

“LET US GO FORTH”**NO. 577**

A SERMON

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 26, 1864,**BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,****AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.***“Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.”**Hebrews 13:13.*

MODERN professors have discovered a very easy way of religion. There is a method by which a man may attain to great reputation as a Christian, and yet avoid all the trials of the believer's estate. He may go through the world finding his path as smoothly turfed as the flesh could desire. Blessed with the smiles of friendly formalists, and with the admiration of the ungodly, he may pass from his first entrance into the church to his grave without experiencing so much as a single shower to dampen his delight, but on the contrary, the sun may smile sweetly upon him all the way, the birds may sing, not a raven may dare to croak, not a single owl may hoot, his road to glory and immortality shall be all that ease could wish. Let him adopt the modern theory of universal charity, let him believe that a lie is a truth, and that whether it be a lie or a truth is of no consequence at all, let him be complacent towards every man, and with a smooth and oily tongue, chime in with every other man's principles, having none of his own worth mentioning, let him trim his sails whenever the wind changes, let him in all things do in Rome as Rome does, let him yield at all times to the current and float gently with the stream, and he shall come to the haven—though I fear not the desired one—he shall come to some sort of haven at last, without any storm or tempest by the way.

But a dark thought comes across one's mind. Is this the kind of religion which we read of in the Bible? Is this the way in which Scriptural saints went to heaven? It would be a very pleasant thing if we could please men and please God too, if we could make the best of both worlds, and have the sweets of this and of the next also, but a warning cry arises from the pages of Holy Scripture, for the Word of God talks very differently from this. It talks about a strait and narrow way, and about few that find it, it speaks of persecution, suffering, reproach, and contending even unto blood, and striving against sin, it talks about wrestling and fighting, struggling and witnessing. I hear the Savior say not, “I send you forth as sheep into the midst of green pastures,” but, “as sheep in the midst of wolves.” I hear Him prophesy that we would be hated of all men for His name's sake.

Truly these things are enough to startle those good easy souls who go so delicately onward, surely they may at once inquire, “Can it be that this smooth-faced godliness, this very delightful way of getting to heaven, can be the right one?” Is it not all a delusion? Are we not buoyed up with a false hope, if that hope is never assailed by trouble and persecution? All is not gold that glitters, may not the glittering religion of the many be, after all, only a pretense and a sham? O you lovers of carnal ease, woe unto you! Inasmuch as you take not up the cross, you shall never win the crown!

The disciples of Christ must expect to follow their Master, not merely in obedience to His doctrines, but also in the reproach which gathers about His cross. I do not find Christ carried on flowery beds of ease to His throne, I do not find Him applauded with universal acclamations, on the contrary, wherever He goes He is a protestor against things established by human wisdom, and in return the things established vow His destruction, and are not satisfied until at last they gloat their cruel eyes with His martyrdom upon the cross. Jesus Christ has no life of pleasure and of ease, He is despised and rejected of men—a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and let us rest assured that if we bear faithfully our testimony, we shall discover that the servant is not above his Master, nor the disciple above his

Lord, if they have called the Master of the house “Beelzebub,” much more shall they call them of His household by titles as ignominious and shameful.

We must expect, if the Christian soldier is really a soldier, and not a mere pretender to the art of war, that he will have to fight until he joins the host triumphant. If the church is properly imaged by a ship, she must expect to have storms, and every man on board her must look to bear his share. From the first day, when Cain and Abel divided the first family into two camps, even until now, the flesh lusts against the Spirit, the evil contends with the good, and the good wrestles with the evil. Wherever the true and the good have pitched their tents, there the enemy has gathered to attack them. Righteousness courts no peace or truce with sin, our peaceful Savior came not to form an alliance so unhallowed. Hear His own words—“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household.” Turning to Scripture, then, I find nothing about this pretty By-path meadow, and its quiet, respectable walk to heaven. I find nothing about riding in the gilded chariots of ease, or walking in silver slippers, but I do find contention, and strife, and rebuke, and suffering, and cross-bearing, and if need be, resistance unto blood, striving against sin. Our text seems to convey that thought to us most powerfully. Let us take it up, and may the Holy Ghost lead us to its true meaning.

We have before us, first of all, *the believer’s path*, secondly, *his leader*, thirdly, *his burden*, and fourthly, *his reason for following that path*.

