

# FOR HIS GLORY

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We sometimes hear of complaints about revivals being too exciting. Perhaps the censure is deserved, but I would like to see a little of the fault. This age does not generally sin in the direction of being too excited concerning Divine things. We have erred so long on the other side that perhaps a little excess in the direction of fervor might not be the worst of all calamities! At any rate, I would not fear to try it. Doubtless our Lord's Presence, like the rising of the sun, scatters heat as well as light on all sides. Oh to be scorched by that Sun, to be parched with that Heat! Blessed would they be who should be guilty of too great a love for Him—convicted of too consuming a zeal for His Glory! I would gladly die of that heavenly malady!—CHS



## A WORD TO SEEKERS

By C. H. Spurgeon

Always in this congregation we have some who are seeking the Lord—would to God we had many more! It were glorious preaching if all were either seeking or had found. If it were not for the mixed multitude who neither seek nor find, our work were easy work, indeed. Some of you are seeking God today, and you are very much troubled with the fear that you cannot be saved. I will have a few words with you to recall to mind some commonplace Truths of God which may give you hope.

First of all some of you are troubled about the *Doctrine of Election*. I cannot this morning explain it to you. I believe it and receive it with joy, and you may rest assured, however much it troubles you, it is true. Though you may not like it, it is true, and remember it is not a matter of opinion as to what you like or do not like, as to what you think or do not think, you must turn to the Bible, and if you find it there you must believe it. Listen to me. You have got an idea that some persons will be sent to Hell, merely and only because it is the will of God that they should be sent there. Throw the idea overboard, because it is a very wicked one, and is not to be found in Scripture. There could not be a Hell inside the man's conscience, who knew that he was wretched merely because God willed he should be, for the very essence of Hell is sin, and a sense of having willfully committed it. There could not be the flames of Hell if there were not this conviction on the mind of the person suffering it, "I knew my duty, but I did it not—I willfully sinned against God, and I am here not because of anything He did or did not do, but because of my own sin." If you drive that dark thought away you may be on the road to comfort. Remember again, that whatever the Doctrine of Election may be or may not be, there is a free invitation in the Gospel given to needy sinners, "Whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

Now you may say, "I cannot reconcile the two." There are a great many other things that you cannot do. God knows where these two things meet though you do not, and I hope you do not intend to wait till you are a philosopher before you will be saved, because it is likely enough that while you are trying to be wise by persistently remaining a practical fool, you will find yourself in Hell where your wisdom will not be of any use to you. God commands you to trust Christ, and promises

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## Jesus Christ Is Indeed, the Savior of The World!

By C. H. Spurgeon

Did I not believe in the depravity of the human heart, I should wonder how so many can reject the pious testimonies which everywhere surround them—testimonies of persons of the most honorable character who, on any other matter would be at once believed!

Perhaps there may be some here who will say, "I do not know that I have ever had any testimony of the sort borne to me." Now, if you will allow me, you shall not be able to say that any longer! I will bear *my* testimony for Jesus Christ at once. When I preach Christ and His salvation to you, I do not preach what I learned in a college or was taught by men. I preach to you what I would die for! I preach to you what is the chief joy of my soul; I preach to you what I know and believe, and have experienced.

Years ago I was under the greatest conceivable darkness of spirit; I was but a lad, but my sins haunted me. I had such an idea of the guilt of my past life, that my heart was heavy within me, and at intervals I was crushed down with fear. I would get away into corners, where no one could

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## TO SEEKERS

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that all Believers shall be saved. Leave your difficulties till you have trusted Christ, and then you will be in a capacity to understand them better than you do now. In order to understand Gospel Doctrine you must believe in Christ first. What does Christ say, “No man comes unto the Father but by Me.” Now Election is the Father’s work. The Father chooses sinners; Christ makes the Atonement. You must go, then, to Christ the Atoning Sacrifice before you can understand the Father as the electing God. Do not persist in going to the Father first. Go to the Son as He tells you.

Once more, remember that even if your own idea of the Doctrine of Election were the truth, yet if it were so, you can but perish should you seek the Lord—

*“I can but perish if I go,  
I am resolved to try;  
For if I stay away I know,  
I must forever die.  
But if I die with mercy sought,  
When I the King have tried,  
That were to die, delightful thought,  
As sinner never died.”*

Trust Christ even if you should perish, and you shall never perish if you trust in Him.

Well, if that difficulty were removed, I can suppose another, saying, “Ah, but my case is of *great sin*.” Recall this to mind, and you will have hope, namely, that “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom,” Paul says, “I am chief.” “I am chief.” Paul was the chief of sinners, and he went through the door of Mercy; and now there can be none greater than the chief, and where the chief went through you can go through! If the chief of sinners has been saved, why not you? Why not you?

We heard Mr. Offord say the other day that he knew a good woman who, when the Salt-Ash Bridge was made down at Plymouth, would not go on it. She said she did

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## Yes, Jesus Christ Is The Savior of the World!

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see me, and cry and pray; and I labored under the belief that everybody else might be saved, but that I would perish.

Then I heard of Jesus Christ, that He was able to put away sin at once from anyone who simply looked to Him, and trusted Him. I heard that and I was enabled by Divine Grace, as soon as I heard it, to trust the Savior. I did then and there rest the whole weight of my soul for time and eternity upon the Person and work of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, and my witness is that in one single moment a load was rolled from off my spirit, and as swiftly as a flash of lightning, I passed from darkness into light—from misery into joy! From that hour I bless God that, being not exempt from trouble, and especially not free from a tendency to despondency which is always with me, I yet rejoice and will rejoice, and am happy, unspeakably happy, in resting upon Jesus Christ!

Moreover, I have found that those points of my character which were most weak have been strengthened, while strong passions have been subdued, propensities have been kept under, and new principles have been implanted. I am changed! I am as different from what I was as a man could be who had been annihilated, and had then been made again. Nor do I claim any credit for this—far from it! God has done great things for me, but He has done the same for others, and is willing to do it for *any* soul that seeks His face! He is willing to do it for every seeker here! There is such a thing as a new heart, and a right spirit—I know there is; there is such a thing as perfect happiness in death, yes, and even a longing to depart! I know that peace with God is to be had, for I have felt it, and bear witness to it.

Do you reject my witness? Perhaps you doubt my truthfulness. Then I must endure your injustice, for I know that I do not lie; but if my character is right, and if you think I speak the truth, then I ask you to receive the witness I bear. I wish I could bear it more judiciously, and more earnestly, but I do bear it in all sincerity with this desire in my soul—I would that not only some of you, but *all* who hear me this day, knew the preciousness of Christ Jesus my Lord, and understood that beneath God’s Heaven there is nothing so blessed as to be resting upon the blood and merits of the once Crucified but now exalted Savior!

