

FOR HIS GLORY

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This old nature of ours sometimes cries out against God *in matters of duty*. We can do anything except the special duty of the hour and as to that one thing, we say, "Not so, Lord." Yonder young woman knows, that according to God's Word, she must not marry that young man, for she would be unequally yoked together with an unbeliever. Now, she was quite willing to be baptized, and she is heartily willing to give her money to the Lord, and in fact, to do *anything* except that one act of self-denial which would require her to cease from a fond friendship. Yet, my friend, I do not know what sorrow you will make for yourself if you really break that salutary rule. I have seen many instances of mixed marriages and I have had to mourn over nearly all of them as the cause of untold wretchedness! Take the precept, and knowing that it is God's mind concerning you, do "Whatever He says unto you, do it." CHS 1885

THE CHALLENGE!

By C. H. Spurgeon

I wish I could picture the apostle as he appeared when he was uttering it. Hark! I hear a brave, strong voice, crying, "Who shall lay anything to my charge?" "Who is that?—Paul. What? Paul, a Christian! I thought Christians were a humble, timid people!" They are—but not when they are arrayed in the robes, and invested with the credentials of their Sovereign! They are lambs in the harmlessness of their dispositions, but they have the courage of lions when they defend the honors of their King!

Again, I hear him cry, "Who shall lay anything to my charge?"—and he casts his eyes to heaven. Is not the wretch smitten dead? Will not such presumption as this be avenged? Does he challenge purity to convict him of guilt? O Paul, the thunderbolt of God will smite you! "No," he says, "it is God who justifies; I am not afraid to face the highest heaven since God has said that I am just! I can look upward without distressing fear."

But hush! Repeat not that challenge. "Yes," he says, "I will! Who is he who condemns?" And I see him look downwards—there lies the old dragon, bound in chains—the accuser of the brethren. And the apostle stares him in the face, and says, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Why, Paul, Satan will bring thundering accusations against you—are you not afraid? "No," he says, "I can stop his mouth with this cry. 'It is Christ who died'—that will make him tremble, for He crushed the serpent's head in that victorious hour. And I can shut his mouth again—yes rather, who is risen again, for He took him captive on that day!

And I will add, who sits at the right hand of God! I can foil him with that for Jesus Christ sits there to judge him and to condemn him forever! Once more I will appeal to His advocacy. 'Who makes intercession for us.' I can stop Satan's accusation with this perpetual care of Jesus for His people."

Again, Paul cries, "Who shall lay anything to my charge?" There lie the bodies of the saints he has martyred, and they cry from under the altar—"O Lord! How long will You not avenge Your own elect?" Paul says—"Who can lay anything to my charge?" And they speak not, "Because," says Paul, "I have ob-

(See *The Challenge* on page 3)

KEEP COMPANY WITH GOD!

By Horatius Bonar 1808-1889

Intimacy with God is the very essence of religion and the foundation of discipleship. It is in communication with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that the most real parts of our lives are lived. And all parts that are not lived in fellowship with Him, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being" are unreal, untrue, unsuccessful and unsatisfying.

Let God be your companion, your friend, your instructor, your counselor. Take Him into the closet with you, into the study, into the shop, and into the marketplace. When you make a feast, and call guests, invite Him as one of them. He is always willing to come, and there is no company like His.

When thrown into worldly society, from your business or your relationships, do not cease to be a Christian. Do not conform to the world in order to please men, or to save yourself from their taunt or jest. Be not afraid to ask a blessing at meals,

(See *Remember* on page 7)

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Gems gleaned by Jim Robinette
<http://www.actionuganda.net/>

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

The love of Christ is made known to us, as I said, (1) by His actual dying for us. This appears to be *wonderful in itself*, and that both with respect to the nature of that death, as also with respect to the persons for whom He so died.

The love of Christ appears to be wonderfully by the death that He died—in that *He died*, in that He died *such* a death. 'Twas strange love in Christ that moved Him to die for us—strange because not according to the custom of the world. Men do not usually, in cold blood, deliberately come upon the stage or ladder to lay down their lives for others. But this did Jesus Christ, and that, too, for such whose qualification, if they are duly considered, will make this act of His far more amazing!

He laid down His life for His enemies (Rom 5), and for those that could not abide Him. Yes, for those, even for those who brought Him to the cross—not accidentally, or because it happened so, but knowingly, designedly (Zech. 12:10). He knew it was for those He died, and yet His love led Him to lay down His life for them!

I will add that those very people for whom He laid down His life, did what they could to provoke Him to pray to God His Father that He would send and cut them off by the flaming sword of angels, (Matt 26:53), He would not be provoked, but would lay down His life for them! Nor must I leave off here—we never read that Jesus Christ was more cheerful in all His life on earth than when He was going to lay down His life for them! Now He thanked God (Luke 22:9). Now he sang (Matt 26:30).

But this is not all. He did not only die, but died *such a death* as, indeed, cannot be expressed. He was content to be counted the *sinner*: yes, to be counted the *sin* of the sinner, nor could this but be odious to so holy a Lamb as He was, yet willing to be *this* and *thus* for that love that He bore to men.—From *All Loves Excelling*, by John Bunyan. First published 1692. Published by The Banner of truth Trust, 1998, Carlisle, PA

“We are sinners whose best “good works” deserve the wrath of God and the hot flames of hell—how can we venture for a single moment to stand as those who had done anything meritorious or could claim anything of our God?”—
CHS, 1861.

OH, MY GOD, SAVE THEM!

(A PRAYER OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON FOR ALL THE UNCONVERTED)

...especially would I address myself to those of you to whom I have preached for so long, who yet are unsaved. I do not know what forms of speech to use with some of you, or in what shape to fashion my appeal; if I thought that coming round to your pews, and kneeling down before you, and entreating you to receive Christ would have any effect upon you, I would gladly do it.

