

Spurgeon on Colossians

SPURGEON ON COLOSSIANS

Colossians 1:16 Christ the Creator Sermon Notes

ANY theme which exalts the Savior is precious to the saints.

This is one in which the preacher cannot hope to do more than to show how vastly his theme is above him.

All things were created by God and for him, yet by Jesus and for him, because he is truly God and one with the Father.

I. CONSIDER THE STATEMENT ITSELF.

1. Heaven itself was created by and for Christ Jesus.

There is such a place as well as such a state, and of that place Jesus is the center. Enoch and Elijah in their bodies are there, Jesus as man is there, and there all his people will be. God, as a pure Spirit, needed no such place, nor angels, for everywhere they would see God.

It was created for Jesus and for the people whom he will bring there to be one forever with himself.

It exists by Jesus and for Jesus.

Everything in heaven prepared by Jesus. He is the designer of it.

Everything in heaven reflects Jesus. He is the soul of it.

Everything in heaven praises Jesus. He is the King of it.

2. The angels. All their ranks were made by him and for him.

To worship him and glorify him with their adoration.

To rejoice with him and in him, as they do when sinners repent.

To guard Christ's people in life and bring them to him in death.

To carry out his purposes of judgment, as with Pharaoh, etc.

To achieve his purposes of deliverance, as Peter from prison.

3. This world was made by him to be:

A place for him to live and die upon.

A stage for his people to live and act upon.

A province to be fully restored to his dominion.

A new world in the ages to come to bless other worlds, if such there be, and to display forever the glories of Jesus.

4. All the lower creatures are for Jesus. "And that are in earth."

They are needful to man and so to our Lord's system of grace.

They are illustrations of Christ's wisdom, power, and goodness.

They are to be treated kindly for his sake.

5. Men were created by and for Christ.

That he might display a special phase of power and skill, in creating spiritual beings embodied in material forms.

That he might become himself one of them.

That he might himself be the head of a remarkable order of beings who know both good and evil, are children of God, are bound to God by ties of gratitude, and are one with his Son.

That for these he might die to save them, and to make them his companions, friends, and worshippers forever.

That human thrones, even when occupied by wicked men, might be made to subserve his purpose by restraint or by overruling.

II. REVIEW THE REFLECTIONS HENCE ARISING.

1. Jesus, then, is God. "By him were all things created."

2. Jesus is the clue of the universe, its center and explanation. All things are to be seen in the light of the cross, and all things reflect light on the cross. For him all things exist.

3. To live to Jesus, then, is to find out the true object of our being and to be in accord with all creation.

4. Not living to Jesus, we can have no blessing.

5. We can only live for him as we live by him, for so all things do.

6. It is clear that he must triumph. All is going well. If we look at history from his throne, all things are "for him." "He must reign." Let us comfort one another with these words.

What an honor to be the smallest page in the retinue of such a prince!

Words of Homage

When the Christian martyr Pionius was asked by his judges, "What God dost thou worship?" he replied, "I worship him who made the heavens, and who beautified them with stars, and who has enriched the earth with flowers and trees." "Dost thou mean," asked the magistrates, "him who was crucified (illum dicis qui crucifixus est)? Certainly," replied Pionius, "him whom the Father sent for the salvation of the world." As Pionius died, so died Blandina and the whole host of those who in the first three centuries, without knowing anything of the Nicene creed, held it implicitly, if not explicitly, and proclaimed it in flames and in dungeons, in famine and in nakedness, under the rack and under the sword. — Joseph Cook

In creation God shows us his hand, but in redemption God gives us his heart. — Adolphe Monod

What sublime views does this subject (the creation of angels) furnish us of the greatness of Christ! By him, says the apostle, were all those illustrious beings created, together with all their attributes, importance, and dignity. The character of every workman is seen, of course, in the nature of the work, which he has made. If this be insignificant and worthless, it exhibits nothing but the insignificance and worthlessness of the maker. If curious and excellent, if sublime and wonderful, it unfolds strongly and certainly his greatness, wisdom, and glory. Of what faculties are angels the subjects! Of what intelligence, purity, power, loveliness, and elevation of mind! What, then, must be the perfections of him who contrived and formed angels, who with a word called them into being, who preserves, informs, directs, controls, and blesses them for ever! Great and excellent as they are, they are exhibited as "unclean in his sight" and as "charged with folly" before him. How amazing, then, must be the perfection of his character! How great, how wise, how good! — Timothy Dwight

Paul would prevent the shadow of a doubt crossing our minds about our Lord having a right to the divine honors of the Creator. "By him," he says, "all things were created"; and as if an angel, standing at his side when he penned these words, had stooped down to whisper in his ear that men, attempting to rob Jesus of his honor, would rise to throw doubt upon that truth and explain it away, to make the truth still more plain, he adds, "that are in heaven, and that are in earth." Not content with that, he uses yet more comprehensive terms; and to embrace all the regions of God's universe above the earth and beyond the starry bounds of heaven, he adds, "visible and invisible." Nor leaves his task till, sweeping the highest and the lowest things, men and worms, angels and insects, all into Christ's hands, he adds, "whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." — Dr. Guthrie

It was well said of a heathen, Si essem lusciniæ: If I were a nightingale, I would sing as a nightingale; si alauda— If I were a lark, I would soar as a lark. Since I am a man, what should I do but know, love, and praise God without ceasing, and glorify my Creator? Things are unprofitable or misplaced when they do not seek or serve their end; therefore, for what use are we meet, if we are unmeet for our proper end? We are like the wood of the vine, good for nothing, not so much as to make a pin whereon to hang

anything (Ezek. 15:2); good for nothing but to be cast into the fire unless it be fruitful. What are we good for if we be not serviceable to the ends for which we were created? — Thomas Manton

Colossians 1:13 Deliverance from the Power of Darkness

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“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.”—Colossians 1:13.

Darkness is used in Scripture to express a great many things. Sometimes it represents sorrow. “A night of weeping” is a common expression among us. We speak, too, of “walking in darkness, and seeing no light.” We commonly say to one another, that our minds are in a dark and gloomy state when we are surrounded by the fogs and mists of sorrow. Taking it in this sense, how often might we say of our heavenly Father, that he “hath delivered us from the power of darkness”? He has helped us in our temporal difficulties and circumstances, or he has whispered, “As thy days so shall thy strength be,” and he has turned our night of weeping into a morning of gladness, put away the sackcloth and ashes, and given us the oil of joy. Blessed be his name for all this! Let us not be ungrateful, nor forget the many times when he has turned our mourning into dancing, and our sackcloth into scarlet and fine linen.

But darkness frequently signifies, too, in Scripture ignorance. We were once so in darkness that we were ourselves blinded. “The God of this world” hath blinded our eyes, lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine in upon us. “We who were sometimes darkness, are now light in the Lord.” Christ’s mission had for one of its many gracious purposes and ends the taking away of the darkness of human ignorance, and the pouring of light upon the intellect of man. I thank God that many of us, though we know comparatively but little, do know that, whereas we were once blind, now we see. We do know something of ourselves, so as to be humbled, and we know, too, something of the gracious God, so as to rejoice that we are saved by him. God has, therefore, delivered us, in that sense, from the power of darkness. Let us be thankful for that. Pant for more knowledge, but oh! believer, be grateful for what you have. Remember that the little you already know of saving truth is inestimably precious, for to know Jesus Christ is eternal life; and if, on this side of the grave, you never learn any more, yet you know that which should set your tongue eternally in holy motion with a rapturous song of thankfulness to him who has taught you such priceless truth. Yes, “he hath delivered us from the power of darkness.”

Darkness, too, frequently represents Satan, and the mysterious spiritual influence which he exerts upon the human mind. He is called “the prince of darkness.” Darkness seems to be his element. God is the “Father of Lights,” but Satan seems to be the father of the gloom and the dark.