I bear my testimony as the woman from the well did. If you reject it, so must it be, but I pray you do not, but come and see Jesus for yourselves, for He is indeed, the Christ, the Savior of the world!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #1053, Vol. 18—**TESTIMONY AND EXPERIENCE**—Read/download by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of Spurgeon’s sermon in Modern English, and over 475 Spanish translations at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).

Pray, my Brothers and Sisters, that God would move our fellow countrymen to go forth to meet King Jesus! Pray that there may come a great desire of religious thought over the minds of the people. God can cause it—He has the keys of human hearts, and can secretly guide them according to His will. Pray that there may be a great religious movement among the people, for then we may look for one of the days of the Son of Man as the days of Heaven upon earth! Then, too, as another sign, we shall see enthusiasm prevailing on all sides. When Christ rode through Jerusalem, it was not possible for men to be cold at the sight of His majesty!—CHS

Perhaps our occupations require that we begin early in the morning, and we therefore, ask, “How can I get alone with God in prayer?” It is said of Sir Henry Havelock that every morning when the march began at six, he always rose at four that he might not miss his time for the reading of the Scripture and communion with his God. If we have no time we must *make* time, for if God has given us time for secondary duties, He must have given us time for primary ones—and to draw near to Him is a primary duty! We must let nothing set it aside. There is no real need to sacrifice any duty—we have time enough for all if we are not idle. And indeed, the one will help the other instead of clashing with it!—CHS

# CALVINISM: ITS PRACTICAL APPLICATION

By DANIEL E. PARKS, PASTOR

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What one believes determines the manner in which he lives. Calvinists believe in the absolute, universal, and eternal Sovereignty of God; in the moral inability of man in salvation; and in the necessity of God's free and Sovereign Grace in Jesus Christ for man's salvation. We consequently exalt the Glory of God, alone, and abase the pride of man, and give all the credit for salvation to God alone.

Arminians deny what Calvinists affirm. Arminians deny the moral inability of man, and believe, instead, that man has "free will." Arminians deny that salvation is entirely of God's free and Sovereign Grace, and teach, instead, that salvation is accomplished through the cooperation of God's Grace and man's "free will." Arminians deny the Sovereignty of God, and say, instead, that God is helpless to save man unless man, of his own "free will," *permits* Him. Consequently, Arminians cannot exalt the Glory of God alone, nor totally abase the pride of man, nor give all the credit for salvation to God alone.

***The Doctrines of Calvinists have a godly practical application in their daily lives.*** Arminians say belief in Election and Predestination, and Eternal Security will result in spiritual laxness and lawlessness. The facts declare otherwise.

Calvinism fosters *holy* living. We Calvinists attribute this to God's Predestination, by which we are told in Romans 8:29 that we were "predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son."

This application was very evident in the time of the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. In cities in which Calvinism prevailed, such as Geneva, immorality was strictly forbidden. The great fault of Calvinistic civil lawmakers was that they went too far in legislating morality, requiring a very stringent code upon even the unregenerate citizenry. But on the other hand, in those cities in which Roman Catholicism prevailed, and in which Calvinism was despised, the ungodly conduct of popes, and monks, and the notorious Borgia family was typical.

The foremost Calvinists of the English-speaking world on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean were so devout in personal piety that they were called *Puritans*. One will search in vain for any group of people in post-Apostolic times who surpassed them in exalting the Glory of God, abasing the pride of man, walking in humility and sobriety, and rejoicing in the Grace of God to sinners. Calvinists today endeavor to emulate Puritan godliness.

What a sharp contrast such Calvinists are to tele-evangelists and priests, modern champions of "free will," and Arminianism! They glory in their pride and ostentation; they are notorious for their licentiousness, sexual immorality, and monetary scams. The world derides Puritans for their godliness, but mocks tele-evangelists and priests for their hypocrisy.

Calvinism fosters *industrious* living. We Calvinists take very seriously the command of 1 Thessalonians 4:11 to "aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands." This has resulted in what sociologists call the *Protestant Work Ethic*. It is characterized by Calvinists' hard work, thrift and self-discipline; these in turn gave rise to capitalism and free enterprise. O that Calvinism should be more prevalent today!

***The Doctrines of Calvinists have a godly practical application in their prayers.*** Nothing necessitates prayer more than the proper awareness of man's inability to meet his own needs, and of the ability of

God to do so if He wills.

This fact is graphically illustrated in the prayers of the self-righteous Pharisee, and the sinful tax collector recorded in Luke 18:9-14. The Pharisee is typical of those men who in every age boast of what they perceive to be their own "free will." He therefore denied the teaching of Jesus Christ regarding the natural bondage of man's will apart from the liberating power of Jesus Christ (see John 8:30-36). It is for this reason that Christ said, "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with *himself*..." In his "prayer" he asked God for absolutely nothing, and was not in the least disappointed at having received nothing from God. Instead, he boasted of his own self-sufficiency and self-righteousness, and of his religious superiority over others. This Pharisee was no Calvinist!

On the other hand, "the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to Heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'" Here is a man who rightly acknowledged his own sinful nature, and moral inability, and who therefore begged God for mercy. Every Calvinist acknowledges his need to pray in this manner every day!

But interestingly, even Arminians pray like Calvinists when the salvation of loved ones is at stake. They may say in their evangelistic appeals, "God has done all He can to save you, and now the rest is up to you, because God can do nothing else unless *you let Him!*" But when this does not avail, they resort to praying, "God, be merciful to my loved one, and save him!"

O that we could all learn to pray like this at all times, and forever forsake any evangelistic appeal which contradicts!

***The Doctrine of Calvinists have a godly practical application in their worship services.*** These include the singing of hymns of praise to God, the observance of God's ordinances, the collection of our monetary offerings to God, and the preaching of the Word of God. We here briefly expand upon two of these.

Consider, first, the *singing* of Calvinists. The songs of Calvinists are comprised of what Paul the Apostle in Colossians 3:16 calls, "Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs"—and in that order! We delight first in singing *Psalms*, Holy Scriptures set to music, such as, "The Lord's My Shepherd" (Psalm 23) and, "All People That on Earth Do Dwell" (Psalm 100). We delight next in singing *hymns*, songs of human origin expressing our praise to God, such as, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," and "How Great Thou Art!" We delight, last, in singing *spiritual songs*, those which are directed from man to man, expressing the Christian experience, and call to commitment, such as "Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Wretched."

Typical of those hymns which both exalt the Glory of God, and abase the pride of man is that of the Calvinist John Newton: "*Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.*"

Contrary to prevailing customs in various Arminian circles, we Calvinists sing such songs as an act of worship, *not* to display musical talents or showmanship. And we do so freely, not charging an admission fee to those who would listen to the songs we sing.

Consider, also, the *preaching* of Calvinists. Typical of Calvinist

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## Calvinism's Practicality

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preaching is the message of Peter the Apostle on the Day of Pentecost, recorded in Acts 2.