I have prayed very anxiously that if perhaps my voice should not be the one that God would bless to your conversion, my brother's voice next Sunday, or that of someone else on the following Sunday on which I shall be absent, may have the effect of leading you to Christ! O that you may but be saved! I will make no terms with God if you will but accept Christ.

I am somewhat of the mind of a dear little girl, who is now dying, if she has not already departed. She sent a little note in pencil to her minister, and it was delivered at the prayer meeting. “A little believer in Christ, nine years of age, asks the prayers of the people for her father, for he is an unbeliever.” She was visited by her minister, and she said to him, “O sir, I have asked father to come and hear you preach; I thought he might get saved, but he mocks at it, and will not come. But, sir, he must hear you preach one day, and that is when I shall be buried, for I shall soon be with Jesus.

O sir! When he stands at the grave, do be sure to tell him about the love of Christ, and say that I asked you to do so, for perhaps when I am dead, that might help to break his heart.”

Oh, yes! If anything would break your hearts, it would be a mercy of God if it happened! If the preacher himself were dead, if his interment in the grave could bring you to the Savior, it would be a cheap price to pay! Only may God save you! May the Holy Spirit renew you! May the Savior wash you in His precious blood, and I shall be well content!—
 (Adapted from Sermon #932, Volume16—HOW GOD CONDEMNED SIN—by the grace of God, for all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons in Modern English, and 574 Spanish translations, all free of charge, visit: www.spurgeongems.org)

THE CHALLENGE!

(Continued from page 1)

tained mercy—who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, that in me, first, He might show forth all long-suffering.” “Christ has died, yes rather, has risen again.”

And now, standing in the midst of men who mock and boast and jeer, he cries—“Who can lay anything to my charge?” And no one dares to speak, for man himself cannot accuse! With all his malevolence, and acrimony, and malice, he can bring nothing against Paul—no charge can stand at the bar of God against the man whom he has absolved through the merits of the death of Christ, and the power of His resurrection!

Is it not a noble thing for a Christian to be able to go where he may, and feel that he cannot meet his accuser? That wherever he may be, whether he walks within himself in the chambers of conscience, or out of himself among his fellow men, or above himself into heaven, or beneath himself into hell, yet is he a *justified one*, and nothing can be laid to his charge? Who can condemn? Who can condemn? Yes, echo, O you skies! Reverberate, you caverns of the deep! Who can condemn when Christ has died, has risen from the dead, is enthroned on high, and intercedes?

But all things pass away. I see the heavens on fire, rolling up like a scroll—I see sun, moon and stars pale, their light now feeble—the earth is tottering. The pillars of heaven are rocking. The grand judgment is commenced—the herald angels descend, not to sing this time, but with thundering trumpets to proclaim, “He comes! He comes to judge the earth in righteousness, and the people in equity.”

What says the believer, now? He says, “I fear not that judgment, for who can condemn?” The great white throne is set; the books are opened; men are trembling; fiends are yelling; sinners are shrieking—“Rocks hide us, mountains fall on us.” These make up an awful chorus of dismay! But there stands the believer, and looking round on the assembled universe of men and angels, he cries, “Who shall lay anything to my charge?” And silence reigns through earth and heaven! Again he speaks—and fixing his eyes full on the Judge, Himself, he cries, “Who is he who condemns?”

And lo, there upon the throne of judgment sits the only one who *can* condemn! And who is that? It is Christ who died, yes rather, that is risen again who sits at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for him! Can those lips say, “Depart you cursed,” to the man for whom they once did intercede? Can those eyes flash lightning on the man whom once they saw in sin, and from there with rays of love they did lift him up to joy, and peace, and purity?

No, Christ will not belie Himself! He cannot reverse His divine grace. It cannot be that the throne of condemnation shall be exalted on the ruins of the cross! It cannot be that Christ should transform Himself at last, but till He can do so, none can condemn—none but He has a right to condemn, for He is the sole judge of right and wrong! And if He has died for us, shall He put *us* to death? If He has risen for us, shall He thrust us downwards to the pit of hell?

And if He has reigned for us, and has been accepted for us, shall He cast us away? And if He has pleaded for us, shall He curse us at the last? No! Come life, come death—my soul can rest on this—He died for me! I cannot be punished for my sin. He rose again; I must rise and though I die, yet shall I live again! He sits at the right hand of God, and so must I! I must be crowned and reign with Him forever! He intercedes, and He must be heard! He beckons me, and I must be brought at length to see His face and to be with Him where He is!

I will say no more. Only may God give us all an interest in these four precious things. An angel’s tongue might fail to sing their sweetness, or tell their brightness and their majesty. Mine has failed—but that does not matter—the excellence of the power is in the *doctrine*, and not in my preaching. Amen.—(Adapted from Sermon #256, Volume 5—THE BELIEVER’S CHALLENGE—by the grace of God, for all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons in Modern English, and 574 Spanish translations, all free of charge, visit: www.spurgeongems.org)

THEY ARE NAILING HIM TO THE CROSS...AND HE IS PRAYING “FATHER, FORGIVE THEM”

By Charles H. Spurgeon

They are nailing Him to the cross! The wretches are driving iron through His hands, but even while they fasten Him to the tree, listen to Him—“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Oh, I spoke to a brother this week, whose heart all-conquering love has touched! He had been a great blasphemer, and when we were talking together about the fact that Jesus Christ loved him even when he was cursing, I saw how it broke his heart. And it broke mine, too, to think that I could rebel against Christ while He was loving me; that I could despise Him while He was putting Himself in my place in order to do me good. Oh, it is this that breaks a man’s heart; to think that Christ should have been loving *me* with the whole force of His soul, while I was despising Him—and would have nothing to do with Him! There is a man here who has been cursing, and swearing, and blaspheming—and the very man whom he has cursed has been crying—“Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he does.” O sinner, I pray that this might break your heart, and bring you to the Savior!—CHS, 1862

THE HOLY SPIRIT ADMONISHES MANY “PREACHERS” OF TODAY

By C. H. Spurgeon

“Lay hold on eternal life.”