Two elements are now at war in this lower world: Christ, the Light, the true light, and Satan—sin—thick darkness, a darkness which may be felt, the Egyptian darkness in which we are naturally born, and out of which we are not delivered, except by the supernatural power of God, exhibited through the plan of salvation by his grace. Beloved, we still are tempted by Satan, but we are not under his power; we have to fight with him, but we are not his slaves. He is not our king; he has no rights over us; we do not obey him; we will not listen to his temptations. By the grace of God, we mean, notwithstanding all his opposition, to fight in his very teeth, and to win our way to heaven. He “hath delivered us from the power of darkness.” Oh! what a mercy this is—that man, such a poor creature as he is, should be able to escape from the power of that master-spirit Diabolus, Satan, the destroyer! That was a wonderful moment when, according to Bunyan’s description, Hopeful and Christian found that the key was turned in the lock and that they could get out of Giant Despair’s castle. That was a wonderful moment, I say, when, according to Master Bunyan, the key turned in the great lock which locked the iron gate. To use John Bunyan’s own words, he says, “That lock went damnable hard.” In all the new editions of “Pilgrim’s Progress,” it is put, “That lock went desperate hard.” That is the more refined way of putting it, but John Bunyan meant just what he said, and implied that there was a sense of the wrath of God upon the soul of man on account of sin, so that he felt as if he were near even to perdition itself. And yet, at such a time, the key did turn in the lock, and the iron gate was opened. You recollect that just at the moment old Giant Despair woke up, and was going to pursue the pilgrims, and lay hold upon them, when he was seized with one of his fainting-fits. Oh! what an escape from Giant Despair! And yet this is little compared with escaping from Satan! Satan is the prince of the power of the air, and human despair is but one of his servants, one of the black officers in his infernal regiment. To escape from Satan himself!—oh! let it be sung in heaven! Let angels who have never fallen help us to sing in triumph over those fallen spirits from whom we have been rescued by divine grace. “He hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of God’s dear Son.”

I prefer, however, tonight, as we cannot talk about all these things, and the field is so very wide, to consider the word “darkness”

here, in the restricted meaning of sin. Sin is a tremendous moral and spiritual darkness, which has overspread the human mind, but we are told in the text, and we have felt it in our personal experience, that "he hath delivered us from the power of darkness."

Let us speak, first, of the power of darkness, from which we are delivered; secondly, upon the statement here made concerning it; and thirdly, of the inferences which inevitably flow from the statement.

First, then, let us speak a little upon:—

I. The Power Of Sin, From Which We Have Been Delivered, as it is here set forth, under the suggestive image of "the power of darkness."

What is "the power" of darkness? I suppose everyone will admit that it is a power which tends towards slumber. It is a composing power. God has given us the night in which to sleep. Whether or not there be any absolute power in darkness to engender sleep I do not know, but I do know this, that it is much easier, when reclining on your bed, to sleep in the dark than it is to sleep in the full glare of the sun. There seems to be some sedative influence about darkness, something which assists a man to fall into a state of inaction, which we call "sleep." Now, beloved, look upon the race of men. They are under the Power of darkness, and in consequence they sleep. Does not the apostle say to us who are delivered from that power, "Let us not sleep as do others"? "They that sleep," saith he, "sleep in the night," that being the proper time for sleep—the night with its raven-wing seeming to engender sleep—"but let us that are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of love." If you look abroad in the world, I say, you will see men, under the soporific influence of sin, given to slumber. Do you believe that men would go on to sin as they do, if it were not that sin stultifies them, prevents their using their reason, drowns their conscience, and will not permit them really to judge accurately concerning things that differ? Why, can you imagine that a man would run the risk of everlasting misery for the sake of a few days of carnal delight, if he were not, by some means or other, besotted, and made a fool of, by sin! Can you conceive that a man would hear the tidings of pardoning mercy through Jesus Christ, and be solemnly assured that if he turned from the error of his ways, God would accept and receive him, and that then he would treat that message with levity, and go his way, even to ridicule it, if it were not that sin has made him so unreasonable, even in these matters, and made him, if not an idiot, a madman, so that he will not think? He willfully chooses his own mischief, ruins himself, and that with a sort of Satanic malice against himself, as well as against God, choosing rather to inherit eternal misery than to give up the poor delights of time, choosing rather to feast upon the empty husks of this world, than to come and sit down at the table of mercy, and eat and drink of the grace which God has provided. So, then, it is very clear-observation shows it to us, and we also have felt it in ourselves—that sin has a soporific, a drowsing, a sleep-giving power. It makes men careless and indifferent. Makes them say, "I'll chance it! I do not care what the future may bring." It makes a man go right to the very edge of perdition, with his eyes blindfolded, and his heart like Nabal's heart, which was turned to stone—careless even of the "terrors of the Lord," and of "the wrath to come."

But blessed be his holy name! "he hath delivered us from the power of darkness." I hope we do not sleep. "Oh, Christian! if you are careless, if you are asleep, if tonight your heart is heavy and dull, I should like to come and whisper this right into your soul, "He hath delivered us from the power of darkness." We are now to be active, earnest, zealous, and full of devoted life. If they sleep who are unconverted, they only act according to nature. They are in the dark; they, therefore, sleep. What can they do otherwise? But you are in the light, you know that you are saved, you rejoice in Jesus Christ. Oh! sleep not, my brethren, but seeing that there are but a few hours in your day, work while the day lasts, and make it your pleasure and your delight to spend and to be spent in the service of him "who hath delivered us from the power of darkness."

A second power of darkness lies in concealment. It is the power of darkness to hide things. What a darkness we had last night! Trying to get home from ministering abroad, I thought I never should be able to find my way. One could hardly see one's hand in that dense fog, which encompassed one. Houses and trees that one would have known in a moment, and that would have told one where one was, were all concealed. One could see nothing. It would be a very small world, indeed, if it were no larger than what could then be seen. Darkness hides things. No matter how glorious yonder landscape may be as you stand upon the mountain's brow; if the sun has gone down, and if night has spread its wings over the whole, you can see nothing. It may be very well for the guide to tell you that yonder is a silver lake, and there the Black Forest, and that far away are the brows of mountains covered with their eternal snows, but you can see nothing; night has effectually blotted it all out. Now, the power of sin is just like that. It hides from the human mind what that mind ought to see. The man is lost, but he does not know it; he cannot see the rocks that are just ahead. The man has soon to stand before the bar of God and receive his sentence, but he does not know it; I mean his heart does not know it. He trifles on, caring for none of these things. As for the plague that is in him in his ruined state, he does not believe it. He hears the truth that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, but he is indifferent to it, and as to the dear and precious things of the covenant of grace, he does not care for them. No matter how rich may be the mercy, nor how pure the consolation, he knows nothing at all about them, for he is in the dark. It is all dark, dark, dark with him, amid the blaze of noon.

I think I may honestly and humbly say that I do try to speak as plainly as any man can speak, and care nothing about mighty fine

words, and yet I do not doubt but that scores come into this house and go out of it, saying, "Well, I do not understand it!" How could they? They are under the power of sin, which makes the plainest truth perplexing, and hides from their eyes that which the merest babe in grace can plainly see.

But, beloved, "he hath delivered us from the power of darkness." Now we can see, blessed be his name! The first sight we had so alarmed us that we almost wished we could not see; it was a sight so terrible; but when, afterwards, we looked to Jesus upon the cross, and found there was life for that look at the Crucified One, and when since then we have learned to look continually to him, and to find in his wounds our healing, and in his death our life—oh! I hope we are thanking God every moment of our existence that "he hath delivered us from the power of darkness."

Now we can see in him our Father, who was once to us "the unknown God." Now we can see in Jesus, to whom we were once strangers, our own dear Elder Brother. Now we can look at the river of death without being alarmed at it, for beyond it we can see the turrets and pinnacles of the new Jerusalem, glittering with jasper and with carbuncle, and we are anticipating the happy day when we shall sing with the saints above. Sweet thought is it that, with these eyes of ours, we shall see our Savior! Yes, he hath delivered us from the concealing power of darkness.