I. We have, first of all, THE BELIEVER’S PATH.

The believer’s path is “*Let us go forth without the camp.*” The divine command is not, “Let us stop in the camp and try to reform it—things are not anywhere quite perfect, let us therefore stop and make matters right,” but the Christian’s watch cry is, “Let us go forth.” Luther caught this note. Many there were who said, “The Church of Rome has in it good and true men, let us try and reform her. Her cloisters are not without piety, her priests are not without sanctified lives—let us try and restore her purity,” but Luther heard the voice of God, “Come you out from among her, lest you be partakers of her plagues,” and therefore he led the van, taking for his watchword, “Let us go forth without the camp.” To this day the Christian’s place is not to tarry in the camp of worldly conformity, hoping, “Perhaps I may aid the movement for reform,” it is not the believer’s duty to conform to the world and to the world’s ways, and say, “Perhaps by so doing I may gain a foothold, and men’s hearts may be the more ready to receive the truth.” No, from the first to the last day of the church of God, the place of witness is not inside, but outside the camp, and the true position of the Christian is to go forth without the camp, bearing Christ’s reproach.

In this respect Abraham becomes an example to us. The Lord’s first word to Abraham is that he should leave his father and his kinsfolk, and the idolatrous house in which he lived, and go to a land which God would show to him. Away he must go, faith must be his guide, providence his provision, and the living God his only keeper. The separate life of Abraham, in the midst of the sons of Canaan, is a type of the separated walk of the church of God.

Again, when Israel had gone down to Egypt, they were not commanded to stay there and subdue their oppressors by force of arms, or petition the legislature that they might obtain gentler usage—no, but with a high hand and an outstretched arm, the Lord brought forth His people out of Egypt, for Egypt was no place for the seed of Israel, and while they wandered in the wilderness, and afterwards when they settled in isolation in the midst of the promised land, God’s Word was fulfilled, “The people shall dwell alone: they shall not be numbered among the nations.” As if to keep up the type, the Jewish people at this very period, though mingled with all the nations of the world, are as distinct as men can be, and you cannot pass by a Jew without remarking at once in his very face that he is distinct and separate from all mankind. This, I say, is but a type of the church of God, the church of God is to be distinct and separate from all other corporations or communities, her laws come from no human legislator, her officers claim

no royal appointment, her endowments are not from the coffers of the state, her subjects are a peculiar people, and her spirit is not of this world.

What is meant then, dear friends, by this “going forth without the camp”? I understand it to mean, first of all, that every Christian is to go forth *by an open profession of his faith*. You that love the Lord are to say so. You must come out and avow yourselves on His side. You may be Christians and make no profession, but I cannot be sure that, nor can any other man. While you make no profession, we must, to a great extent, judge you by the non-profession, and since you do not acknowledge yourselves to be a part of Christ’s church, we are compelled to consider you as not a part of that church. We cannot suppose you to be better than you profess to be, for the most of men are not half so good as their professions. Usually, as a rule, no man is so good as his religion, and certainly no man is ever better than his religion, if you do not profess to be on Christ’s side, with all charity we are forced to accept your own confession of having no interest in Jesus.

Come out, Christians, your Master commands you, and warns you that if you are ashamed of Him in this generation, of you will He be in the day of His glory. He bids you acknowledge Him, for if you confess Him before men, He will confess you when He comes in the glory of His holy angels. I pray you, then, come out from among them, by taking up the name of a Christian. Why, what is there to shudder at? Are you a soldier, and will you not wear your Captain’s livery? What! do you love Christ, and blush to own it? You ought to be glad to plead guilty to the blessed impeachment. Why stand you back? Let not fear or shame restrain you. If you be Christians, there is really nothing discreditable in it. Up, and stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of God, and say, “I will go with you because the Lord is with you.”

This done, the Christian is to be separate from the world *as to his company*. He must buy, and sell, and trade, like other men in the world, but he is not to find his bosom friends in it. He is not to go out of society and shut himself up in a monastery, he is to be in the world, but not of it, and his choice company is not to be among the loose, the immoral, the profane, no, not even among the merely moral—his choice company is to be the saints of God. He is to select for his associates those who shall be his companions in the world to come. As birds of a feather flock together, so the birds of paradise are gregarious. Like the speckled birds, they are pecked at by the common flock. As idle boys were accustomed to mock at foreigners in the streets, so do worldlings jeer at Christians, therefore the believer flies away to his own company when he wants good fellowship.