1 Timothy 6:12.

Three classes of people seem to have existed in the community where Timothy was called to labor—each with different views of the best method of teaching those around them. First of all, there were some who intermeddled with social politics. They told the slaves that they might conspire against their masters, and try to rectify the unquestionable wrongs which existed in that day.

Paul desires, as much as anybody could, that injustice should come to an end, and that especially *slavery* should be swept off the face of the earth, as it has largely been by the influence of the gospel. But, taught of God, and seeing that it was by the proclamation of the gospel that these evils would be most surely overcome—rather than by any hasty social change—he says to Timothy, “Leave that matter alone. Lay hold on eternal life! You are not sent to cleanse the Augean stable of politics, and to set things right socially—let it be sufficient for you to lay hold on eternal life, and to call upon the people to do the same. Every man to his own calling, and this is yours—“Lay hold on eternal life.”

Today many a young preacher, and perhaps some of the older ones, would do well to take heed to this advice of Paul given by the Spirit, for while every real social improvement, based on the principles of right and justice must have the sympathy of all Christian men, depend upon it that in the long run, the surest way to raise men is to preach the gospel to them! This will change their character, and regenerated lives will soon result in altered social conditions.

Round about Timothy, too, there buzzed a set of men full of questions and difficulties—and discoveries of a false science which Paul calls, “profane and vain babblings.” These were in a most unhealthy state, “sick about questionings and disputes of words,” as the apostle’s language in verse four may be literally rendered. Concerning such, he says to Timothy, “Do not answer such wrangling of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth of God. Do not worry yourself about them! Let the bees or the wasps buzz as much as they like; as for you, lay hold on eternal life! Stick to your business. Go in for the one thing for which God has called you, the glorious work of saving souls! Let those who like such questions fight them out to the bitter end, but as for you, lay hold on eternal life!”

Then Paul had noticed that at Ephesus there were certain men who were striving to be rich. Certain men, even of the members of the church, who seemed to be sacrificing everything else for gain. They were counting that gain was godliness, and that if they could get rich, they really were the better men for it. But Paul says to Timothy, “Leave money alone. Having food and raiment, let us be content. Your hand is not big enough to lay hold on two things. Therefore, since you can only have one, see that it is the *vital* thing. Lay hold on eternal life!” To use the rough old proverb, “Let the cobbler stick to his last.” “Timothy, stick to your business! Lay hold on eternal life—that is your main concern—‘Whereunto you are also called, and have professed a good profession before many witnesses.’”

I like this plain dealing of the apostle. He seems to say, “Come to the all-important point, Timothy, and stick to it. Let others go in for this, and that, and the other—but as for you, set before yourself the highest aim. Say to them, as I wrote to the Philippians last year from Rome, ‘This one thing I do’—‘Lay hold on eternal life.’”

The great complaint which we have to make against many is that they seem to be looking after the odds and ends, the paraphernalia, the minor affairs of life. They do not seem to aim at this point—*eternal life!* Is it not so in praying? Is there not much that passes by the name which is not real prayer? We might often say, “Come to the point, man, and ask of God what you need!” Paul seems to hint that there was in the preaching, even in his day, a great deal that was extraneous, ornamental, superfluous—and so he says to young Timothy, “Aim at the center of the target. Go in for this, the main business, first of all—lay hold on eternal life!”—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #2226, Volume 37—“Lay Hold on Eternal Life.”

NOTABLE QUOTES OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“The Lord does not blow hot and cold! If He reveals two doctrines which apparently contradict each other, yet are they both true, since both are spoken by the God who cannot lie! And if I cannot see how they can both be true, it comforts me to think that I am not asked to *see* it—I am expected to *believe* it—and God’s grace gives me the faith to do even that.”—1891, Sermon #2233

“When God speaks by the feeble. When He uses the insignificant, then does He not get to Himself a glorious name? I hear almost every day in the week of souls converted to God by sermons preached here, which go to the ends of the earth. And when I hear about them, I always wonder that God should have blessed those sermons to anybody. And any man whom God favors with His presence, and helps will marvel that God should use such a poor, dry stick!...And all this to make unto Himself a glorious name!”—1891, Sermon #2229

“Behold! The Lamb of God!”

John 1:29

By Daniel E. Parks
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“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’” (John 1:29, cp. v 36).

I. Behold the character of Christ: He is characterized as a “Lamb.”

1. Christ is, like a lamb, innocent and harmless (Heb 7:26): “who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” He was in His earthly ministry devoid of malice in His heart, of deceit in His mouth, of reviling in His conduct (1 Peter 2:22f): “Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously.”

2. Christ is, like a lamb, considered “clean” by God, and therefore, acceptable for a sacrifice for sins (1 Peter 1:19): God’s people are assured that they are redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

3. Christ is, like a lamb, appointed by God to be a sacrifice for sins (1 Peter 1:19-21): this “lamb without blemish and without spot...indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God.”

4. Christ is, like a lamb, made to be the prey of His enemies (Psa 22:12-16): “Many bulls have surrounded Me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. They gape at Me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion...For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet.”

5. Christ is, like a lamb, meek and gentle in the face of adversity (Heb 12:3): “who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself.” Indeed, in His darkest hour He refused to call for the “more than twelve legions of angels” who would have come to deliver Him” (Matt 26:53).