Calvinist preaching has for its theme Jesus Christ, alone, and exalts Him alone. Like Peter in Acts 2:22, we Calvinists extol Him as both God and Man, declaring Him to be the “Lord,” and a “Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs.” And like Peter in Acts 2:36, we Calvinists declare Jesus to be God’s Anointed One, the “Christ.” And like Peter in the same Chapter, verse 30, we Calvinists declare God has exalted Jesus Christ by raising Him from the dead, and that He is presently enthroned in Glory as King of kings, and Lord of lords. We do not agree with those Arminians who diminish Christ’s Kingship until a later millennial age.

Calvinist preaching presents man as a sinful creature. Like Peter in Acts 2:23, we Calvinists confess that man is so depraved in his heart, that he is capable of the worst sin—rejecting and even murdering the very Son of God.

Calvinist preaching extols God’s Predestination. Like Peter, we Calvinists are not at all hesitant to preach what he, in verse 23, called “the predetermined counsel and foreknowledge of God.” Arminians say Predestination has no place in evangelism, but Peter and we Calvinists declare otherwise. And also contrary to Arminians, Peter and we Calvinists do not find the Sovereignty of God, and human responsibility to be incompatible.

Calvinist preaching is alone sufficient to convict the lost. We and Peter have no necessity for an Arminian “altar call.” The Gospel alone is sufficient to cause sinners, as in Acts 2:37, to be “cut to the heart,” and to cry out, “What shall we do?”

Calvinist preaching exhorts sinners to come to Christ, and to publicly confess Him in Baptism. We do so in the words of Peter in verse Acts 2:38, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

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to bring many to a saving knowledge of  
our Master, Jesus Christ.

## ON “MODERN THOUGHT,” BRAINS, AND BLADDERS...

By Charles H. Spurgeon

These are days of “modern thought.” As you are all aware, men have become wondrously wise, and have outgrown the Scriptures. Certain unhappy children’s heads are too big, and there is always a fear that it is not brain, but water on the brain—and this “modern thought” is simply a disease of *wind* on the brain—and likely to be a deadly one if God does not cure the Church of it. Within the compass of the orthodox faith—within the range of the simple Gospel—there is room enough for the development of every faculty, however largely gifted a man may be!

It doesn’t matter, though the man is a Milton in poetry, though he is a master in metaphysics and a prince in science—if he is but pure in his prose, accurate in his metaphysics, and honest in his science, he will find that the range of his thought needs no more space than Scripture gives him. It has been thought by some that these persons who run off to heretical opinions are persons of great mind. Believe me, Brothers and Sisters, it is a cheap way of making yourself to be thought so, but the men are nobodies. That is the sum of the matter. We are satisfied with the theology of the Puritans, and we assert this day that when we take down a volume of Puritan theology, we find in a solitary page more thinking and more learning—more Scripture, more real teaching—than in whole folios of the effusions of modern thought!

Modern men would be rich if they possessed even the crumbs that fall from the table of the Puritans. After all, they have given us nothing new. A few variegated bladders they have blown—and they have burst while the blowers were admiring them! But, as for anything worth knowing which has improved the heart, benefited the understanding, or fitted men for service in the battle of life, there have been no contributions made by this “modern thought” worth recording. Whereas the old thought of the Puritans, and the Reformers, which I believe to be none other than the thought of God thought out again in man’s brain and heart, is constantly giving consolation to the afflicted, furnishing strength to the weak, and guiding men’s minds to behave themselves aright in the House of God, and in the world at large.

There are “waters to swim in,” in the Scriptures! You need not think there is no room for your imaginations there. Give the coursers their reins—you shall find enough within that Book to exhaust them at their highest speed; you need not think that your memory shall have nothing to remember—if you have learned the Bible through and through, and knew all its texts—you would have much to remember above that! You would still need to remember its inner meaning, and its conversations with your soul, and the mysterious power it has had over your spirit when it has touched the strings of your nature as a master harper touches his harp strings, and has brought forth music which you knew not to be sleeping there.

There is no faculty but what will find room enough in the Word of God, if we will but obediently bring it to the service of the Lord. There are in this respect “waters to swim in.”—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #1054, Vol. 18—*Waters to Swim In*—Read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of Spurgeon’s sermon in Modern English, and over 475 Spanish translations at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).

PRAY DAILY FOR OUR  
PRESIDENT, HIS CABINET,  
AND OUR  
MILITARY  
PERSONNEL!

# THE GIFT OF THORNS...

Sandra felt as low as the heels of her shoes as she pushed against a December gust and the florist shop door. Her life had been easy, like a spring breeze, then in the fourth month of her second pregnancy, a minor automobile accident stole her ease.

During this Christmas season she would have delivered a son. She grieved over her loss. As if that weren't enough, her husband's company threatened a transfer; then her sister, whose annual holiday visit she coveted, called saying she could not come.

What's worse, Sandra's friend infuriated her by suggesting her grief was a God-given path to maturity that would allow her to empathize with others who suffer. "She has no idea what I'm feeling," thought Sandra with a shudder.

"Good afternoon, can I help you?" The shop clerk's approach startled her.

"I...I need an arrangement," stammered Sandra, "for Christmas."

"Do you want beautiful but ordinary, or would you like to challenge the day with a customer favorite I call the Christmas Special?" asked the shop clerk. "I'm convinced that flowers tell stories," she continued. "Are you looking for something that conveys 'gratitude' this Christmas?"

"Gratitude? Gratitude for what?" she thought to herself—"For a careless driver whose truck was hardly scratched when he rear-ended me? For an airbag that saved my life, but took that of my unborn child?"

"Not exactly!" Sandra blurted out. "In the last five months, everything that could go wrong has gone wrong." Sandra regretted her outburst, and was surprised when the shop clerk said, "I have the perfect arrangement for you."

Then the door's small bell rang, and the shop clerk said, "Hi Barbara...let me get your order." She politely excused herself, and walked toward a small workroom, then quickly reappeared carrying an arrangement of greenery, bows, and long-stemmed thorny roses. Except the ends of the rose stems were neatly snipped...there were no flowers. "Want this in a box?" asked the clerk.

Sandra watched for the customer's response. Was this a joke? Who would want rose stems with no flowers!? She waited for laughter, but neither woman laughed. "Yes, please," Barbara replied with an ap-

preciative smile. "You'd think after three years of getting the Special, I wouldn't be so moved by its significance, but I can feel it right here, all over again," she said as she gently tapped her chest.

"Uhh," stammered Sandra, "that lady just left with, uhh...she just left with no flowers!"

"Right...I cut off the flowers. That's the Special...I call it the Christmas Thorns Bouquet." "Oh, come on, you can't tell me someone is willing to pay for that?" exclaimed Sandra.

"Barbara came into the shop three years ago feeling very much like you feel today," explained the clerk. "She thought she had very little to be thankful for; she had lost her father to cancer, the family business was failing, her son was into drugs, and she was facing major surgery."

"That same year I had lost my husband," continued the clerk, "and for the first time in my life I had to spend the holidays alone. I had no children, no husband, no family nearby, and too great a debt to allow any travel."