In the third place, darkness has a depressing and an afflicting power. Are you not all conscious, if you are shut up in a dark room, that your mind seems to sink in the dark? Why, our little children, who are the simplest specimens of humanity—and let us know the truth at once—can hardly be punished more severely (though I hope we never do so punish them, for it would be very wicked to do so) than by being shut up in the dark. They cannot bear it, cannot endure it, and at first when the little one even goes to bed in the chamber alone in the dark, it feels afraid. What must not those persons have suffered who were shut up in the dungeons at Venice—dungeons below the wagger-mark of the canal, where not a ray of light, perhaps, ever did come, except the warder's candle—shut in there, hour after hour, unable to know the day from the night, but finding it one long and dreary night! The cruel oppressor would not have thought of it unless he had known that the darkness was so uncongenial to us, that it depresses our spirits. Now, when some men have eyes given to them, and are made really to see, sin is like darkness to them. Of course, it is not to some of you. A blind man sees as well in the dark, as he does in the light, but as soon as ever you get eyes, God begins to deal with you till you feel that sin is a darkness to you. Oh! what a darkness is this! Well do some of us remember when we walked in the darkness of our sin. We tried to kindle a fire, and to light ourselves with the sparks of our own good works, but we failed in every attempt, and we should have been in the thick Egyptian night even until now, if it had not been that he delivered us from the power of darkness. Now, we know that we still, alas! sin; but it does not fill us with despair, because there is an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous.

Now, we come to our Father every night, and, bowing low in reverence before him, we mourn that we have sinned during another day, but we do not mourn with a hopeless sorrow, for we remember that:-

**"There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."**

We know that when we were plunged into that fountain our foulest stains were cleansed right away, and now we give thanks unto the Father, who hath delivered us from the depressing power of sin. Oh! Christian, if you are downcast tonight about this, if you cannot say the text in this sense, go to your heavenly Father, pray to him, and ask him to enable you to look to Christ, just as you did at first. Perhaps you have too many good works of which to boast, and that is why you are so depressed. Throw them all away, and come now, as a poor, empty-handed sinner, having nothing to which to trust, but the finished work of Christ. You may depend upon it, that doing this, your peace will yet be like a river, because your righteousness, being Christ's imparted to you, will be like the waves of the sea. Then shall you sing, "Thanks be to him who hath delivered us from the depressing power of darkness."

I cannot dwell upon these points, though they are all interesting, but must now notice, fourthly, that there is what I may call the fascinating power of darkness. It is strange, but it is true, that there are many who love darkness. I said just now that this was contrary to nature, and so it is in one sense. Unfallen nature could not bear darkness, but fallen nature loves it. Hear what God says about it, "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." Night is the time of the world's merriment. Then the thief steals out to do his deeds of ill. "They that be drunken, be drunken in the night," and then is the time for "wantonness and chambering." As the apostle saith, it is the hour of evil. Darkness seems to be attractive to some men. Strange is it, but it is so. The fascinating power of sin is just like the fascinating power of darkness. I have sometimes thought that sin might well be compared to those serpents which fascinate their prey. It may be some poor little animal; the snake looks and looks, and the little creature, instead of running away, looks at those' bright, sparkling eyes, till the poor hare, or rabbit, or whatever it may be, instead of escaping, stands as though it were a statue, perfectly tranquil and fascinated with the glare of the serpent's eyes, and then in a moment the snake darts at it and devours its prey. So is it with sin, and there are some here, perhaps, who are under its fascinating

power to-night. They know, for they have often been told, that sin is their deadly enemy, and yet it is so pleasant, it is so enchanting, so enticing. As they picture the wizard as being able to strike men into stone, or able to make them do his will, so does sin seem to do, and then at last it destroys the man who once found pleasure in it. It is a cup-bearer to you, and comes with smiling face, and holds out the sparkling goblet and says, "Drink, my Lord! See the beaded bubbles sparkling on the rim! Drink! for it moveth itself aright and sparkleth. Drink! and it shall put a flush into your veins, and make your blood tingle and leap, and let you know a thrill and a joy you have never known before." And when you get the cup to your lip, you may not be able to take it away again, though, as you drink, it will scald the lips and throat, and burn the very vitals. And as you drink on, especially if you drink of the cup of lust, you shall feel another thrill that shall make the very bones to rot, and the very marrow to decay, till you wish you had never been born, and curse bitterly the day in which you came into this world. to be partaker of a poison so terrible, so loathsome, so like an ante-past of hell. Oh my God! grant that if there be any young man here who has already drunk of that cup, that by God's help he may dash it down, once and for ever. But it is fascinating, fearfully fascinating, and when once a man begins to drink of it, it is seldom that he stops, until he drains the very dregs of eternal ruin. But thanks be unto God, for "he hath delivered us from the power of darkness."

It cannot fascinate us now. I know thee! thou fair witch! I know thee, thou painted harlot! Though mightest have deceived me once, but I know thee now! My Savior has shown me superior charms. He has taught me the mischief that comes from loving the world, and the things thereof, and now thou temptest me in vain! I hope there are many here who can say, "He hath delivered us from the fascinating power of sin, from the power of darkness."

It cannot stop on this point, however, but must notice the fifth thing. There is about darkness an emboldening power to some men. Darkness makes the child afraid, but it makes the bad man bold.

It is in the dark that the lion comes out after his prey, and all the beasts of the field go forth to get their food. The sun would frighten them, but boldness comes to them with the darkness. And oh! there is a wonderfully emboldening power to some men in sin. Perhaps, my dear friend, you have come in here tonight, but you have said this afternoon that which you would not have said ten years ago! Ah! young woman, you have already done that which you would have shuddered to have done only one twelve months ago! Ah! merchant, you have already entered into a doubtful transaction which you would have scorned some months back. You see, you did wrong by little, and as you did one wrong, you got courage to do another, and another, and another. There is the darkness of sin over your minds; you have grown more bold in sin, but that is a poor courage which depends upon the darkness; it is, in fact, the darkness of Satan. It is because of his supreme darkness of mind and spirit, that Satan is the boldest of all spirits in contending with the God of heaven and earth. Beware of the brow of brass! It is a grand thing for a Christian to be like a pillar of iron against evil, but it is a mark of reprobation to become like an iron pillar against God and against truth: and some men do become such. They sin until habitude engenders a second nature. At first, when sin catches us in its net, it is with the tiniest spider's cobwebs, that can scarce be seen; and they seem as though you could break from them in a moment. Then they become silken bonds: then firmer still, until a man seems to be enveloped in a tangle of cables, and every cable hardens and becomes as iron or triple steel until at last there is no escaping, for sin gathers daily force until it getteth a monstrous power over men. Men will now say and laugh at a thing which once made them shudder, and do an action and then wipe their mouths and say, "Aha! aha!" An action which once he would no more have thought of doing than trying to mount without wings above the skies. Hazael said, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" And yet, dog or not, he did the very thing he thought it impossible for him to do. Now, I do trust, if we have been delivered from the power of sin in this respect, that we are no longer to be found doing wrong, and that if we have done wrong, we are humbled on account of it. Then should we be contrite and broken in spirit, and instead of boasting, snapping our fingers, and saying, "It is nothing," we should go to our beds ashamed, or go to our Father's face blushing, and mourning, and weeping, and saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." What a blessed thing it is to have a broken heart! Thank God for a tender conscience, and if you have one, never tamper with it. Oh! young man, never tamper with a tender conscience! It is such a blessing to have it. Oh! cultivate it, and pray the Lord to make your heart more and more tender concerning sin, that you may hate it with a perfect hatred. He hath delivered us from the power of sin.

Once more, and I shall leave this point. Darkness seems to have about it a kind of prophetic power. If we were not warned by our astronomers when an eclipse was coming, I have no doubt that half the world would be dreadfully frightened as soon as the sun became darkened. People would say to one another, "The judgment is coming." That is their general thought. If the day gets unusually dark, they think something horrible is going to happen, and they want to know whether this is not the time when the judgment may be expected, and so on. Darkness seems to be a prognostication of evil. Such is sin. My dear hearer, if thou hearest the voice of sin, it tells thee in thy sober moments—it cannot help telling thee—that there is a judgment to come. "Be sure your sin will find you out." "God will bring every work into judgment." For every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account at the last day. But the Christian knows that to him the darkness of sin prognosticates nothing of the kind. He stands beneath the cross of Christ, and he knows that sin spent itself upon Jesus upon that cross, so that it might not touch for a single moment the soul that believes in Jesus. Now, notwithstanding everything, the Christian can say, "I am forgiven; I am a monument of grace: I am a sinner saved by blood: I rejoice that for me sin has been put away, and I am, therefore, saved." Thus, "he hath delivered us from the power of darkness."