The Christian must come out of the world *as to his company*. I know that this rule will break many a fond connection, but be you not unequally yoked with unbelievers. I know it will snap ties which are almost as dear as life, but it must be done. We must not be overruled even by our own brother when the things of God and conscience are concerned. You must follow Christ, whatever may be the enmity you excite, remembering that unless you love Christ better than husband, or father, or mother, yea, and your own life also, you cannot be His disciple. If these are hard terms, turn your backs, and perish in your sins! Count the cost, and if you cannot bear such a cost as this, do not undertake to be a follower of Christ.

The follower of Jesus goes without the camp *as to his pleasures*. He is not without his joys nor his recreations either, but he does not seek them where the wicked find them. The mirth which cheers the worldly makes the Christian sad, the carrion which delights the crow, would disgust the dove, and so, those things which are delightful and full of pleasure to unrenewed men, shock and grieve the hearts of the regenerate. If you have no separation from the world, *as to your pleasures*, since your heart is generally in your pleasures, your heart therefore is with the wicked, and with them shall your doom be when God comes to judge mankind.

Furthermore, the true follower of Christ is divided from the world *as to his maxims*, he does not subscribe to the laws which rule most men in their families and their business. Men generally say, “Everyone for himself, and God for us all.” That is not the Christian’s maxim. “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others,” is the Christian’s rule. Some men will sail

very near the wind, they would not absolutely cheat, but still they use very sharp practice, they would not lie, but their puffs and recommendations are not quite the truth, the Christian scorns all this questionable dealing, and in all matters keeps to the rule of uprightness. If the believer is true to his Master, and goes without the camp to follow Him, his actions are as the noonday clear, his word is his bond, and in his trade he would as soon think of becoming absolutely a thief, as to condescend to the common tricks of trade.

From my soul I loathe those men, who, under the pretense and profession of religion, use the very respectability of their position to gain credit among others, that they may defraud by obtaining credit which they do not deserve, such persons are the greatest possible disgrace to the Christian church. The bankruptcy courts may whitewash them, but the devil has blackened them beyond all power of bankruptcy to cleanse them, their black deceitfulness shows through, after all. Men may escape censure when standing at the easy bar of the commissioner, and get a certificate, but they will find it very difficult to get a certificate when God comes to judge them in the last great day.

Our laws in England really seem to me to be made on purpose that men may thief and rob with impunity, as long as they do it under color of commerce. Well, if man's law will not touch such men, God's law shall, and the church should see that she cleanses herself as much as possible from them. If we be followers of Christ, we must go forth without this camp of pettifogging, and thieving, and ours must be a downright and honest religion that will not let us swerve a hair's breadth from the straight line of integrity and uprightness.

Once more—and here is a very difficult part of the Christian's course—the Christian is to come out not only from the world's pleasures, and sins, and irreligion, but there are times when the true followers of Christ must come out from *the world's religion* as well as irreligion. Every nation has a religion. In the days of Abraham, the little nationalities round him all had their god. In the days of Christ, there was an established religion in Judea, and I think that out of its synagogues our Lord Jesus Christ was thrust with fury. There was an established religion, with its priests and its proud Pharisaic professors, but our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ boldly bore His protest against its distortions of Scripture, its want of true spirituality, its worldliness, its pomp and pride.

In His day, Jesus Christ was as true a dissenter as any of us, and separated Himself and His little company from the authorized and established ecclesiastical camp. Judaism was not now the religion of Abraham, neither were the Pharisees the true exponents and successors of Moses, therefore Christ with burning words, though full of charity, with loving heart, but with thundering tongue, bore an awful witness against the religion of His own age. He knew how the multitude respected it, and how the great ones lived upon it, but for all this, though His life must be shed for His protest, Christ led His disciples away from the national religion to something better, nobler, and more sublime. And you and I too, brethren, must see that we never fall in with the religion of the times, because it happens to be fashionable, and because the multitude follow it, or the law of the land patronizes it. If there exists anywhere on earth a church which teaches for doctrine the commandments of men, come out of her, and bear your witness for the truth.