6. Christ is, like a lamb, silent and patient in suffering (Isa 53:7; Acts 8:32): “He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.” He fulfilled the prophecy that “He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street” (Isa 42:2).

7. Christ is, like a lamb, a delicacy to the hungry. Meat was scarce among ancient Israelites, and to have a lamb to eat was considered a great blessing from God and a sign of prosperity (Deut 32:13f; Amos 6:4). The eating of a lamb would mark an important occasion (as in 2 Sam 12:3-6). Christ the Lamb is considered the greatest spiritual delicacy—“if, indeed, you have tasted that the Lord is gracious” (1 Peter 2:3).

II. Behold the relationship of Christ: He is “the Lamb of God.”

1. Christ is the Lamb claimed by God. On two different occasions, God said of Christ the Lamb, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”—at His baptism by John (Matt 3:17) and His transfiguration by God (Matt 17:5). Who would be so wicked as to spurn the only One of whom God has so said!

2. Christ is the Lamb appointed as a type by God. For example, at the institution of the Passover (Exo 12) God required every Israelite household to sacrifice a lamb, apply its blood at their doors, and roast and eat its flesh. All this typified Christ the Lamb. Believers are assured, “For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us” (1 Cor 5:7), and His blood has been applied to our hearts, and we have obeyed His invitation to “eat the flesh of the Son of Man” (John 6:53).

3. Christ is the Lamb provided by God. This fulfills the prophecy of Abraham to Isaac, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering” (Gen 22:8).

III. Behold the uniqueness of Christ: He is “the Lamb of God.”

1. Christ is unique as the antitype fulfilling all the typical sacrificial lambs in the Old Testament. These would include the *first-born* lamb sacrificed by Abel at the dawn of creation (Gen 4:2, 4), the *substitutionary* lamb provided by God in the place of Isaac on Mount Moriah (Gen 22:8ff), the *Passover* lamb slain and eaten by Israelites in Egypt on the occasion of the exodus from bondage (Exo 12), and all the Old Covenant lambs sacrificed under the law. These last would include the lambs of the continual burnt offering sacrificed every morning and evening (Exo 29:38-42), the two additional lambs sacrificed every

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PRAY DAILY FOR CHAPEL LIBRARY
AND PASTOR POLLARD

PRAY FOR GRACE TO BE HOLY

“Behold! The Lamb of God!”

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Sabbath (Num 28:9f), the seven lambs sacrificed each of the seven days of Passover (28:16-24), the seven lambs sacrificed every Feast of Weeks (28:26ff) and every Feast of Trumpets (29:1f) and every Day of Atonement (29:7f), and the 105 lambs sacrificed during the eight days of the Feast of Tabernacles (29:13ff). The sacrifices of all these lambs ceased with the sacrifice of Christ the Lamb of God on Calvary, because they were but “a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ” (Col 2:17). He is the fulfillment of all they typified.

2. Christ is unique as the only Lamb of God in this day and age. Each of the thousands and thousands of Old Testament lambs sacrificed to God was “a lamb of God.” But Christ now is uniquely “*the* Lamb of God”—the only One that forevermore satisfied God for the redemption and salvation of His people.

IV. Behold the efficacy of Christ: He “takes away the sin of the world.”

1. What is “the sin” here mentioned? Scriptures speak of “a sin” as anything that misses or falls short of God’s standard of absolute perfection (as in Rom 3:23). Here “the sin” is used in a collective sense, inclusive of sins of each and every sort:

- i.** both **original** sin and **actual** sins
 - ii.** both sins of **commission** and sins of **omission**
 - iii.** both **public** sins and **secret** sins
 - iv.** both sin as **guilt** in the eye of God’s righteousness and **defilement** in the eye of God’s holiness
 - v.** sins of **thought** and **word** and **deed**
 - vi.** sins of both **individual persons** and a **collective group**
- No sin is above the ability of Christ to take away.

2. How is it that Christ “takes away” the sin. (When John the Baptist made this declaration, he viewed as potentially present the then-future and now accomplished atoning work of Christ). “And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins” (1 John 3:5).

i. Christ “takes away” the sin of others through imputation. In this imputation, the sins of men are charged to the account of Christ: “For [God] made [Christ] who knew no sin to be sin for us” (2 Cor 5:21). He thereby takes the sins of others away from them and unto Himself.

ii. Christ “takes away” the sin of others in substitution. Having had their sins imputed to Him, He suffers the penalty of death for their sins in their place and stead as their penal Substitute. He, therefore, is their Sin-Bearer and bears their sins away completely and forever (Isa 53:6, 4, 11, 12): “the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all...Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows” (also vv 11, 12). And as their Scapegoat He did “bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land” (Lev 16:22). Consequently, God now declares that “their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more” (Heb 8:12).

2. What is this “world” whose sins are taken away by Christ? It is the aggregate of all persons whose sins have been taken away by Christ and who, therefore will not die in their sins.

i. Consider first what this “world” is not. It is not the “world of the ungodly” who perish in their sins (2 Peter 2:5). It is not the world of unbelievers for whom Christ refused to pray, and which will refuse to glorify Him (John 17:6-10).

ii. Consider what this “world” is truly. This is the “world” that God so loved that He gave to it His only-begotten Son and which has received Christ through believing in Him—and, thus, which will never perish but have everlasting life—the world that God will save and not condemn (John 3:16f). This is the “world” which has received life from Christ, the bread of God (John 6:33). This is the “world” which has been reconciled to God through Christ, having been made sin for them and, by virtue of their being in Christ, and having been made by Him a new creation (2 Cor 5:18-21). This is the “world” for whom Christ is the propitiation for their sins (1 John 2:2). This is the “world” of those whose sin has been taken away by Christ the Lamb of God (John 1:29).