"So what did you do?" asked Sandra. "I learned to be thankful for thorns," answered the clerk quietly. "I've always thanked God for good things in life, and never thought to ask Him why those good things happened to me. But when bad stuff hit, did I ever ask! It took time for me to learn that dark times are important. I always enjoyed the 'flowers' of life, but it took thorns to show me the beauty of God's comfort. You know, the Bible says that God comforts us when we're afflicted, and from His consolation we learn to comfort others."

Sandra sucked in her breath as she thought about the very thing her friend had tried to tell her. "I guess the truth is, I don't want comfort, she said, I've lost a baby, and I'm angry with God." Just then someone else walked in the shop.

"Hey, Phil!" shouted the clerk to the balding, rotund man. "My wife sent me in to get our usual Christmas arrangement...12 thorny, long-stemmed stems!" laughed Phil as the clerk handed him a tissue-wrapped arrangement from the refrigerator.

"Those are for your wife?" asked Sandra incredulously. "Do you mind me asking why she wants something that looks like that?" "No...I'm glad you asked," Phil replied. "Four years ago my wife and I nearly divorced; after 40 years, we were in a real mess, but with the Lord's Grace and guidance, we slogged through problem after problem. He rescued our marriage. Jenny here (the clerk) told me she kept a vase of rose stems to remind her of what she learned from 'thorny'

times, and that was good enough for me. I took home some of those stems. My wife and I decided to label each one for a specific 'problem,' and give thanks to Him for what that problem taught us."

As Phil paid the clerk, he said to Sandra, "I highly recommend the Special!"

"I don't know if I can be thankful for the thorns in my life." Sandra said to the clerk. "It's all too...fresh."

"Well," the clerk replied carefully, "my experience has shown me that thorns make roses more precious. We treasure God's Providential care more during trouble than at any other time. Remember, it was a crown of thorns that Jesus wore so we might know His Love. Don't resent the thorns."

Tears rolled down Sandra's cheeks; for the first time since the accident, she loosened her grip on resentment. "I'll take those 12 long-stemmed thorns, please," she managed to choke out.

"I hoped you would," said the clerk gently. "I'll have them ready in a minute." "Thank you. What do I owe you?" asked Sandra. "Nothing," said the clerk, "Nothing but a promise to allow God to heal your heart. The first year's arrangement is always on me." The clerk smiled and handed a card to Sandra. "I'll attach this card to your arrangement, but maybe you'd like to read it first."

It read: "Dear God, I have never thanked You for my thorns; I have thanked You a thousand times for my roses, but never once for my thorns. Teach me the glory of the cross I bear; teach me the value of my thorns. Show me that I have climbed closer to You along this path of pain; show me that, through my tears, the colors of Your rainbow look much more brilliant."—Author unknown

**PRAY DAILY  
FOR GRACE  
TO BE HOLY!**

# LISTEN, O SEEKER!

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not believe it was safe. She saw locomotive engines and trains go over it so that the bridge sustained hundreds of tons at a time, but she shook her head and said she wondered people were so immensely presumptuous as to cross it. When the bridge was totally clear and not an engine on it she was asked if she would not walk on it then. Well, she did venture a little way, but she trembled all the while for fear her weight should make it fall. It could bear hundreds of tons of steel, but it could not bear her. You great sinner, it is much the same case with you. The stupendous bridge which Christ has flung across the wrath of God will bear the weight of your sin, for it has borne ten thousands of thousands across before, and will bear millions of sinners yet to the shore of their eternal rest. Call that to remembrance, and you may have hope.

“Yes,” says one, “but I believe I have committed *the unpardonable sin*.” My dear Brother, I believe you have *not*, but I want you to call one thing to remembrance, and that is that the unpardonable sin is a sin which is unto death. Now a sin which is unto death means a sin which brings death on the conscience. The man who commits it never has any conscience afterwards—he is dead there. Now, you have some feeling; you have enough life to wish to be saved from sin; you have enough life to long to be washed in the precious blood of Jesus. You have *not* committed the unpardonable sin, therefore have hope. “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.” “But,” you reply, “Oh, *I cannot repent!* My heart is so hard.” Call to remembrance that Jesus Christ is exalted to give repentance and remission of sins, and you may come to Him to get repentance, and need not bring it to Him. Come without any repentance, and ask Him to give it to you, and He will give it. Rest assured there is no fear whatever that if the soul seeks softness and tenderness, it has that softness and tenderness in a measure even now, and will have it to the fullest extent before long. “Oh, but,” you say, “I have a *general unfitness* and incapacity for being saved.” Then, dear Friend, I want you to call this to remembrance, that Jesus Christ has a general fitness and a general capacity for *saving* sinners. I do not know what you need, but I do know Christ has it. I do not

know the full extent of your disease, but I do know Christ is the Physician who can cure it. I do not know how hard, and stubborn, and stolid, and ignorant, and blind, and dead your nature may be, but I do know that “Christ is able to save unto the uttermost those who come unto God by Him.”

What you are has nothing to do with the question, except that it is the mischief to be undone. The true answer to the question of how you are to be saved lies yonder in the bleeding body of the Immaculate Lamb of God! Christ has all salvation in Himself. He is Alpha, He is Omega. He does not begin to save, and leave you to perish, nor does He offer to complete what you must first begin. He is the Foundation as well as the Pinnacle. He commences with you as the green blade, and He will finish with you as the full corn in the ear.

O that I had a voice like the trumpet of God that shall wake the dead at last! If I might only have it to utter one sentence, it would be this one, “Your help is found in Christ.” As for you, there never can be found anything hopeful in your human nature; it is death itself, it is rottenness and corruption. Turn, turn your eyes away from this despairing mass of black depravity, and look to Christ! He is the Sacrifice for human guilt. His is the Righteousness that covers men, and makes them acceptable before the Lord. Look to Him as you are—black, foul, guilty, leprous, condemned. Go as you are! Trust Jesus Christ to save you, and remembering this, you shall have “a hope that makes not ashamed,” which shall endure forever.

I have labored to speak comfortable words, and words in season, and I have tried to speak them in homely language, too. But, O Comforter, what can we do without You? YOU must cheer our sadness. To comfort souls is God’s own work! Let us conclude, then, with the words of the Savior’s promise, “If I go away, I will send you another Comforter, who shall abide with you forever.” And let our prayer be that He would abide with us to His own Glory, and to our comfort forevermore. Amen.—Adapted from Sermon #654, Volume 11—MEMORY—THE HANDMAID OF HOPE —read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of CH Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).