Now, I shall want your attention for a little upon the second truth found here, which is:—

II. The Statement Here Made Concerning The Power Of Darkness.

Observe that, in the first place, it is a statement full of assurance. "He hath delivered us." Paul does not say he hopes so, but definitely asserts, "who hath delivered us." Brethren and sisters, can we speak in the same positive manner? Let us not be content unless we call, for if we have believed in him, "he hath delivered us." If, indeed, our trust be in his finished work and perfect righteousness, then he hath delivered us. It is not a matter of argument, or a thing about which to raise a debate; it is so: it must be so, for every soul that is in Christ, he hath delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into his own kingdom.

Observe, again, it is a statement full of intelligence. The Person who uttered it knew what he was saying. He was a sound divine, for he says, "Who hath delivered us." He does not say, "We have got out of it somehow"; but "He hath delivered us." I wish some persons could have much clearer notions than they have about who it is that saves. If salvation comes of man—well, say so, and if sinners save themselves by all manner of means, give them the credit, the glory, the praise of it, but if it be God that saves, then let him have the sole and perfect honor of it. "Salvation is of the Lord." Sinner, you should not try to save yourself. You cannot do it. If you could, why did Christ come to save you? Your salvation does not rest in your hands. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." All the matter of salvation rests with the eternal Father, through Jesus Christ. He is the Alpha and the Omega of our salvation. The person who wrote this verse, then, it seems, was a sound divine, for he ascribes the glory where it ought to be ascribed. "Who hath delivered us."

Then, next, it is a statement full of gratitude. If you look at the connection, you find it says, "Giving thanks unto the Father." What a delightful grace gratitude is! It is such a heavenly thing to be thankful. I wish we spent a little more time about it, being dissolved by God's goodness, looking at all that he has done for us, and at all our demerit, which renders that love the more wonderful. What joy is there in gratitude—to fall speechless at the foot of the cross, and feel the thanks we cannot speak, or to stand up and sing, "Blessed be his name," or to tell out to others the loving kindness of the Lord, and to say, "He hath dealt graciously with me, and he will deal graciously with me." Brethren, be much in the sacred and holy palace of gratitude. You cannot have anything that will more strengthen you for service than holy thankfulness to God for his favors. We might have said a good deal more upon that last point, but we leave you to say it to yourselves, and so we will close with the third truth that shines here, namely:—

III. The Inferences That May Be Drawn From This Statement.

The first inference is a doctrinal one, but as I have already touched on this, I only briefly hint, and then leave it. Here it is. Deliverance from the power of sin is as much the work of God as deliverance from the guilt of sin. Where we look for justification, there also must we look for sanctification; for as we are justified through Jesus Christ, we must expect to receive sanctification from a heavenly source also. We cannot receive the one blessing through the spirit, and the other through the flesh. We would infer from the text, speaking doctrinally, that in order to our sanctification, and our deliverance from the power of sin, we must look to our heavenly Father, altogether and alone.

The next evidence is experimental. "He hath delivered us." Now, then, I ought to feel in my soul that I am so delivered, and if I do not so feel, I ought to be wretched until I do feel it, because this has been the experience of every true Christian sooner or later. He hath delivered us from the power. We may be in darkness sometimes, but it shall not have power over and enslave us. Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace. Let the experimental inference then be "I am resolved to be happy: yet I will—I will—rejoice in God, for he hath delivered."

The next inference is practical. If we are delivered from the power of darkness, do not let us put ourselves under its power again, and do not let us temporise with it. You would fancy, from the actions of some professors, that they were not delivered from the power of darkness at all, but were only helped to keep away from some conspicuous sin. When I hear some people talk about Fox-hunting Christians, card-playing Christians, Christians who are never at prayer-meeting, Christians who have no zeal for souls, it seems to me that they might just as well talk about angels who are not in heaven, or angels who never obey the voice of God! Why, these are sham Christians; they are not genuine Christians; they are of the world, and do the things of the world. We may conclude that their hearts and natures are worldly, for if they were spiritual they would love spiritual things, and their hearts would be engaged in spiritual exercises. Brethren, the grace of God has not come into us merely to keep us away from some few notable vices, but to deliver us altogether from the power of darkness, and if I can sometimes go into sin—just occasionally by way of pleasure, it proves that I am a stranger to the deliverance which Jesus Christ gives to his really called and regenerated people.

And now the last inference is a hopeful inference. If he hath delivered us from the powers of darkness, he will deliver us all the way through. If he has done this great thing for us, what will he not do for us? If he hath delivered us from the tremendous power of sin,

he will certainly deliver us from the power of death. If sin is taken away, why need we fear? Has he delivered us from the power of darkness? Then he will certainly help us in our daily-troubles. Did he give his own dear Son to put away our sin, and will he not give us bread and water? If he has covered our souls with the beautiful robe of righteousness that Christ has woven, will he let us want for ordinary raiment? Oh! let us be of good cheer. The good God of Grace cannot be a bad God of Providence. He who feeds so well on heavenly bread cannot starve us for lack of bodily bread. He hath delivered us. We have already received the greatest mercy, and you may be quite sure of the smaller ones. When Sir Francis Drake was overtaken by a storm in the Thames off Greenwich, "What," said he, "afraid of a storm? Been round the world three times, and afraid now of being drowned in a ditch? No!" And surely we who have circumnavigated a whole world of discipline and trouble, over whose heads the waves and billows have rolled, we do not mean to be drowned in this present trouble. Do you, my dear friend? You shall not perish in this ditch: you shall get safe home. He who has delivered you from the power of darkness will never withdraw his hand and help until he brings you within the pearly gates, puts the crown on your' head, and the palm-branch in your hand, the stow-white robe upon your shoulders, and the new song of everlasting joy into your mouth, even praise for evermore. Be of good courage, then.

And then there is this inference for some of you who are not converted. If God has delivered us, why should he not deliver you? Why, some of us who have been delivered seemed very unlikely-ever to be delivered. We did not want to be. We loved darkness rather than light, and yet he delivered us from it. We were, some, of us, very hard-hearted. Some of us had plunged very deep into sin. There are some here who are wonders of divine grace. They were once wonders of sin, and yet the love of God looked them up, and brought them out—fetched them from the bar of the gin-palace, fetched them out of the theater, brought them even from the brothel, some of them, and washed and cleansed them, and made them sit among God's people, and love his ways, and rejoice in his dear name. And why should not God do the same with you? I know twenty reasons why he should not, but I will tell you one thing he has said, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." So if you come to him, he will not cast out even you. The way to come to him is to trust him. That is, trust Christ to save you, and it is all done, and you are saved. That is the great work. When a soul, sensible of sin, sees that Christ, by his blood, made atonement, and comes and throws himself upon that sacrifice of the cross, then sin is pardoned. Then because the sin is pardoned, the forgiven sinner is grateful, and he says, "I will not go on in this sin." So he puts it away, and he is led into a life of holiness, by the mercy of God. Oh! that we could all say in the words of the text—and if we cannot all say it to-night, I hope we shall soon be able to do so—"Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and hath delivered us from the Power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

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Colossians 1:16 Christ the Creator

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"All things were created by him, and for him." — Colossians 1:16

There can be no mistake, as to the Person concerning whom Paul is writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; it is Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate Son of God, who was crucified on Calvary; for, writing concerning the same Person in the 14th verse, the apostle says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." It is, therefore, that Savior whose blood was shed for his people's redemption who is here declared to be the Creator of all things, and by whom all things consist.

The first verse of the Book of Genesis tells us, that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," so someone may ask, "How do you reconcile that statement with Paul's declaration that all things were created by Christ, and for him?" No reconciliation is needed, for the two statements are identical, as Jesus is God, and "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Jesus said, "I and my Father are one," and so they are. We know not how it is, but the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct personalities, yet there are not three Gods, but only one, as the apostle John writes, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." The one God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the Father, Son, and Spirit, three in one and one in three.