As the lamb of Abel was sacrificed for an *individual*, and the lamb of the Passover for a *family*, and the lamb of the old covenant for a *nation*, Christ is “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the *world*.” Whether Jew or Gentile, all who trust in Christ for salvation know He has taken away their sins!

NOTABLE QUOTE OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“It is to me always sufficient if I find a truth of God taught in Scripture—I ask no more. If I do not understand it, I am not particularly anxious to understand it! If it is in the Scriptures, I believe it. I like those grand, rocky truths of the Bible which I cannot break with the hammer of my understanding, for on these I lay the foundations of my soul’s confidence!”—1891, *Sermon #2207*

A WORD TO PREACHERS AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS TEACHERS

By Charles H. Spurgeon

Concerning Ananias, [Acts 9:10] I want to remind you of his COMFORT in the work. The Lord reassured His servant, first, by reminding him of the *doctrine of election*. God said to him, “He is a chosen vessel unto Me.” Some read it, “He is a choice vessel,” as if there were originally something in Paul which rendered him a choice person. But the apostle, himself, does not put it so, for he describes Ananias as saying, “The God of our fathers has chosen you, that you should know His will.” He did not know the will of the Lord except through the divine choice. To him, the revelation of God came as the *gift* of sovereign grace! Here was one whom God had chosen to bless, though Ananias knew it not. The grand doctrines of sovereign grace and of electing love are the most powerful inducements to labor for the conversion of all who come in our way!

Did not our Lord say to one of His servants, “I have much people in this city”? And did he not make this his encouragement for preaching the truth of God with all boldness? So let it be *your* encouragement! Behind all opposition there is an almighty will which cannot be set aside—there is a purpose which must be accomplished—there is a predestination that can, by no means, be defeated. “Oh,” says one, “if I believed that God had an elect people, I should not preach again.” It is amazing how people argue—for that is the very reason why I *do* preach! If the Lord has not chosen any, what is the use of my preaching? But if He has done so, I shall not preach in vain! Often have I thought to myself—I shall have a picked congregation today—God will bring the very people here that He means to bless—and He will save His own elect by His own Word! It does not rest with *me*, nor with *them*, but with HIM, and therefore, there is hope! The eternal purpose goes forth in all the majesty of its might, therefore

REMEMBER, YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN!

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or to have family worship, or to enter into religious conversation because a worldly man is present. Keep constant company with the great God of heaven and earth—and let every other companionship be regulated by His.

Beware of deterioration in prayer. Whenever you feel the closet becoming a dull place, you may be sure something is wrong. Backsliding has begun! Go straight to God that He may heal it (Hosea 14:4). Do not resort to other expedients to relieve the dullness, such as shortening the time, or getting some lively religious books to take off the weariness—go at once to the great Quickener with the cry, “*Quicken us, and we will call on Your name*” (Psa 80:18).

Beware of going through prayer in a careless or perfunctory way, like a hireling doing his work in order to get done with it. Few things tend more to deaden the soul, to harden the heart, and to drive out spirituality than cold, formal prayer! Dread it and shun it. Pray with honest fervor and simple faith.

Be much alone with God, and take time to get thoroughly acquainted. Converse over everything with Him. Unburden yourself wholly to Him—every thought, feeling, wish, plan, doubt. He wants converse with His creatures—shall His creatures not want converse with Him?

He wants not merely to be on good terms with you, (if one may use man’s phrase), but to be intimate. Shall you decline the intimacy and be satisfied with mere acquaintance? What? Intimate with the world, with friends, with neighbors, with philosophers, but not with God?

will we go to every creature, testifying in the name of Jesus—and believing that as many as the Father gives Him, shall come to Him.

Moreover, the Lord put aside the fears of Ananias by telling him that He had *chosen this man to a great purpose*. “He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name among the Gentiles.” A great sinner is to be made a great saint! A great opposer is to become a great laborer. Who knows how largely God may use the sinner whom we seek to save? Who knows what may be in any man, or in any child? You, dear teachers in the school, may be teaching Luthers, or Whitefields! You may be instructing, in those young girls, holy women who shall serve the Lord abundantly! You are handling choice materials, therefore be not careless in your service. To you is given not gold, nor silver, nor precious stones to fashion, but immortal spirits that shall glorify Christ on earth and in heaven!

And then, to remove all difficulty from the mind of Ananias, the Lord told him that *He would go with him*—“For I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name’s sake.” You are bid to teach the gospel to an individual who has been very hardened—and you fear that you have no strength for such an undertaking, and therefore, you cry—“Lord, I cannot show this man the truth!” The Lord replies, “I will show him.” “But,” you say, “he is so ignorant!” “I will show him.” “Alas, he is blind and prejudiced!” “I will show him.” You are, “laborers together with God.” When we lift our trowel upon this wall, we may know that a divine arm is moving at the same moment—and the stone which we seek to place in its course shall be laid there by an omnipotent hand which works effectually!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #1838, Volume 31—*The Good Ananias—A Lesson for Believers*—Read/download entire sermon at <http://www.spurgeongems.org>.

**Pray your epitaph may be,
“He/She lived to glorify Christ.”**

Letters to Mike Gendron of Proclaiming the gospel:

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

S.T., Niagara Falls, NY, writes: Praise the Lord for PTG! Those who are bold for the truth of God and speak against error are few in today's church. To the people who accuse you of being judgmental—have they not read what Charles Spurgeon said about the Roman Church? Have they forgotten Luther? Have they forgotten Wycliffe who was killed for his opposition to Rome? Furthermore, have they not read Paul's letters? Would Paul embrace the Roman church who preaches a different gospel? And lastly don't they remember Jesus who rebuked the Pharisees and scribes for putting their tradition over God's Word?