## “BUT I AM A WORM...”

“But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people” (Psa 22:6). Christ calls Himself “a worm”...on account of the opinion that men of the world had of Him...The Jews esteemed Christ as a worm, and treated Him as such. He was loathsome to them, and hated by them. Everyone trampled upon Him, and trod Him underfoot as men do worms...The Chaldee paraphrase renders it here a *weak* worm. Though Christ is the Mighty God, and is also the Son of Man whom God made strong for Himself—yet there was a weakness in His Human Nature, and He was crucified through it (2 Cor 13:4). It has been observed by some that the Hebrew word, “towla,” there used, signifies the scarlet worm, or the worm that is in the grain or berry with which scarlet is dyed. And like this scarlet worm did our Lord look, when by way of mockery He was clothed with a scarlet robe—and especially when He appeared in His dyed garments, and was red in His apparel, as one that treads in the wine vat—and when His body was covered with blood when He hung upon the Cross, which was shed to make crimson and scarlet sins as white as snow.—John Gill (1697-1771)

## A Study of Ephesians 4:23-24a

# PUTTING ON THE NEW MAN – PART 1

In our last study in this Fourth Chapter of Ephesians, we looked at verse 22, and what it means for the Christian to put off the old man. Looking ahead to verse 24, we see an exhortation to put on the new man, and coming in between these two things is verse 23 which says, “and be renewed in the spirit of your mind.”

Why did Paul put this in between the two? Why did he not go directly from exhorting us to put off the old man, to putting on the new man? The reason is that verse 23 gives us the key for how to do BOTH things. One will never really put off the old man or put on the new man unless the spirit of his mind is renewed.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones for the content of this message.

First of all, we must consider what *renew* means. It means just what its parts convey. “Re” means again; and “new,” new. To renew means to make new again. The fact that this is a verb in the present tense means that it is a continual action. The process of being made new again is an ongoing one; it is something the Believer must do continually.

There is one more important aspect of the verb we need to note at the outset here, and that is that it is in the passive. It says “be renewed.” This means that the renewal spoken of here is something which is done TO the Believer. It is something which the Holy Spirit does. And, since it is ongoing, it is not limited to what the Holy Spirit does to the Believer at the moment of conversion. Although it begins at Regeneration, it goes beyond Regeneration, and is an ongoing process.

Yet we must be careful here. While this is something done to the Believer, it is still something which the Believer is being exhorted to do. This is because the Believer can do things to either hinder it on the one hand, or to promote and encourage it on the other hand.

The next thing we note is WHERE this renewing is to take place. Paul says, “and be renewed IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND.” It is very important that we understand what is meant here, by the spirit of the mind. Some have thought that this had something to do with the Holy Spirit working in the mind of the Believer. Although that is a great Truth of God, it is not what is intended here. Never does the Scripture refer to the Holy Spirit as the “spirit of the mind.” Every English translation has “spirit” here with a small “s.”

The clue to what the Apostle means here has already been given to us in verse 18. In that passage, unbelievers are described as “having their

understanding darkened.” Remember that we said that this did not refer to their ability to use their brain, but to the fact that there are “blind spots” in the unbeliever’s thinking. In other words, the unbeliever, even if he is brilliant or a genius in the sense of his ability to think, cannot discern *spiritual* things.

What the Apostle is saying here is that just the opposite is true of the Believer. The Believer is one who has been renewed in the “spirit of the mind.” He no longer is blind to spiritual things. Note how careful the Apostle is in putting this. He does not simply say the Believer is renewed in his mind; he says he is renewed in the “spirit” of his mind. The Believer no longer has this darkness over his understanding.

Let me put it this way. There is nothing wrong with the brain of unbelievers. What is wrong is all in the spirit of the brain. What Paul is speaking of here is not some ability of the brain to think; the natural faculty of the ability to think is still intact, and in many cases works amazingly well in the unbeliever, but, because of sin, and the influence that it exerts on the mind, the unbeliever’s whole outlook is both blind and perverted. He leaves God out; he cannot understand spiritual Truths of God. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, “But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

A good example is the Apostle Paul himself. By everyone’s standard, Paul, when he was still called Saul of Tarsus, was a brilliant man. He was highly educated by the best of Jewish scholars; yet look at what he was doing to the Church! He was using all his might and ability to persecute the Church by beating and imprisoning Christians. But when Christ appeared to him on the road to Damascus, a great change took place—he was renewed in the spirit of his mind. Christ was no longer seen as an enemy, but as a friend. Paul became one of the greatest and most earnest followers of Christ the world has ever seen! The essential question to ask then is this—Just what is it that changes in the Believer? How does the Regeneration or the New Birth affect the spirit of the Believer’s mind? —PF

(Lord willing, more next month).

Pray daily for Pastor Curt Daniel of Faith Bible Church in Springfield, IL. You can visit his site at <http://faithbibleonline.net/index.html>

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Do you say, “I cannot believe”? Have you asked for faith? Is your heart hard? Have you asked to have it softened? If you cannot come to Christ with a broken heart, come *for* a broken heart, for it is His gift. He will give you all—all that His Gospel demands, for He is Alpha and Omega, the Author and the Finisher of our faith. It is an easy yoke, then, since He *gives* what He *requires*! That the yoke of Christ is easy, I might call to witness all those who have ever proved it. Never did a man wear it, but he always loved to wear it!—CHS



*A Warning***22 Marks of Religious Declension**

**When** you are reluctant to religious conversation and the company of serious, heavenly-minded Christians, and enjoy yourself best with men of the world. **When** from preference you are absent from meetings for prayer, confine yourself to Sabbath meetings, are easily detained from them, and are ready to excuse such neglects. **When** you are afraid to seriously consider certain duties lest your conscience rebuke past neglect and insists on fidelity. **When** it is more your object, in doing duty, to pacify conscience than to honor Christ, obtain spiritual profit, or do good to others. **When** you have an over-critical spirit respecting preaching; are dissatisfied with the manner as inelegant, too plain, too intelligent, or not according to some favorite model; or with the matter as too doctrinal, or too perceptive; or when you complain of it as too close, or are suspicious of personality. **When** you are more afraid of being accounted strict, than of sinning against Christ by negligence in practice and unfaithfulness “to your Lord and Master.” **When** you have little fear of temptations, and can trifle with spiritual danger. **When** you thirst for the complacency of men of the world, and are more anxious to know what they think or say of you than whether you honor the Savior in their sight. **When** scandals to religion are more the subject of your censure than of your secret grieving and prayer before God, and faithful endeavors for their removal. **When** you are more afraid to encounter the scorn of an offending man by rebuking sin than of offending God by silence. **When** you are more bent on being rich than holy. **When** you cannot receive deserved reproof for faults, are unwilling to confess them, and justify yourself. **When** you are impatient toward the frailties, misjudgments and faults of others. **When** your reading of the Bible is formal, hasty, lesson-wise, or merely intellectual and unattended with self-application; or when you read almost any book with more interest than the Book of God. **When** you have more religion abroad than at home; are apparently fervent when “seen of men,” but languid when seen only in the family or by God alone. **When** your religious taste is more for the new things of men, than for the old things of the treasury of God’s Word. **When** you call spiritual sloth and withdrawal from Christian activity by the names of prudence and peaceableness while sinners are going to destruction, and the Church suffering declension; unmindful that prudence can be united with Apostolic fidelity and peaceableness with most anxious seeking of the salvation of souls. **When**, because there is false zeal abroad, you will neither trust yourself nor others, even in that “fervency in spirit, serving the Lord” which Paul taught and practiced. **When** you are secretly more gratified at the falls of some professor of religion, than grieved for the wounds he inflicts upon Christ. **When**, under chastisement of Providence, you think more of your sufferings than your deserts, and look more for relief than purification from sin. **When** you confess, but do not forsake besetting sin. **When** you acknowledge, but still neglect duty.—From the “Free Presbyterian Magazine,” author unknown. (Gleaned from Brother A. W. Pink’s *Studies in the Scriptures*, December, 1933).