I see before me now a church which tolerates evangelical truth in her communion, but at the same time lovingly embraces Puseyism, and finds room for infidels and for men who deny the authenticity of Scripture. This is no time for us to talk about friendship with so corrupt a corporation. The godly in her midst are deceived if they think to mold her to a more gracious form. Her bishops will not touch the burial service, although four thousand clergymen petition for a little ease for their consciences, nor will they give up reading in God's own worship the filthy story of “Susannah and the Elders,” nor the nursery tale of “Bel and the Dragon”—though one of their priests avers that he would quite as soon read, “Jack and the Bean-stalk.”

We have waited long enough, her space for repentance has been already too long. Flee out of her, all of you who love your souls. Come out from among her, be you separate, touch not the unclean thing, lest you be partakers of her plagues, for her plagues are many. Often have I read works in which the

Puseyites call the Church of Rome their sister church, well, if it is so, let the two harlots make a league together, but let good and honest men come out of both apostate churches, and those who love the Lord Jesus, whether clergy or laity, must leave them to their doom. I know it is hard work, it calls upon many to be poor, and give up their livings, but they must do it.

Scotland witnessed, a few years ago, one of the noblest spectacles the world ever beheld. My heart would break with joy for England if I should live to see such a day and such a deed of heroism, but there is not spirit enough left in us, there is not grace enough left in us. I fear we have fallen upon a degenerate age. The “land of brown heath and shaggy wood, land of the mountain and the flood,” has nurtured a noble race of brave, bold men, and these could give up house, and home, and living, for the truth and for God’s sake, but it is not so in England. No, they will sell their consciences, they will cower down and mutter a lie at the command of the State, they will bury adulterers and seducers in sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection. They will teach a catechism which their conscience tells them is untrue, for pelf, for station, for the sake of the loaves and fishes, the men of God (and many of them we hope are such) will hold still to the false church.

Our protest is lifted up against her, and our foot stands altogether without her camp. Come you out from among her, be you separate, touch her not, have no communion with her false doctrines. As for each of us who know the truth, our place is with Christ without the camp, bearing His reproach. I am sure my text contains all this and more, and I would to God that His church would take up her true position now, and be separate in all things from anything that defiles and makes a lie.

II. But now, secondly, we have in the text, THE CHRISTIAN’S LEADER.

It does not say, “Let us go forth without the camp” merely, but, “Let us go forth therefore *unto Him.*” Here is the pith of the text—“unto Him.” Beloved, we might leave society—we might forsake all its conventionalities, and become Nonconformists in the widest sense, and yet not carry out the text, for the text is, “Let us go forth *unto Him.*” O beloved, it is this point that I would urge upon you! I am no politician, I care not one whit what church has the State-pay, or what has not, I care not for political dissent, but I do care for religiously following my Master’s Word, and will, and when I read this text, “Let us go forth therefore *unto Him,*” I set myself to learn what the Word means.

It means, first, *let us have fellowship with Him.* He was despised, He had no credit for charity, He was mocked in the streets, He was hissed at, He was hounded from among society. If I take a smooth part, I can have no fellowship with Him, fellowship requires a like experience. Come, then, my soul, don you the Savior’s garb—walk through the mire with Him, off with your silver slippers—go barefoot with Christ, be you yourself, like the bush which burns, but is not consumed, be content that your shoulders should be raw with His rough cross—He carried it—do not you shirk the labor. Expect not to wear the crown where Christ carried the cross, but, for fellowship’s sake, follow Him.

Again, if I am to follow Him, *I am to follow His example.* What Christ did, that I am to do. I am to go forth unto Him. It is never to be a rule to me that Mr. So-and-So did such-and-such a thing, or Mrs. So-and-So, what Christ did is to be my rule. Some men are for hanging on what Luther did, or what Calvin did, that is nothing to the Christian, he says, “I am to go forth unto Jesus.” Follow Jesus Christ, and none but Jesus Christ, and then you will be separate indeed from the rest of men.

I am to go forth unto Him, that is, *I am to go forth to His truth.* Wherever I see His truth, I am to espouse it, wherever I see error, I am to denounce it without hesitation. I am to take His Word to be my only standard, and just where His Word leads me, there I am to go, no matter where. I may have been educated in one way, but I am to bend my education to this Book; I may have conceived prejudices, but they must give way before His truth; I may know that such-and-such a belief is profitable to me, but my profit shall go for nothing in comparison with the Word of God.