L. M., Simi Valley, CA, writes: I wanted you to know that I still appreciate your ministry so much! We met a few years ago at one of your seminars and I direct people to your website all the time. My mother became a believer last October, right before her 87th birthday! She was an opposer of Christianity all her life, and was a very depressed, stubborn woman who was transformed right before our eyes! God is so good. It's amazing to see Him work in those we think are impossible. She went to be with the Lord on 1/24/05 and had so much peace. It was undeniable to anyone who knew her that the Spirit indwelt her.

Shane, Internet, asks: Why is it that when you become an ex-Catholic, it becomes your mission to minister to Catholics? I find that most of them do so to justify their new found conversion rather than their desire to see Catholics saved. I have asked ex-Catholic people specific questions, and they either send me canned paragraphs that dispute the Catholic Church or refuse to answer my questions. Unless I subscribe to everything these people say, I just get ignored. Maybe they just think my soul is lost and they would rather tend to those who are easy pickings! Anyway this behavior tends to lead me to question whether this is a ministry or a quest for self-justification?

Brother Mike answers: The reason we minister to Catholics and everyone else lost in religious deception, is twofold. We are compelled to do so because of our love for Christ, and our deep compassion for those who have been deceived as we once were. Our mission is to deliver the message of salvation as it is clearly revealed in the Bible. We point the lost to Jesus Christ as the only all-sufficient Savior. The only way God saves sinners is by divine grace, working through man's faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. What you do with the message is between you and God. Conversions are His work alone. So, it's not about who is "easy pickings." No one can come to Jesus unless His Father draws them (John 6:44).

C. R., Poulsbo, WA, writes: Thank you for your wonderful ministry that is so valuable to a Protestant married to a Catholic! Please be praying for my husband. Since we have been married, we have not attended the Catholic church, but at times my husband misses it. I have been strongly convicted that it is wrong to bring our children up in the Catholic church, so we attend a CMA church and my husband plays the drums for worship! His family cornered him last night about how deceived we are! On the way home, I prayed and decided not to bring it up. Once we got home my husband brought it up, and for the first time he was open to the idea that *they* were wrong! He was willing to listen, as long as I continued speaking gently and not like a know-it-all! Something is stirring in him for the first time, and I think that we are going to come under attack from my in-laws again! God bless you! I love you and your wife so much for this very needed ministry!

C. H. Liberty, KY, writes: I've recently read your book, *Preparing Catholics for Eternity*, and found it passionate and informative. My parents became entrenched with Catholicism over the past several months, so I shared the truth with them. Although I've always been very close with them, they kicked me out, and told me never to return. My father has a lot of head knowledge about Scripture so I'm amazed he can't see the evil in Catholicism. I pray that God will open their eyes to the truth of God.

D. B., Pinellas Park, FL, writes: I think your *Greatest News* tracts are great because they are totally Scripture and God promises that His Word won't come back void! I use them quite a bit in sharing the gospel with girls who come into our pregnancy center. I'm a volunteer peer counselor plus a nurse. I also enjoy the newsletter.

D.P., Birmingham, AL, writes: It is most encouraging to see your comments about the disappearing doctrine in the evangelical church. I thank you for speaking out and for your objectivity and fairness. Thanks for reporting what Joel Osteen said in the Larry King Live interview. We have a saying in Alabama, "whatever is in the well comes up in the bucket." Thanks, also, for your holy boldness in proclaiming the truth of God and trying to divert people from the wide road to the narrow road.

S.S., Pinehurst, NC, writes—In my 30's I was trying to establish my own righteousness through penance, indulgences, sacraments and rituals. Because of my horrible fear of Purgatory, I said many 30 day Novenas to Mary, many Stations of the Cross and wore Catholic medals like good luck charms. All of that changed when an evangelist began counseling me once a week for about 4 months. He showed me from the Bible that "we are justified freely by His grace" and Jesus said, "it is finished." I'm still amazed when I think of my salvation! We pray that your ministry will continue to grow, and Roman Catholics will be saved, and leave the wicked, depraved Catholic Church.

WHO WILL ENTER HEAVEN?

I suppose we know that the wicked and unbelievers will not enter heaven (Psa 9:17; Rev 22:15).

But it may surprise us who will indeed enter heaven.

And it may surprise us even more to learn that many will be barred from heaven even though they thought they had earned the right to enter it.

The Lord Jesus Christ, in speaking of the Final Judgment in Matthew 7:21-23, tells us: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

Think of it! *Many* will stand before Jesus Christ the Judge, and emphatically acknowledge Him as “Lord, Lord” and boast of all that they spoke in His name, and of all the great and glorious works they performed in His name, but every one of them will be barred from heaven and consigned to everlasting punishment.

Why? Because no one boasting of himself and his works will enter heaven. If we boast of ourselves before Him in even the slightest way or degree, we are lawless and iniquitous, and we completely excommunicate ourselves from Him. Jesus knows no such person in the knowledge of salvation.

Who will enter heaven? The Lord Jesus says “he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”

What is God the Father’s will in this regard? Jesus says “this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:40).

These are all who might say: “Lord, we confess ourselves to be vile and wretched sinners, devoid of holiness and righteousness, the sort of people You will justly condemn to everlasting punishment. We acknowledge that we have never done anything deserving even the least blessing from You; but we have heard in Your gospel that You came to earth to save sinners such as we, and that it is Your Father’s will to give everlasting life to all who believe in You, and to raise them to everlasting glory. We see You as our only hope of salvation; we forsake all confidence in ourselves, and trust in You alone for salvation, and give to You all the glory for it.”