The subject I have to speak about is the honor and glory of the second Person of the blessed Trinity, even our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and it is so vast a theme that the preacher, at the outset, confesses that the task is too great for him to accomplish he

staggers beneath the weight of his theme, which seems to him too great for the human mind to compass or for human lips adequately to express. All I can hope to do is to be lost in my subject that Jesus Christ may be All-in-all.

The text tells us that all things were created by Christ, and for him, so we will, first, consider Paul's statement; and, secondly, we will review the rejections arising from it.

I. First, then, let us Consider Paul's Statement: All things were created by him, and for him."

So, first of all, heaven itself was created by and for Christ Jesus. Then, there is such a place, as well as such a state, and of that place Jesus is the center. There is such a place, for Enoch is there. "Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." God took him bodily to some place, and that place is heaven. Elijah also is there; the horses of fire and the chariot of fire took not merely his spirit, but the entire Elijah, and he is in heaven. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has gone back to heaven, went there in his own body. When he passed into the skies, he went up into the heavenly places, as well as into the heavenly state; and there he lives at the right hand of God, even the Father, enthroned in the new Jerusalem, the holy city of God.

**"See how the Conqueror mounts aloft,
And to his Father flies,
With scars of honor in his flesh,
And triumph in his eyes.**

**"There our exalted Savior reigns,
And scatters blessings down;
His Father well rewards his pains,
And bids him wear the crown."**

God, absolutely considered, as a pure spirit, needed no such place as heaven. God is everywhere; long ago he asked, "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" The idea of there being needed any celestial court or place of abode falls short of the true idea of the omnipresent Jehovah. Neither do I suppose that it would have been necessary to have a place for angels, for everywhere the holy spirits would have been able to behold the face of God; wherever they might be, there they would see God; and, consequently, no special place would have been needed to be set apart for them. But it was ordained, in the eternal purpose of God, that there should be created a race of beings who should not be pure spirits, but who should have bodies made of material substances; and it was resolved by Jesus Christ that he would become one of these beings, that he would take upon himself their nature, and would become, in fact, a man. Now, when a spirit becomes linked with a material substance, it must have a place in which to dwell; and, therefore, heaven was created both for Christ and for his people. When the Son of man shall come in his glory, he will say to those on his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," prepared, that is, with this view, that there might be a special central place for the display of Christ's glory, and that all his people might be there with him. These are his own words: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." They are not merely to be, as he is, but to be with him where he is; and, therefore, heaven was created, by him, and for him, and for his people who are vitally united with him.

O beloved, when we get to heaven, we shall see that everything there glows with the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! The print of his pierced hand will be upon everything. The city of pure gold was created by him, and created for him. The foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones by him, and for him; the jasper, and sapphire, and emerald, and beryl, and all the rest, and the gates of pearl are all for him, all shall be to his glory. For him each harp of gold, each palm of victory, each shout of victory, each Song of adoration, all heaven shall ring with the praises of Jesus. Heaven shall be, as it were, set with mirrors, in every one of which you will be able to see a reflection of the glorious person of Jesus Christ, even as in every dewdrop you may see the image of the sun. Everyone in heaven will feel it to be his bliss to praise Jesus; towards the august throne of the Most High this anthem will triumphantly ascend, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing," with the variation of which! John tells us in the Revelation, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

There will be nothing in heaven that will be derogatory to Jesus, but everyone and everything there will be to his praise and glory. I cannot believe that any one of his chosen people will be missing on the last great gathering day. No David's seat will be empty there, no Thomas will be absent then. I cannot conceive of one whom he has purchased with his precious blood being lost. Not one sheep or lamb will be missing from the great Shepherd's flock; in the day when, they pass under the hand of him that telleth them, they shall all be there. The army of the great Captain of our salvation shall be complete there; when the muster-roll is read, they shall all answer to their names; and all who are gathered there will owe their salvation to the Lamb that was slain. There will not be one Pharisee there to boast, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are." There will not be one atheist there blasphemously

shouting, "There is no God;" nor one Unitarian seeking to drag Christ from the throne that is rightly his; but all will be adoring and magnifying, and delighting to adore and magnify him by whom and for whom heaven itself was created.

**"All the chosen of the Father,
All for whom the Lamb was slain,
All the church appear together,
Wash'd from every sinful stain."**

Next, all angels were created by Jesus, and for him. However great, and strong, and swift they are, there is not one angel that ever flies from Jehovah's throne that was not created by Christ. Read the whole verse from which our text is taken: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." If there be rank upon rank of blessed spirits, "that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word," all were created by him, and for him. Gabriel was sent to foretell Christ's coming to earth, angels announced his birth at Bethlehem, others of them ministered to him in the wilderness and in Gethsemane, watched over his empty sepulcher, and joyfully attended him as he returned to heaven as the victorious King of glory. It is written that he was "seen of angels," and it must have been with awe and wonder that they gazed upon him from the manger to the tomb. We read also, "which things the angels desire to look into," and there must have been many mysteries which even their lofty intelligence could not comprehend until he explained them. They delight to praise and worship him, and they help to swell the mighty chorus of adoring homage that is ever ascending to him.

**"Bright angels, strike your loudest strings,
Your sweetest voices raise;
Let heaven and all created things
Sound our Immanuel's praise."**

Angels were created by Christ, and for him, not merely to admire and adore him, but actually to serve him. Truly did the psalmist write, "who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire;" and Paul reveals a most important part of their service when he asks, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" We will not enter into any speculations about their battles with evil spirits on our behalf, though we believe that this is one of the many ways in which they minister for us. We cannot describe all the service that these heavenly messengers render to the Lord's own people. I remind you of how one of them smote a hundred and eighty-five thousand of Sennacherib's army in a single night, and of how the prophet Elisha, besieged by the Syrians in Dothan, saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire for his protection. You will recall many other instances of angelic interposition, and you know, too, how it is written, "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

As for the fallen angels, who rebelled against God, and who have sunk for ever into hopeless alienation from him, even these were created by Christ, and for him; and though they hate him, they shall be compelled to obey him, and to own that he is Lord over all. Even their malice against the people of God shall only draw out his love toward them, and manifest his vigilance, and wisdom and power on their behalf. In the wilderness the Son of man met "the prince of the power of the air" in mortal conflict. Evil stood there endowed with all the attributes it could desire to have upon its side; evil hoary with long and varied experience, evil backed up by a powerful angelic intellect, evil with ferocious malice glaring in its eyes, evil with diabolic cunning tempting the Son of God to sin. There, too, stood the Prince of life, alone, yet undaunted, the incarnation of holiness and love. Three times they wrestled, foot to foot, but the tempter had to retire, beaten; and when he came again, hoping to take the Son of God and Son of man at a disadvantage in Gethsemane, when he was full of anguish, and was shortly to die in still greater agony on the cross, it was again a desperate struggle, but the Master flung him to the ground. Our Samson rent the old roaring lion as if he had been a kid, and left him prostrate and defeated, while he passed on to complete the great work of his people's redemption, and to conquer all the powers of darkness ere he gave up the ghost. Glory be to Jesus, he hath gotten glory to himself out of the devil and all his angels!

And even hell itself, terrible as it is, was created by Christ as a necessary part of the moral government of the universe so that sin might not go unpunished. Even there Christ reigns, his sovereignty is supreme down to its lowest, depths. He has the keys of hell and of death; and when the appointed time comes, he will send an angel with the key of the bottomless pit, and bid him, lay hold on "the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan," and bind him for a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit; and then, after the millennium, and Satan has been again loosed for a little season, he shall be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Christ is King even over that dark sad part of his domains, and amidst all the confusion and tumult of the pit his enemies shall "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The verse from which our text is taken, also reminds us that this world was created by Christ, and for Christ. "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth." John tells us that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,

and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made." The eternal Logos was the Creator of this lower world as well as of the realms on high. There is neither hill nor valley, sparkling fountain nor foaming sea which he hath not made. "The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land." Truly is he the Creator of this earth, and it was formed for him as well as by him.