And then I am to go forth to Christ’s *witness-bearing.* The present age does not believe in witness-bearing, but the whole Bible is full of it. The duty of every Christian is to bear witness for the truth. Christ says, “For this purpose was I born and came into the world.” He who knows the truth, but lays the finger of silence on his lips, saying, “Peace, peace, when there is no peace,” is a sorry Christian. If you

have been washed in Jesus' blood and saved by His righteousness, I do implore you, take your position with Christ as witness-bearers for the truth as it is in Jesus. My Master wants today a band of men and women who are prepared to be singular, so long as to be different is to be right, He wants men and women of bold, unflinching, lion-like hearts, who love Christ first, and His truth next, and Christ and His truth beyond all the world, men and women, too, whose holy lives and consistent conversation are not to be perverted by the bribes of this world, and whose testimony is neither to be distorted nor silenced by frowns or by smiles. Happy souls shall they be who dare to take their stand with Christ today.

The struggles of the Covenanters of old need to be renewed at this moment. The strife of the Puritan Age needs to return once more to the church, and what if the stakes of Smithfield come again! and what if the times of persecution return to us! the good old vessel which outrode the blood-red storm will outride it still, and she will reach her haven with all her passengers and crew safe on board, to be received by the King, and honored with His gracious smile.

We are to take care, however, that it is to Christ we go, not to a party, not to a denomination, not to anything but Christ and His truth. Out upon denominationalism, or anything else which savors not of Christ Jesus! Whether it is the Baptist church, or the Episcopalian, or the Presbyterian church which errs from Christ's way, it is nothing to any one of us which it may be, it is Christ we are to care for, and Christ's truth, and this we are to follow over all the hedges and ditches of men's making, straight away to Christ, clinging to Christ's mantle, fighting a way straight through where He Himself fought, and opened the path to His crown. Thus, then, have we spoken of the Christian's Leader.

III. Now, in the third place, we have THE CHRISTIAN'S BURDEN. He is to bear the Lord's reproach.

The reproach of Christ, in these days, takes this shape. “Oh,” say they, “the man is too precise.” “He is right, but still, truth is not always to be spoken. The thing is wrong, no doubt, which he denounces, but still the time has not come yet, we must be lenient towards these things. The man is right in what he says, but we must not be too precise nowadays. We must give and take a little—there must be charity.” God's Word, in this age, is a small affair, some do not even believe it to be inspired, and those who profess to revere it, set up other books in a sort of rivalry with it. Why, there are great church dignitaries nowadays who write against the Bible, and yet find bishops to defend them. “Do not, for a moment, think of condemning their books or them, they are our dear brethren, and must not be fettered in thought.” How many days ago is it since a bishop talked in this way in convocation? Some believe in Popery; but here, again, the plea will be, “They are our dear brethren.” Some believe in nothing at all, but still they are all safely housed in one church, like the beasts, clean and unclean, in Noah's ark.

Those who come out with Christ get this reproach, they are too precise, in fact, they are “bigots.” That is how the world brings it out at last, “bigots!”—a set of “bigots!” I have heard say that the word “bigot” took its rise from this, that a certain Protestant nobleman being commanded, in order to gain his lands, to kneel down, and in some way or other commit the act of idolatry towards the host, said, when he came at last to the point, “By God, I will not,” and they called him henceforth a “By-God.” If this is the meaning of the word “bigot,” we cheerfully adopt the title, and were it right to swear, we would aver “By Him that lives!—by heaven!—we cannot speak a lie, and we cannot bend our knee to the shrine of Baal, bigots, or no bigots.” The truth is first and our reputation next.

Then they say, “Ah! these people are behind their time, the world has made such advances, we are in the nineteenth century, you ought to know better, the discoveries of science put their narrow views out of court.” Very well, Christian, be content to be behind the times, for the times are getting nearer to judgment and the last plagues. “Ah!” but they say, “These people seem to us to be so self-righteous, they think themselves right and nobody else.” Very well, Christian, if you are right, think yourself right, and if everybody else should call you self-righteous, that does not make you so. The Lord knows how we cling to the cross, and as poor sinners, look up to Christ and Jesus Christ alone. Our conscience is void of offense in this matter. “Ah!” they say, “they are not worth noticing, they are all a pack of fools.” It is

very remarkable that in the judgment of their own age, good men always have been fools. Fools have been the men who have turned the world upside down. Luther and Calvin, Wesley and Whitefield, were all fools, but somehow or other God managed by these fools to get to Himself a glorious victory. And then they turn round and say, “It is only the poor—only the lower orders. Have they any of the nobility and gentry with them?” Well, this reproach we can pretty well bear, because it is the old standard of Christ that the poor have the Gospel preached to them, and it has ever been a sweet reflection that many who have been poor in this world have been made rich in faith.