This is the sort of person who will enter heaven. Will you?—Adapted from an article by Daniel E. Parks wrote in November for *the Saint Croix Avis newspaper*

**Pray daily for God’s elect in prisons. Pray He will keep them safe and hold them up.
Pray they might be used by Him to draw many to His Son, Jesus Christ.**

THAT MINISTRY WHICH COMES FROM GOD...

By Charles H. Spurgeon

That ministry which comes from God is distinguished altogether from that which is not of His own sending by its effects; *it is sure to be heart-breaking*. Have you been from your childhood under the ministry of the Word of God, and have you never been made to loathe yourself in the sight of God? Has the sword of the Spirit never pierced you? Have you never felt rebuked, accused? Has the rebuke of the Almighty never staggered you as with a heavy blow which felled you to the earth? Have you never gone out of the sanctuary to weep, to be ashamed, to clothe yourself in sackcloth and ashes, and to be afraid to look up to heaven?

If this has never been your case, either you must be a hardened one, indeed, or else the ministry under which you have been sitting is not a true ministry at all, for God says, “My word is like a hammer which breaks the rock in pieces.” If the word, therefore, which you have been accustomed to listen to has never broken you in pieces, it matters not how melodious the voice you may have been listening to!

The external accessories of worship may have been provided with ever so much care, and taste, and lavish expenditure, yes, and the solemn swell of the organ, the gorgeous pomp of architecture, and the comely array of vestments may all have helped to charm you, yet be sure of this, it is *not* the voice of God to you if it has not broken your heart!

If you have not been made to feel yourself lost, ruined, and undone by the Word of God, I charge you by the living God to be dissatisfied with yourself, or else with the ministry under which you are sitting, for if it were *God’s* ministry to your soul, it would break your heart in shivers, and make you cry, “God be merciful to me a sinner!”—(Adapted from Sermon #862, Volume 15—WINNOWER TIME—by the grace of God, for all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons in Modern English, and 574 Spanish translations, all free of charge, visit: www.spurgeongems.org)

**TELL SOMEONE
TODAY
HOW MUCH
YOU
AND BROTHER EMMETT
LOVE
JESUS CHRIST.**

A Study of Ephesians

HOW CHRIST HAS LOVED US—PART 8

What could make the love of Jesus so plain as His humbling? In Philippians 2:7 we are told that Christ emptied Himself. In other words, Jesus voluntarily left behind glory and His prerogatives as God in order to take on flesh and become the sacrifice for our sins. “Though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich” (2 Cor 8:9).

The third way in which our verse shows us the amazing depths of Christ’s love for His people is by telling us HOW He gave Himself. Not only did He give Himself in ceaseless preaching of the gospel. Not only did He give Himself in numerous acts of love, kindness, and miraculous healings. Not only did He give Himself in teaching the way to enter and live in the kingdom of God. But He gave Himself, says our verse, as “an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.” Jesus offered Himself, but He did more than offer Himself. An offering is simply giving something to another. Paul describes Jesus’ offering of Himself as a SACRIFICE TO GOD.

Many Christians make a terrible mistake by ignoring the Old Testament. They assume that because the Old Testament deals primarily with the old covenant which God made with the nation of Israel, that is of little use for us today. But that is not the case. You see, the Old Testament gives us numerous pictures of Christ. And one of the most clear pictures given to us there is of what a sacrifice is. In fact, we cannot understand what the apostle Paul means by the sacrifice of Christ without relating it to what took place in the sacrifices which God required in the Old Testament.

In Old Testament times, there were appointed priests who were to take the animal and grain offerings of the people, and offer them as a sacrifice to God. But how they did this was very important. First of all, the idea of offering an animal was intended as a *substitute*. In other words, the one offering the sacrifice was confessing that he had offended God by his many sins. He was also confessing that he needed forgiveness and pardon of those sins in order to remove the punishment he deserved for them from God. But there was even more to it than that. The priest, having received the animal from the offerer’s hands, would then slit its throat and drain out its blood. This act was very symbolic, for it meant that God required the shedding of blood, and death of the animal to cover the sins of the one offering the animal. In other words, it was a picture of the sins of the offerer being transferred to the animal, and the animal then taking the punishment in place of the offerer.

And that is exactly, in a much greater way, what happened in the self-sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. He was taking all the sin, and offense, and transgressions of His people upon Himself, and shedding His blood and dying in their place on the cross as the payment for their offense against God. He was both the priest making the offering, and the offering itself.

That brings us now to deal briefly with the results of Christ’s love. Our verse speaks of two results. One result has already occurred. The other should occur in the life of every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. The first result of the love of Christ and the giving of Himself as a sacrifice for us is that God was pleased with it. Note how the verse ends. It says that the sacrifice which Christ gave of Himself to God was a “sweet-smelling” or a “fragrant aroma.” This is Scripture’s way of saying that God was very pleased. We have a good example of this in what happened after the Great Flood. Noah and his family had been brought safely through a world-wide flood that killed off all the rest of mankind. When Noah and his family were able to leave the ark after being on it for over a year, Noah offered animal sacrifices to God from every clean animal that he had. And this is what we are told happened as a result: “And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, ‘I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done’” (Gen 8:21). Lord willing, more next month—PF

ATTENTION ALL INMATES!

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FREE BIBLE COURSES...

Believing On Christ

By Thomas Willcox
(1621-1687)

BELIEVING is the most wonderful thing in the world. Put anything of your own to it, and you spoil it—Christ will not so much as look at it! When you believe and come to Christ, you must leave behind you your own righteousness and bring nothing but your sin. You must leave behind all your holiness, sanctification, duties, humbling, etc.—and bring nothing but your needs and miseries, or else Christ is not fit for you, nor you for Christ. Christ will be a pure Redeemer and Mediator—you must be an undue *sinner*—or Christ and you will never agree. It is the hardest thing in the world to take Christ alone for righteousness, but that is to acknowledge Him Christ. Join anything to Him of your own, and you *un*-Christ Him!