It was specially made to be the place of residence for his people, the place on which they would fall through sin, and the place on which they would be restored through the redemption accomplished there by Christ Jesus on the cross of Calvary. This world was created by Christ as the place where he himself would live and labor, and suffer, and die. He would be laid as a baby in an earthly manger, as a boy and a man he would walk through the streets and lanes of this world, he would fare as human beings fared, and suffer as the dwellers upon the earth suffered, though never through any sin of his own. I might truly say that the whole world was created for Calvary. "Why leap ye, ye high hills?" That little mound outside Jerusalem's gate, explains your very existence. The world itself was created that Christ might die on Calvary. This earth was to be a sort of stage upon which Christ was to take the principal part in the greatest drama that the whole universe has ever witnessed. The world was made by him, and for him, and it will remain until his great purpose of love and mercy is fully accomplished.

We must not forget that even the lower orders of creation were made by Christ, and for him. They were needed by man, and man was necessary to the completeness of Christ's plan of salvation, so the lower forms of creatures are links in the chain that could not be spared. There is a wonderful sympathy between, the various portions of creation, as the apostle Paul tells us, "for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Treat all creatures kindly, then, so far as you can, for the great Creator's sake. I would not have a sparrow needlessly killed, nor even a worm trodden on that might be spared. My Lord and Master made them all; and when I look at them, I see traces of his wonderful wisdom and power; and when I see how bountifully he provides for them, I note the tokens of his goodness and care. He opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing. There is not a little bird that picks up a seed by the roadside that was not created by Christ, and for him; and perhaps answers its end better than some of you who lift your brows to yonder heaven only to defy your Maker. There is not an ass upon the common, nor a lion in the forest, nor a fish in the sea, nor a fowl in the air that was not made by him, and that does not in some way promote his glory.

And to come to ourselves, men were created by Christ, and for him. Perhaps the Creator resolved to manifest his power and skill in a new order of created beings. He had made pure spirits, and he had made material substances; he had created various forms of life, rising from the vegetable to the animal; but he resolved that there should be a spirit created that should be affiliated with materialism, and that this spirit should, in the end, when it had passed through all its graduations, become the most wonderful creature in the whole universe, a creature that should know evil, not merely by report, but by actual personal experience; — a creature that should, after that, be delivered from the power of evil, and so should be bound to God by ties of gratitude so strong that it should never revolt from him again. This creature, knowing evil and knowing good, strengthened by divine grace, should, of its own free will, cling to the good and eschew the evil, and should be for ever God's best ally against all revolt in his dominions; for this creature, though it had known evil, was to become a child of God, and to be a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. These creatures, partly spiritual and partly material, were to have at their head Christ Jesus, who was to be the model of them all, and they were to be like him, and to be his companions for ever; and to be to him more than companions, to be his friends, with whom, he might hold familiar intercourse; and to be to him even more than friends, to be united to him in conjugal relationship, to be so completely one with him that they should be "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones," that his life should be their life, and that their life should be derived from him.

What a wonderful creature a man will be when he gets to heaven with his body, and soul, and spirit all complete, No other creature will be so near to God as man will be through his union to the God-man, Christ Jesus the Lord. Yet this glorified man will never presume upon his position, but will always keep his proper place; he will have been so, trained and educated by his falls, his regeneration, and his redemption that he will be ever humble, and yet will rejoice that he is a son of the Most High who may say to him, "Abba, Father." I do not know how such a creature as a perfect man could have been made by God except through the fall in Eden the birth of Christ at Bethlehem, and his death on Calvary. In making man, God had produced a new type of being, that in him Jesus Christ might find an opportunity of displaying his wondrous condescension in taking upon; himself man's nature, and his wondrous grace in taking upon himself man's sin, and dying in his room, and place, and stead. Through glorified men becoming Christ's companions, friends, and faithful servants by reason of his mysterious union with them, a new race of beings has been created who can have greater sympathy with God than any others of his creatures can have. Devils can have no sympathy with God, for they are only evil. The holy angels cannot have as much sympathy with God as man who has fallen by sin, and then been saved by grace. It is of those who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, that it is written, "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them." He will be our God, and we shall be his people, he will be our Father, and we shall be his children for ever and ever.

But, oh, if you reject the Savior; if you turn the wondrous opportunity of immortal glory, which God presents to you in the gospel, into the dread alternative of eternal wrath; if you are resolved that you will not be among those privileged beings who will be next to God himself; if you spurn the dignity that is held before you; then, notwithstanding that, you will have to glorify Christ. Even in this life, and against your own will, you shall scarcely know how, you shall be made to subserve Christ's purpose; and at the last, he will make you realize how terrible he is as he breaks you in pieces as a potter's vessel. If you will not touch his silver scepter of mercy, you shall feel the weight of the iron rod of his inflexible justice. If you will not lie at his feet as a penitent, you shall be driven from his presence into the outer darkness where there will be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth for ever. God grant that none of you may ever know experimentally what this means!

**“Ye sinners, seek his grace,
Whose wrath ye cannot bear,
Fly to the shelter of his cross,
And find salvation there.”**

II. Now I must pass on briefly to Review The Reflections Arising From This Statement: All things were created by him, and for him.”

And the first clear reflection from this declaration is, then, Jesus is God. If all things were made by him, and for him, how is it possible for us to get away from the conviction that he is indeed God? I will not attempt to argue about the matter, but, whatever others may say or do, as for me, Jesus of Nazareth is my Lord and my God, and I will love, and adore, and worship him for ever and ever.

The second reflection is that Jesus is the clue of the universe, its center and its explanation. Creation and history are enigmas which can only be understood in the light of the cross. When we look at the planets, their motions seem irregular from our standpoint; but if we could stand in the sun, we should see the planets revolving in their orbits in an orderly manner around it. Calvary is the sun of the universe. Stand there, believe in God making propitiation for sin by the death of his Son, and you can understand everything in the light that streams from Calvary. Get away from that great center, and you understand nothing. The great question to ask concerning everything is, — Will it glorify Christ? How will it affect his infinitely wise designs?

Try, beloved friends, wherever you are, to see all things in the light of Christ. I think this will teach you not to look with scorn upon any of the things that are around you. See how the Lord Jesus hath purged all things for his people so that they shall no longer be common or unclean. That lovely river, those fertile valleys, that dense forest, yonder snow-clad Alps, and everything else that Christ hath created, you need not say, as some have done, “I will not gaze upon the beauties of nature, lest they should take my thoughts away from my Master.” Scorn not his works, lest you should also scorn the great Maker of them. His are the mountains, and the valleys his; sun, moon, and stars all shine to his praise and glory. Go up and dawn, then, in the world, and be not troubled by many things that now disquiet you. Say, “I do not know how this will glorify Christ, but I am persuaded that, in some mysterious way which I cannot yet fully comprehend, his eternal purposes are being accomplished.” See Christ in everything, and see everything in the light of Christ.

And, beloved, another clear inference from Paul's declaration is that to live to Christ is to live as we ought to live. If he made us for himself, then we who live unto him have found out the true object of our existence. Put a thing to a wrong purpose, and it is a failure; but use it for the object for which it was made, and it will answer that end. Christian, Christ made you for himself, yea, he hath twice made you for himself; therefore lay yourself out for him, body, soul, and spirit, spend all your time, and all your strength, and all your means for him and him alone. So you will be in accord with the great object of your creation.

If we do not live unto Christ, we have to make the sorrowful reflection that we are out of gear with all things that he hath made. Although, by the mysterious working of his divine power, he will get glory out of us, yet we are not consciously in harmony with Jesus, and all discords must have an end. All opposition to omnipotence must be futile, and must also be transient. However long he may suffer evil to continue, there is an end even to his longsuffering patience; and then, woe be to those who are still at enmity against the Almighty!