Brethren, you must expect if you follow Christ to endure reproach of some sort or another. Let me just remind you what reproach your Master had to bear. The world’s church said of Christ, “He is a deceiver, He deceives the people.” Incarnate truth, and yet a deceiver! Then, they said, “He stirs up the people, He promotes rebellion. He is no friend of good order, He fomented anarchy, He is a mere demagogue.” That was the world’s cry against Christ, and as that was not enough, they went further, and said, “He is a blasphemer,” they put Him to death on the charge that He was a blasphemer. They whispered to one another, “Did you hear? He said such-and-such last Sabbath in His sermon. What a shocking thing he did in such a place! He is a blasphemer.” Then came the climax, they all said He had a devil, and was mad. Surely they could go no further than this, but they supplement it by saying, when He cast out devils, that He did it through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. A sorry life your Master had, you see. All the filth in earth’s kennels was thrown at Him by sacrilegious hands. No epithet was thought coarse enough, no terms hard enough, He was the song of the drunkard, and they that sat in the gate spoke against Him.

This was the reproach of Christ, and we are not to marvel if we bear as much. “Well,” says one, “I will not be a Christian if I am to bear that.” Skulk back, then, you coward, to your own damnation, but oh! men that love God, and who seek after the eternal reward, I pray you do not shrink from this cross. You *must* bear it. I know you may live without it if you will fawn and cringe, and keep back part of the price, but do not do this, it is unworthy of your manhood, much more is it unworthy of your Christianity. For God and for Christ be so holy and so truthful that you compel the world to give its best acknowledgment of your goodness by railing at you—it can do no more, it will do no less. Be content to take this shame, for there is no heaven for you if you will not—no crown without the cross, no jewels without the mire. You must stand in the pillory if you would sit in glory, you must be spit upon, and be treated with shame if you would receive eternal honor, and if you reject the one you reject the other.

IV. We close by noticing THE CHRISTIAN’S REASON FOR BEARING HIS REPROACH, AND GOING WITHOUT THE CAMP.

It is in the text, “Let us go forth *therefore*”—there is the reason. Why then? First, *because Jesus did*. Jesus Christ came into the world pure and holy, and His life and His testimony were a witness against sin. Jesus Christ would not conform. If He would but have done this, He might have been King of the Jews. But no, the most loving spirit that ever lived was also the most firm. Nobody shall say that Christ was either self-willed or harsh, or that He hated other men—nothing of the kind, never was there such pure generosity, such overflowing affection for men, as you find in Christ.

But yield the truth, yield holiness? No, never! Not a grain of it. Be silent? No, He rebukes the Pharisees. And when the lawyer pulls His coat, and says, “Master, in so doing, you rebuke us,” then Jesus Christ begins, “Woe unto you lawyers.” All classes have their portion from His mouth. The Herodians come to Him, does He for a moment yield to them, or when the opposite party tempt, does He side with them? Does He either side with the Sadducee or with the Pharisee? No, Christ’s course was ever an independent one, He committed himself unto no man, for He knew what was in man.

The whole of His life through, you cannot mistake Him for a Pharisee, or a Sadducee, or any one of the other teachers. He stands out like a lone mount of light, separate and apart from the chain of dark mountains, and so must the Christian. Christ was separate, and so must you be. Christ was pure, holy, truthful, so must you be. I pray you either renounce your profession, or else seek grace to carry it out.

Moreover, the connection of the text tells us that Christ *set apart His people by going without the camp*. That He might sanctify His people, He suffered without the camp. Christ’s separation was in order that His people might be separated. The head is not of the world, and shall the members be of it? The head is despised and rejected—shall the members be honored? “If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” The world rejects Christ—shall the world receive *us*? No, if we are truly one with Him, we must expect to be rejected too. Christ’s separation is the type and symbol of the separateness of all the elect.