Whatever comes in when you go to God for acceptance, besides Christ, call it anti-Christ! Bid it be gone! Make ONLY Christ's righteousness triumphant! All besides that is Babylon, which must fall if Christ stands—and you shall rejoice in the day of the fall thereof (Isa 14:4). Christ ALONE did tread the winepress, and there was none with Him (Isa 63:3). If you join anything to Christ, Christ will trample upon it in fury and anger, and stain His raiment with the blood of it.

You think it easy to believe? Was ever your faith tried with an hour of temptation, and a thorough sight of sin? Was it ever put to grapple with Satan and the wrath of God lying upon the conscience when you were in the mouth of hell and the grave? Then did God show you Christ, a ransom and a righteousness. Then you could say, "Oh! I see divine grace enough in Christ."

Then you may say that which is the greatest word in the world, BELIEVE. Untried faith is uncertain faith.

**PRAY FOR GRACE TO HAVE A
CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF
HIS HOLY WORD.**

**PRAY DILIGENTLY FOR THOSE CHAPLAINS
CALLED BY GOD TO REPRESENT HIS SON IN OUR
JAILS AND PRISONS. ASK THAT THEY MAY BE
COMFORTED DAILY BY HIS HOLY SPIRIT.**

ANOTHER QUOTE OF CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

A minister is living in positive sin who constantly preaches to a mere handful within walls, while outside there are crowded courts and lanes, and alleys, where men are perishing for lack of knowledge! The minister who does his duty goes out into the highways and hedges; he goes into all the world; he preaches whether men will hear, or whether they will not, and delights to make hills and woods ring with the message of his Master's peace!—CHS, 1870, sermon #929

A. W. PINK DESCRIBES AN HONEST HEART

An honest heart *loves the truth of God*, and none other does. "This is condemnation that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19), and that is true—a description of all men the world over! What a fearful state to be in—not only in the dark, but loving the darkness! And why? Because it is congenial to their depraved hearts, and it is their native element. Hence the passage goes on to say, "for everyone that does evil hates the light, neither comes to light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (v 20). Many excuses are made why they turn away from plain and faithful preaching, and why they do not read God's Word in private, but the real reason is because they hate the light of God—exposure, even to themselves, is the very last thing they desire. In sharp contrast—"But he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are worked in God" (v 21). This is the man with an honest heart—so far from hating the light, he welcomes it, wanting to be searched and discovered by it.

An honest heart, then, is a truth-loving heart—one which genuinely desires to know the mind of God, one which is ready for his creed, his character, and his conduct to be searched by the light of the sanctuary! He wants to know the truth about *God*, the One with whom he has to do, the One before whom he must yet appear and render an account. He will not be put off with any superficial and sentimental representations of the divine character; he determines at all costs to acquaint himself with God as He actually is; he wants to know the truth about *himself*, whether his soul is only slightly disposed or whether his case is so desperate as to be altogether beyond help. He is anxious to determine whether he has only a head or intellectual knowledge of things that matter most, or whether he has been given a heart or spiritual knowledge of them. He wants to make certain of how he stands with regard to God and eternity, and he dares not take any man's opinion or say-so with regard thereto.—Adapted from his *Studies in the Scriptures*, April, 1943. Courtesy of Mt. Zion Bible Church. Many years of the Studies can be downloaded/read at <http://www.eternallifeministries.org/pink/studies.htm>

**For HIS Glory
Prison Ministry
Emmett and Ann O'Donnell
P.O. Box 291301
Kerrville, TX 78029-1301**

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)



“Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.”
Psa 37:4 NKJV

In This Issue...

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

WAS IT SPURGEON...OR PRAYER?

By C. H. Spurgeon

The Philistines were not routed except by prayer. Samuel prayed unto the Lord. They said, “Cease not to cry unto the Lord for us.” Beloved, let us bear our witness this morning that if anything of good has been accomplished here, it has been the result of prayer!

Often have I solaced my heart by the recollection of the prayers offered in our former house of meeting at New Park Street. What supplications have I heard there; what groans of wrestling spirits! There were times when I have not had the heart to say a word because your prayers to God melted me; your supplications stopped my utterance, and I could only pronounce a benediction and send you away because the Spirit of God was so present it was hardly the time to speak to man, but only to speak to God!

I do not think we always have the same spirit of prayer here, and yet in this I must and will rejoice—I know not where the spirit of prayer is to be found more in exercise than in this place! I know you hold up my hands, you who are like Aaron and Hur upon the mountains. I know that you intercede with God for the conversion of this neighborhood, and the evangelization of this great city. Young and old, you strive together that the kingdom of God may come, and the Lord’s will may be done.

But, oh, we must not forget as we look upon this vast church—2,000 and more members walking in the fear of God—we must not forget that this increase came as the result of *prayer*, and that it is in prayer, still, that our strength must be!

I charge you before the Most High, never depend upon my ministry! What am I? What is there in me? I speak, and when God speaks through me, I speak with a power unknown to men in whom the Spirit dwells not! But if He leaves me, I am not only as weak as other men, but less than they, for I have no wisdom of years; I have no human learning; I have taken no degree in the university, and wear no titles of learned honor.

If God speaks by me, **He must have all the glory!** If He saves souls by such a frail being, **He must have all the glory!** Give unto the Lord glory and strength—lay every particle of the honor at His feet—but do continue to pray; do plead with God for me that His power may still be seen, His arm still put mightily to His work!

Prayer honored must be recollected when we set up the Ebenezer and say, “Up to now the Lord has helped us.”—(Adapted from Sermon #500, Volume 9—EBENEZER.