Another reflection from the text is that we can only live for Christ as we live by Christ. We cannot glorify him except as he gives us the grace to do so; if we attempt to do it by our own power, we shall most certainly fail. Wait at his cross, beloved; cry to him to give you the aid of his almighty Spirit, and then, through the effectual working of the Holy Ghost, you shall be able to live alone for Jesus, by whom and for whom you were made both at your first creation and also when you were created anew in Christ Jesus.

And, lastly, it is clear from all this that Christ must triumph. Some of us have been almost breaking our hearts as we look around at the follies of the generation in which we live. They are going on pilgrimages to the shrines of their idols, the gods that are no gods;

they are bowing down to their priests, and confessing in their ears the sad stories that should be told to God alone; they are setting up the calves and images that their fathers worshipped, and turning away from the only living and true God. All this we mourn and grieve over, but let us not imagine that Christ's true kingdom is suffering loss. Beneath the dark clouds that hide the sun we mourn the absence of the great orb of day, but think how brightly the sun is shining above those clouds. Borrow an eagle's wings, and soar above the clouds, and then you shall see the sun shining in his strength. So is it with Christ, the Sun of righteousness. Get away, by faith, from this poor earth, and you shall see him shining in his glory, whether it be day or night, summer or winter. Christ must reign." The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his appointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us;" but it is still true, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion;" and he shall reign for ever and ever, and let all his people say, "Hallelujah!" and again and again cry, "Hallelujah! "

He must reign. What power is there that can stand against him who created all things? What arm can dare to be lifted up against his almighty arm? Be of good courage, ye soldiers of the cross; dream not of defeat, nor think for a moment of flying from the foe in terror. Victory must come to the Lamb that was slain. He shall come from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, his apparel shall be red, like the garments of him that treadeth in the winefat, for all his enemies shall be trodden down in his wrath; and Home, the harlot church, the chief of all his foes, shall be hurled down like a millstone into the flood, and sink to rise no more.

"He shall reign from pole to pole, With illimitable sway; He shall reign when, like a scroll, Yonder heavens have pass'd away: Then the end; — beneath his rod, Man's last enemy shall fall; Hallelujah! Christ in God, God in Christ is all in all."

Happy is he who is the lowliest page in the retinue of such a King. Happy is he who shall be privileged to sprinkle a few drops of water to lay the dust in the road over which our conquering King shall ride. Blessed is he who shall spread his garments in the way, or wave a palm branch in honor of the royal Victor in his triumphal procession. Happy shall he be then who has been laughed to scorn for Christ's sake, or who, has been lying in a dungeon till the moss has grown on his eyelids, or who has been burned at the stake, and his ashes cast to the four winds of heaven, because he would not deny his Lord. Oh to be wholly on his side now, that we may be among his faithful followers on that day! Here we are, O thou glorious Son of David, take us, and all that we have, and make us more than ever thine from this time forward, and unto thee shall be the glory for ever and ever!

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Colossians 1:27 CHRIST IN YOU

DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 13TH, 1883,

BY C. H. SPURGEON,

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"Christ in you, the hope of glory." — Colossians 1:27

The gospel is the grand secret: the mystery of mysteries. It was hidden from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to the saints. To the mass of mankind it was utterly unknown; and the chosen people, who saw something of it, only perceived it dimly through the smoke of sacrifices and the veil of types. It remained a mystery which wit could not guess nor invention unravel; and it must for ever have continued a secret had not God in his infinite mercy been pleased to reveal it by the Holy Ghost. In a still deeper sense it is even yet a hidden thing unless the Spirit of God has revealed it to us individually, for the revelation of the gospel in the word of God does not of itself instruct men unto eternal life: the light is clear enough, but it availeth nothing till the eyes are opened. Each separate individual must have Christ revealed to him and in him by the work of the Holy Ghost, or else he will remain in darkness even in the midst of gospel day. Blessed and happy are they to whom the Lord has laid open the divine secret which prophets and kings could not discover, which even angels desired to look into.

Brethren, we live in a time when the gospel is clearly revealed in the word of God, and when that word has its faithful preachers lovingly to press home its teachings, let us take care that we do not despise the mystery which has now become a household word. Let not the commonness of the blessing cause us to undervalue it. You remember how in the wilderness the Israelites fed upon angels' food until they had enjoyed it so long, so constantly, and so abundantly that in their wicked discontent they called it "light bread." I fear me that many in these times are cloyed with the gospel like those who eat too much honey. They even venture to call the heavenly word "common-place," and talk us if it were not only "the old, old story," but a stale story too. Are not many hungering after novelties, longing for things original and startling, thirsting after the spiritual dram-drinking of sensational preaching, dissatisfied with Christ crucified, though he is the bread which came down from heaven?

For us, let us keep clear of this folly; let us rest content with the old food, praying from day to day, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." May it never happen to us as unto the Jews of the apostles time, who refused utterly the word of life; so that the truth

became to them a stumbling-block, and those who preached it were compelled to turn to the Gentiles. If we despise the heavenly message we cannot expect to fare better than they did: let us not incur the danger of refusing him that speaks from heaven. If there be life, rejoice in it; if there be light, walk in it; if there be love, rest in it. If the Lord God Almighty has at length set open the treasures of his grace, and put eternal bliss within your reach, stretch out the hand of faith, and be enriched thereby. Turn not your backs upon your God, your Savior for in so doing you will turn your backs on eternal life and heaven. God grant that none of you may do this.

In our text we have in a few words that great mystery with which heaven did labor us in travail, that mystery which is to transform this poor world into new heavens and a new earth; we have it, I say, all in a nutshell in the seven words of our text: the riches of the glory of this mystery may here be seen set out to open view — “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

By the assistance of the divine Spirit, I shall speak upon this mystery in three ways: The essence of it is “Christ” the sweetness of it is “Christ in you”; and the outlook of it is “the hope of glory.” The words read like a whole body of divinity condensed into a line, — **“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”**

I. The eternal mystery of the gospel, The Essence Of It Is Christ.

I hardly know what is the antecedent to the word “which” here whether it is “mystery,” or “riches,” or “glory”; and I do not greatly care to examine which it may be. Any one of the three words will be suitable, and all three will fit best of all. If it be “the mystery,” Christ is that mystery: “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.” if it be the word “glory,” beyond all question our Lord Jesus wears a “glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Is he not “the brightness of the Father’s glory”? if we take the word “riches,” ye have often heard of “the unsearchable riches of Christ,” for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Oh, the riches of the grace of God which it hath pleased the Father to impart unto us in Christ Jesus! Christ is the “mystery,” the “riches,” and the “glory.” He is all this; and blessed be his name, he is all this among us poor Gentiles who at first were like dogs, scarce accounted worthy to eat the crumbs from under the children’s table, and yet we are now admitted into the children’s place, and made heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. Riches of glory among the Gentiles would have sounded like a mockery in the first ages, and yet the language is most proper at this day, for all things are ours in Christ Jesus the Lord.

The essence of this mystery is Christ Himself. In these days certain would-be-wise men are laboriously attempting to constitute a church without Christ, and to set forth a salvation without a Savior; but their Babel building is as a bowing wall and a tottering fence. The center of the blessed mystery of the gospel is Christ himself in his person. What a wonderful conception it was that ever the infinite God should take upon himself the nature of man! It never would have occurred to men that such a condescension would be thought of. Even now that it has been done it is a great mystery of our faith. God and man in one person is the wonder of heaven, and earth, and hell. Well might David exclaim, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” The first thought of the incarnation was born in the unsearchably wise mind of God. it needed omnipotent omniscience to suggest the idea of “Immanuel, God with us.” Think of it! The Infinite an infant, the Ancient of days a child, the Ever Blessed a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief! The idea is original, astounding, divine. Oh, that this blending of the two natures should ever have taken place! Brethren, the heart of the gospel throbs in the truth. The Son of the Highest was born at Bethlehem, and at his birth, ere he had wrought a deed of righteousness or shed a drop of blood, the angels sang, “Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men,” for they knew that the incarnation had within itself a wealth of good things for men. When the Lord himself took our manhood it meant inconceivable benediction to the human race. “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,” and in that child and son we find our salvation. God in our nature can mean for us nothing but joy. How favored is our race in this respect! What other creature did the Lord thus espouse? We know that he took not up angels, but he took up the seed of Abraham; he took upon him hum an nature, and now the next being in the universe to God is man, he who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death is the day crowned with glory and honor, and made to have dominion over all the works of Jehovah’s hands. This is the gospel indeed. Do not sinners begin to hope? Is there one in your nature who is “Light of lights, very God of very God,” and do you not perceive that this must mean good to you? Does not the “word made flesh” dwelling among men arouse hope in your bosoms, and lead you to believe that you may yet be saved? Certainly, the fact of there being such an union between God and man is the delight of every regenerated mind.