**MY THOUGHTS  
ON  
CHRISTMAS**

By Daniel E. Parks

I am not overly fond of the manner in which the world has traditionally celebrated Christmas. I certainly do not recognize it as the birth date of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Nor do I find in Holy Scriptures any exhortation to celebrate His birth, nor any intimation that it occurred on the date men have appointed for it. I recognize that much associated with Christmas has no real connection to Jesus Christ, and that much that is presently associated with it arose out of paganism.

But neither am I a Scrooge regarding Christmas. I delight in having the holiday so that I may spend time with my loved ones. I delight in the feasts and fellowship we enjoy during that season. I delight in giving and receiving gifts, and in seeing the wide eyes of children as they open theirs. I delight in the sales merchants provide during that season. I delight in the spirit of good cheer so prevalent in our society during that season—but wish it prevailed also during the rest of the year.

I delight in knowing that many people who very rarely attend a worship service will indeed be present on the Sunday of that season. I delight in that rare opportunity to present the Gospel of Christ to them, and hope for another such opportunity before Easter.

I am amused at the paranoia regarding Christmas presently and increasingly exhibited in certain “politically correct” sections of our society. Cities and towns are forbidding from their parades, floats displaying a Christian theme. Schools are forbidding students to utter the name of Christ in their programs. Some retail stores have begun forbidding the Salvation Army to collect money for the needy in its Christmas pots—and I am boycotting such stores. Christmas itself is being *excluded* in an attempt to make the holiday *inclusive*.

I refuse to exclude Christ from the Christmas season. However, I will not make more of Him during this season than I would at any other time. I will not confine acknowledging His birth to just one day of the year. Rather, I will celebrate every day the goodness of God for the Incarnation of His Son. I will not confine to this one season the singing of carols such as *Joy to world! The Lord is come!* Rather, I will carol His coming throughout the year.

I will rejoice that many people are acknowledging His birth. However, I will endeavor to ascertain that they know the reason why He was born, and that the *reason* for His birth is of far greater importance than the mere *fact* of His birth. “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (Galatians 4:4f). “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief” (1 Timothy 1:15).

I therefore will celebrate during this season not only the birth of Jesus Christ, but also His death, burial, Resurrection, and exaltation to Glory. And I will exhort people to believe and obey the truth regarding Christ’s First Coming, for He will, at His Second Coming judge them according to whether or not they have done so (Acts 10:34-43).—December 7, 2004



# Letters to Mike Gendron Of Proclaiming the Gospel:

ptg@pro-gospel.org ~ www.pro-gospel.org  
PO BOX 940871, PLANO, TX 75094

**Darwin, Internet, writes**—You think so highly of yourself and you think you know the right interpretation of the Bible. I would love to see your degrees and where you get your knowledge. It is not from the Bible because you use it to twist the words to support your theology. Why are you spending your life fighting the Church that Jesus established under St. Peter, the first Pope? Your heresy has been around for many years. You think you are God, and you can do whatever you want, and lead thousands of people down your path. I have been born again for 36 years and know the Bible better than you do. I think Satan is joyful through all of this. You are his kind of man. He wants to destroy the Catholic Church. He knows how to lie and has lied to you for many years. The Catholic Church has a billion people and many of them are good people. I hope God forgives you for your arrogance and pride. People who are former Catholics might follow you, but then they were never Catholic in the first place. I will pray for you when I pray for the enemies of Jesus Christ. God bless. Darwin, Internet

**Brother Mike makes an observation**—This is one of many letters we receive each month that show how religious pride blinds people from the light of the Gospel, and the glory of our all-sufficient Savior. All we can do is point them to Christ and His Word, and pray for the veil of blindness to be removed (2 Cor 3:16).

**S.A. Hartford, WI, writes**—I recently saw you on VCY America. You woke me up from my apathy! I never understood how important it is to be a witness for Christ until I heard you on radio. I live in a senior citizen apartment building that is full of Roman Catholics with a Catholic church across the street. I would like to order your Roman Catholicism: Scripture vs. Tradition tracts to share with others.

**Terry, Internet writes**—When you were at Calvary Bible in Michigan I got your CD messages and gave them to friends who had Catholic friends who gave them to a lady who was just saved out of the Catholic Church. She heard your messages and was greatly inspired, and reported back that "he was on the money on every issue." She then passed them on to a Christian friend who has a daughter engaged to marry a Catholic man. We are waiting to hear the response. Just wanted to let you know that what you are doing is touching lives.

**N.M., Weaubleau, MO, writes**—The Catholic Church and Protestant Churches are God's two witnesses on earth. Lay off your Catholic Brothers. We're in this battle together.

**Brother Mike answers**—Not according to God's Word. His two witnesses are His chosen people—the Jews and His True Church (Isaiah 43:10; Acts 1:8). Roman Catholics who deny the sufficiency of Christ's redeeming work are not my Brothers in Christ. It is the duty of all Christians to tell such people that they have no part or portion in the things of God (Acts 8:20-22). I will continue to call Catholics to repent and believe the Gospel (Mark 1:15).

**A note from Brother Mike**—Shortly after Billy Graham and Mitt Romney met for prayer at Graham's Montreat, North Carolina, home, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association scrubbed prior references to Mormonism as a cult from its website. The association said, "we do not wish to participate in a theological debate about something that has become politicized during this campaign." In a section of the website called Billy Graham's My Answer there had been the question, "What is a cult?" Answer: "A cult is any group which teaches doctrines or beliefs that deviate from the biblical message of the Christian faith. Some of these groups are Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, the Unification Church, Unitarians, Spiritualists, and others." **This page has now been removed from the site.**

**PRAY DAILY  
FOR OUR BROTHERS  
AND SISTERS IN PRISONS.  
ASK FATHER  
TO USE THEM FOR  
HIS HONOR AND GLORY.**

**O, Brothers and Sister,  
you who have been saved by Sovereign Grace,  
pray that our  
Master's Holy Spirit will bring  
millions  
enslaved to the  
Roman Catholic Church  
to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ!**

**Christian missionaries  
are dying all over the  
world for the sake of  
Jesus Christ.  
Are you praying for  
them?**

# BAPTISM/CIRCUMCISION

By Charles H. Spurgeon

It is often said that the ordinance of Baptism is analogous to the ordinance of circumcision. I will not controvert that point, although the statement may be questioned.