Again, Christ would have His people separate *for their own sanctification*. You cannot grow in grace to any high degree while you are conformed to the world. The path of separation may be a path of sorrow, but it is the path of safety, and though it may cost you many pangs, and make your life like a long martyrdom, and every day a battle, yet it is a happy life after all. There is no such life as that which the soldier of Christ leads, for though men frown upon him, Christ so sweetly smiles upon him that he cares for no man. Christ reveals Himself as a sweet refreshment to the warrior after the battle, and so blessed is the vision, that the warrior feels more calm and peace in the day of strife than in his hours of rest.

Believe me, the highway of holiness is the highway of communion. You cannot live near to Christ and yet truckle. A blot on your conscience will certainly separate Christ from you, as to communion. Be pure, be clear, be chaste, as before the Lord, and you may walk as on the mountain tops, having Christ for your companion, enjoying with Him a heaven on earth.

The Covenanters and martyrs tell us in their diaries, that they were never so happy as when they were in the dungeon alone with Christ for company, nay, their best days were often their days of burning, they called them their wedding days, and went to heaven singing and chanting the triumphal pean, as they mounted in their chariots of fire.

Let us close with this last thought and reason. *Thus we shall hope to win the crown* if we are enabled by divine grace faithfully to follow Christ in all respects. Oh! the crown! The crown! The crown! Come, let me hold it up to you! Is not this a treasure? Eternal life, likeness to Christ, sitting at His right hand? Do you not hear them—the harps of angels—the songs of the redeemed? Do you not hear them, I say, as in one perpetual psalm of joyfulness they salute the Lord their God with thanksgiving? It is but a flea bite here, and then an eternity of bliss, a moment’s shame, and then an eternal honor, a little while of witness-bearing, a little while of suffering, a little while to be rebuked, and then “forever with the Lord.” This reward is so great, that it transcends the light affliction which is but for a moment. I will not put so little shame in contrast with it all. Why, in this age we suffer nothing, a few hard words, a jeer, a sneer—now and then a friend who leaves us because we speak the truth, but what is that?

O brethren, we are denied the honor of those favored saints who died for Jesus. Our weak spirits love these softer times, but, after all, the real days of honor were the days of persecution, and the times when saints won brightest crowns were when they suffered most. I fear me the church of Christ is growing sleepy. Men of God have lost muscle and nerve. Our forefathers died for half a truth, and we will not bear rebuke for a whole one.

Two women were tied to the stake at Wigton and drowned in the rising tide—do you know what for? Simply because they would not say, “God save the king.” You say, “What does that matter?” Well, it was comparatively a theological trifle. They held a certain theory concerning the bearing of the Headship of Christ upon the political position of the king, because they thought the thing was wrong—though I, for my part, would say, “God save the king” a thousand times, yet they would not say it once, and died in constancy to their belief. The two women were actually tied to stakes by the seaside. The tide came up, and when the elder woman of the two was drowned, they asked the younger whether she would say it now. But no, she would not. She believed it to be a truth concerning Christ and His kingdom, and though it only touched one of the smallest jewels of His crown, yet she would not do it, and therefore the gurgling waters came up to her chin, and at last rolled over one who had faithfully

borne witness to a portion of truth which seems very trifling to us nowadays, but which to her seemed to be worth dying for.

Nowadays, I say, we would not die for the whole Bible, though in other ages saints would have died for the dot of an *i*, or the cross of a *t*. We turn tail, and are frightened because somebody has said a hard thing to us for defending the truth which concerns Jesus, and has the salvation of man wrapped in it. I say we cannot fight for the great, and they would fight for the little. O may God restore to us, dear friends, more grace, more piety, more love for souls, more care for the kingdom of Christ, a sterner prizing of the truth, and a determination solemnly avowed before the Lord of hosts, that come what may, we will contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. We stand upon the Rock of Ages, confident that God will defend the right, and that right in the end shall come off victorious. God give you grace—you especially, the members of my charge—from this day, more than ever you have done, to take your place without the camp, and cheerfully and joyfully to bear Christ’s reproach.

Some of you cannot do this, you cannot bear His reproach, you cannot go outside the camp, for you have no vital faith—you have not believed in Jesus. O sinner, you are not to carry Christ’s cross first, but look to that cross for salvation, and when He has saved you, as He will if you trust in Him, then take up your cross and carry it, and praise the name of God from this time forth, even forever.

Taken from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.