers and sisters who are always doing it—they call themselves my "dogs"—for they go and pick up the birds that I have wounded! I wish that they might be able to pick up many tonight!

Oh, that some of you might always be on the alert to watch a face and see whether there is any emotion there! Just paddle your own canoe alongside that little ship and see whether you cannot get into communication with the poor troubled one on board and say a word to cheer a sad heart. Always be doing this, for if you are in prison, yourself, the way out of it is to help another out! God turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends. When we begin to look after others and seek to help others, God will bless us. So may it be, for His name's sake! Amen.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software, Sermon #2283, Volume 38—*David's Prayer in the Cave*—Read/download entire sermon at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.