But supposing it to be, let me urge upon every Believer here to see to it that in his own soul he realizes the spiritual meaning both of circumcision and Baptism—and then consider the outward rites—for the thing *signified* is vastly more important than the sign.

Baptism sets forth far more than circumcision! Circumcision is putting away of the filth of the flesh, but Baptism is the *burial* of the flesh altogether! Baptism does not say, “Here is something to be taken away,” but *everything is dead* and must be buried with Christ in His tomb, and the man must rise anew with Christ.

Baptism teaches us that by death we pass into the new life. As Noah’s Ark, passing through the death of the old world, emerged into a new world, even so, by a like figure, Baptism sets forth our salvation by the Resurrection of Christ—a Baptism of which Peter says, it is “not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God.”

In Baptism, the man avows to himself and others that he comes by death into newness of life according to the words of the Holy Spirit, “Buried with Him in Baptism, in which also you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised Him from the dead.” The most valuable point is the *spiritual* meaning, and on that we experience what it is to be dead to the world—to be dead and buried with Christ—and then to be risen with Him!

Still, Brothers and Sisters, Abraham was not allowed to say, “If I get the *spiritual* meaning, I can do without the outward rite.” He might have objected to that rite on a thousand grounds, a great deal more strongly than any which the hesitating have urged against Baptism—but he first accepted the *rite*, as well as the thing which it intended, and straightaway was circumcised!

And so I exhort you, Brothers and Sisters, to be obedient to the precept upon Baptism, as well as attentive to the Truth of God which it signifies. If you are, indeed, buried with Christ and risen with Him, despise not the outward and instructive sign by which this is set forth.

“Well,” says one, “a difficulty suggests itself as to your views”—for an argument is often drawn from, “that inasmuch as Abraham must circumcise all his seed, we ought to baptize all our children.” Now, observe the *type* and interpret it not according to *prejudice*, but according to *Scripture*. In the *type*, the seed of Abraham are circumcised. You draw the inference that all typified by the seed of Abraham ought to be baptized, and I do not quibble at the conclusion.

But I ask you, who are the true seed of Abraham? Paul answers in Romans 9:8—“They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” As many as *believe* in the Lord Jesus Christ, whether they are Jews or Gentiles, are Abraham’s seed!

Whether eight days old in Divine Grace, or more or less—every one of Abraham’s seed has a right to Baptism. But I deny that the unregenerate, whether children or adults, are of the spiritual seed of Abraham. The Lord will, we trust, call many of them by His Grace—but as yet they are “heirs of wrath, even as others.”

At such time as the Spirit of God shall sow the good seed in their

hearts, they are of Abraham’s believing seed—but they are not so while they live in ungodliness and unbelief, or are as yet incapable of faith or repentance.

The answering person in *type* to the seed of Abraham is, by the confession of everybody, the Believer. And the Believer ought, seeing he is buried with Christ *spiritually*, to prove that fact by his *public* Baptism in water according to the Savior’s own precept and example.

“Thus,” said Christ, “it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness,” as He went down to the river Jordan. At the Jordan was He sprinkled? Why go down to a river to be *sprinkled*? Why did He go down into the water to be *sprinkled*? “Us.” Did He mean babies? Was He a baby? Was not He, when He said “us,” speaking of the faithful who are in Him? “And thus it becomes *us* to fulfill all righteousness”—that is, all His saints.

But how does Baptism fulfill all righteousness? Typically thus—It is the picture of the whole work of Christ. There is His immersion in suffering; there is His death and burial; there is His coming up out of the water representing His Resurrection. His coming up the banks of Jordan represents His Ascension. It is a typical representation of how He fulfilled all righteousness, and how the saints fulfilled it in Him.

But, Brothers and Sisters, I did not intend to go so far into the outward sign, because my soul’s deepest desire is this, that as Abraham, by the outward sign was taught that there was a putting away of the filth of flesh, which must be, or death must follow—so are we taught by Baptism that there is an actual death to the world, and a resurrection with Christ, which must be to every Believer, however old or however young—or he has no part or lot in the matter of consecration to God, or, indeed, in salvation itself!—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #845, Vol. 14—*Consecration to God—Illustrated by Abraham’s Circumcision*—Read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of Spurgeon’s sermon in Modern English, and over 475 Spanish translations at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).

## Hot Mince Pies, French Fries, And Christians...

Look at many Christians. I call them Christians, for they call themselves so. A boy in the streets, selling mince pies, kept crying, “Hot mince pies!” A person bought one of them, and found it quite cold. “Boy,” he said, why do you call these pies hot?” “That’s the name they go by, Sir,” said the boy. So there are plenty of people who are called Christians, but they are not Christians—that’s the name they go by—all the substance is drained out of them by other matters. You see the shape of a Christian, the make of a Christian, and some of the talk of a Christian, but the *fruit* of a Christian is not there. That is the result of the choking by the thorns of care, riches, pleasure, and worldliness in general.—CHS



Reflections is a Christian meditation sent by Action Uganda Ministries, and is meant to instruct, encourage and edify.

## THE MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECT — Part 2

*“Men ought always to pray.”  
Luke 18:1.*

I have carefully looked over the lives of God’s saints in the Bible. I cannot find one of whose history is much told us, from Genesis to Revelation, who was not a man of prayer. I find it mentioned as a characteristic of the godly that they “call on the Father,” that they “call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.” I find it recorded as a characteristic of the wicked that they “call not upon the LORD” (1 Peter 1:17; 1 Cor 1:2; Psa 14:4).

I have read the lives of many eminent Christians who have been on earth since the Bible days. Some of them, I see, were rich, and some poor. Some were learned, and some unlearned. Some of them were Episcopalians, some Presbyterians, some Baptists, some Independents. Some were Calvinists, and some not. Some have loved to use a liturgy, and some to use none. But one thing, I see, they all had in common. They have all been *men of prayer*...

I do not deny that a man can pray without heart, and without sincerity. I do not pretend for a moment to say that the mere fact of a person praying proves everything about his soul. As in every other part of religion, so also in this—there is plenty of deception and hy-

pocrisy.

But this I *do* say—that not praying is clear proof that a man is not yet a true Christian. He cannot really feel his sins; he cannot love God; he cannot feel himself a debtor to Christ; he cannot long after holiness; he cannot desire Heaven. He has yet to be born-again. He has yet to be made a new creature. He may boast confidently of election, Grace, faith, hope, and knowledge, and deceive ignorant people, but you may rest assured, it is all vain talk *if he does not pray*.

I say furthermore that of all the evidences of real work of the Spirit, a habit of hearty private prayer is one of the most satisfactory that can be named. A man may preach from false motives. A man may write books, make fine speeches, seem diligent in good works, and yet be a Judas Iscariot. But a man seldom goes into his closet and pours out his soul before God in secret unless he is in earnest. The Lord Himself has set His stamp on prayer as the best proof of a true conversion. When he sent Ananias to Saul in Damascus, He gave him no other evidence of [Saul’s] change of heart than this—“Behold, he prays” (Acts 9:11).

I know that the elect of God are chosen to salvation from all eternity. I do not forget that the Holy Spirit, Who calls them in due time, in many instances leads them by very slow degrees to acquaintance with Christ...I cannot call any one justified until he believes. I dare not say that any one believes until he prays...The first act of faith will be to speak to God. Faith is to the soul what life is to the body. Prayer is to faith what breath is to life. How a man can live and not breathe is past my comprehension, and how a man can believe and not pray is past my comprehension too.—J.C. Ryle (1816-1900) from *Practical Religion*, Banner of Truth Trust, [www.banneroftruth.org](http://www.banneroftruth.org)

## PREACHER, DO YOU EXPECT A HARVEST?

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

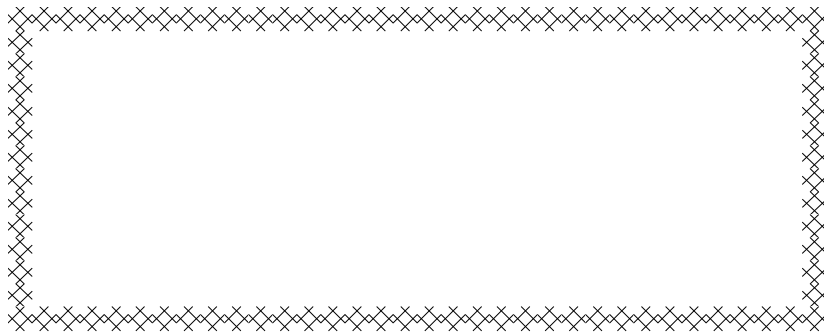
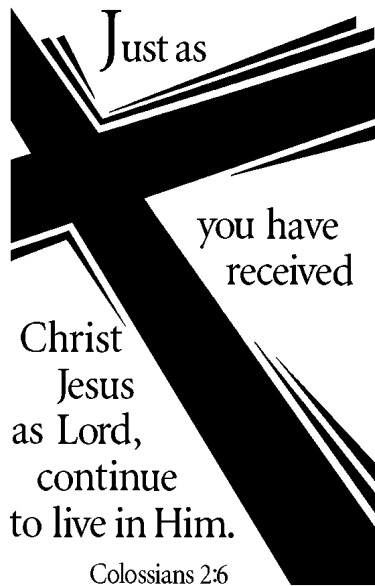
The joy of the Church in receiving converts may be compared to the joy in harvest. In all nations, the time of reaping the corn, and gathering it into the garner has been regarded as a festival. What is the joy of harvest?

Well, it is *a joy which we ought to expect*. The farmer expects a harvest. He says, “It is so many weeks to harvest.” He sows his seed with a view to harvest; he hires men to clear out the weeds with a view to a harvest. Well, now, every Church should be looking for a *spiritual* harvest. One said to me, once, “I have preached for several years, and I believe God has blessed the Word, but nobody ever comes forward to tell me so.” I said to him, “Next Lord’s-Day say to the people, ‘I shall be in the vestry when the sermon is finished, to see friends who have been converted.’” To his surprise, 10 or 12 came in—and he was quite taken aback—but, of course, quite delighted! He had not looked for a harvest, so of course he did not get one!

You know the story I tell of my first student, Mr. Medhurst. He went out to preach on Tower Hill, Sunday after Sunday. He was not, then, my student, but one of the young men in the Church. He came to me and said, “I have been out preaching, now, for several months on Tower Hill, and I have not seen one conversion.” I said to him, rather sharply, “Do you expect God is going to bless you every time you choose to open your mouth?” He answered, “Oh, no, Sir! I do not expect Him to do that.” “Then,” I replied, “that is why you do not get a blessing.” We ought to *expect* a blessing! God has said, “My Word shall not return to Me void”—and it will not! We ought to look for a harvest! He who preaches the Gospel with his whole heart, ought to be surprised if he does not hear of conversions—and he ought to begin to say in his heart, “I will know the reason why,” and never stop till he has found it out. The joy of the harvest is what we have a right to *expect*.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #2256, Vol. 38—*HARVEST JOY*—Read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of Spurgeon’s sermon in Modern English, and over 475 Spanish translations at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).



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



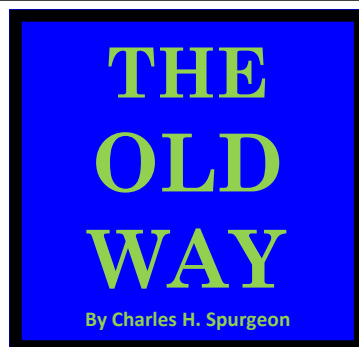
**Pray for the spouses and children of men and women in prisons.**

**In This Issue...**

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

The old way which wicked men have trod is *a way of unbelief*. Noah was sent to tell those ancient sinners that the world would be destroyed by a flood. They thought him an old fool, and mocked him to scorn; for 120 years that “preacher of righteousness” continually lifted up his warning voice; he threatened that the world would certainly be deluged, and the ungodly sons of men would surely be swept away. He pointed to the ark of safety which he was building in testimony against them, and besought them to humble themselves, and break off their sins by righteousness—but they would not believe the Prophet, preacher of righteousness though he was. They turned his most earnest words into jests, and his tender invitations were made the subject of their scorn.

This was the old way, and the old way has not lost its pilgrims. In different forms and different ways, the atheism of the human heart still continues to discover itself, yes, and discover itself in Christian congregations, too. You who are unconverted surely do not believe that



you will be condemned by the righteous Justice of God, or you would not be so much at ease. If you solemnly believed in the Justice of God, you would not dare to bring it down upon your heads! If you really and in very truth believed in the Great Assize, and in the Judge of All, you would not spend your lives in violation of the Law, and in bringing upon yourself the penalty!

Oh, if you believed that there is a Hell for such as die out of Christ, you would be afraid to remain out of Christ another day! You would seek your chambers, fall upon your knees, and cry to God for mercy, that He would now accept you, and let you be recon-

ciled to Him through His blood. Alas, you hear of God's anger, and you profess to believe in it, but you act like infidels—and as you act, so you are! This old way of disbelief has always ended in confusion, for the Flood did come, and their disbelief could not arrest its rising. The angry waters burst out from their lairs like beasts of prey, hungry for human life, and the rebellious race was utterly destroyed! Even thus most surely shall the vengeance of God overtake us, whether we believe it or not, unless we fly to Christ, the Ark, and are housed in Him from the coming tempest.—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Ages Software—Sermon #859, Vol. 15—*THE OLD WAY OF THE WICKED*—Read/download by God's Grace, all 63 volumes of Spurgeon's sermon in Modern English, and over 475 Spanish translations at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).

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