Our Lord’s person is at this day constituted in the same manner. He is still God and man; still he can sympathize with our manhood to the full, for he is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh; and yet he can help us without limit, seeing he is equal with the Father. Through manifestly divine, yet Jesus is none the less human; though truly man, he is none the less divine; and this is a door of hope to us, a fountain of consolation which never ceases to flow.

When we think of our Lord we remember with his person the glorious work which he undertook and finished on our behalf. Being found in fashion as man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. he took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, because we had failed in our service and could not be saved unless another did suit and service on our behalf. The heir of all things girded himself to be among us one that serveth. What service his was! How arduous! how humble! how heavy! how all-consuming! His was a life of grief and humiliation, followed by a death of

agony and scorn. Up to the cross he carried all our load, and on the cross he bore, that we might bear, his Father's righteous wrath. Oh, what has not Christ done for us? He cast our sins into the depths of the sea: he has taken the cup which we ought to have drunk for ever, and he has drained it dry, and left not a dreg behind. He has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; and now he inns finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness and gone up to His Father's throne within the veil, bearing his divine oblation, and making everything right and safe for us, that by-and-by we may follow him, and be with him where he is. Oh yes, brethren, Christ's person and finished work are the pillars of our hope. I cannot think of what he is, and what he has done, and what He is doing, and what he will yet do, without saying, "He is all my salvation and all my desire."

My brethren, every one of our Lord's offices is a well-spring of comfort. Is he prophet, priest, and king? Is he friend? Is he brother? Is he husband? Is He head? Every way and everywhere we lean the weight of our soul's great business upon him, and he is our all in all. Besides, there is this sweet thought, that he is our representative. Know ye not that of old he was our covenant head, and stood for us in the great transactions of eternity? Like us the first Adam headed up the race, and stood for us — alas, I must correct myself — fell for us, and we fell in him; so now hath the second Adam taken up within himself all his people and stood for them, and kept for them the covenant, so that now it is ordered in all things and sure, and every blessing of it is infallibly secured to all the seed. Believers must and shall possess the covenanted inheritance because Jesus represents them, and on them' behalf have taken possession of the estate of God. Whatever Christ is His people are in him. They were crucified in him, they were dead in him, they were buried in him, they are risen in him; in him they live eternally, in him they sit gloriously at the right hand of God, "who has raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." In him we are "accepted in the Beloved," both now and for ever; and this, I say, is the essence of the whole gospel. He that preaches Christ preaches the gospel; he who does not preach Christ, preaches no gospel. It is no more possible for there to be a gospel without Christ than a day without the sun, or a river without water, or a living man without a head, or a quickened human body without a soul. No, Christ himself is the life, soul, substance, and essence of the mystery of the gospel of God.

Christ himself, again I say, and no other. I have been trying to think what we should do if our Lord were gone. Suppose that a man has heard of a great physician who understands his complaint, he has traveled a great many miles to see this celebrated doctor; but when he gets to the door they tell him that he is out. "Well," says he, "then I must wait till He is in." "You need not wait," they reply, "his assistant is at home." The suffering man, who has been often disappointed, answers, "I do not care about His assistant, I want to see the man himself: mine is a desperate case, but I have heard that this physician inns cured the like; I must, therefore, see him. No assistants for me." Well," say they, "he is out; but there are his books; you can see his books." "Thank you," he says, "I cannot be content within his books, I want the living man and nothing less. It is to him that I must speak. and from him I will receive instructions." "Do you see that cabinet?" "Yes." "It is full of his medicines." The sick man answers, "I dare say they are very good, but they are of no use to me without the doctor: I want their owner to prescribe for me, or I shall die of my disease." "But see," cries one, "here is a person who has been cured by him, a man of great experience, who has been present at many remarkable operations. Go into the inquiry-room with him, and he will tell you all about the mode of cure." The afflicted man answers, "I am much obliged to you, but all your talk only makes me long the more to see the doctor, I came to see him, and I am not going to be put off with anything else. I must see the man himself, for myself. He has made my disease a speciality; He knows how to handle my case, and I will stop till I see him." Now, dear friends, if you are seeking Christ, imitate this sick man, or else you will miss the mark altogether. Never be put off with books, or conversations. Be not content with Christian people talking to you, or preachers preaching to you, or the Bible being read to you, or prayers being offered for you. Anything short of Jesus will leave you short of salvation. You have to reach Christ, and touch Christ, and nothing short of this will serve your turn. Picture the case of the prodigal son when he went home. Suppose when he reached the house the elder brother had come to meet him. I must make a supposition that the elder brother had sweetened himself, and made himself amiable; and then I hear him say, "Come in, brother; welcome home!" But I see the returning one stand there with the tears in his eyes, and I hear him lament, "I want to see my father. I must tell him that I have sinned and done evil in his sight." An old servant whispers, "Master John, I am glad to see you back. Be happy, for all the servants are rejoiced to hear the sound of your voice. it is true your father will not see you, but he inns ordered the fatted calf to be killed for you; and here is the best robe, and a ring, and shoes for your feet, and we are told to put them upon you." All this would not content the poor penitent. I think I hear him cry — "I do not despise anything my father gives me, for I am not worthy to be us his hired servant; but what is all this unless I see his face, and know that he forgives me? There is no taste in the feast, no glitter in the ring, no fitness in the shoes, no beauty in the robe unless I can see my father and can be reconciled to him." Do you not see that in the case of the prodigal son the great matter was to get his head into his father's bosom, and there to sob out "Father, I have sinned"? The one thing needful was the kiss of free forgiveness, the touch of those dear, warm, loving lips, which said, "My dear child, I love you, and your faults are blotted out." That was the thing that gave his soul rest and perfect peace; and this is the mystery we come to preach to you — God himself drawing near to you in Christ Jesus, and forgiving you all trespasses. We are not content to preach unless Jesus himself be the theme. We do not set before you something about Christ, nor something that belongs to Christ, nor something proclaimed by Christ, nor somebody that has known Christ, nor some truth which extols Christ; but we preach Christ crucified. We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and we say to you, never be content till you clasp the Savior in your arms as Simeon did in the

temple. That venerable saint did not pray to depart in peace while He only saw the child in Mary's bosom; but when He had taken the dear one into his own arms, then he said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." A personal grasp of a personal Christ, even though we only know him as an infant, fills the heart to the full; but nothing else will do it.

I go a little farther still. As it must be Christ himself, and none other, it must also be Christ himself rather than anything which Christ gives. [I was thinking the other day how different Christ is from all the friends and helpers that we have. They bring us good things, but Jesus gives us himself. He does not merely give us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; but he himself is made of God all these things to us. Hence we can never do without him. When very ill you are pleased to see the doctor; but when you are getting well you say to yourself, "I shall be glad to see the back of the good man, for that will be a sure sign that I am off the sick list." Ah, but when Jesus heals a soul he wants to see Jesus more than ever. Our longing for the constant company of our Lord is the sign that we are getting well: he who longs for Jesus to abide with him for ever is healed of his plague. We never outgrow Christ; but we grow to hunger more and more. If you eat a meal you lose your appetite, but if you feed upon Christ you hunger and thirst still more after him. This insatiable desire after him is not a painful hunger, but a heavenly, pleasant hunger which grows upon you the more its cravings are gratified. The man who has little of Christ can do with little of Christ; but he that gets more of Christ pines for a yet fuller supply. Suppose a wise man were to instruct you: you would learn all he had to teach and then say, "Let him go on and teach somebody else;" but when Jesus teaches we discover so much of our own ignorance that we would fain keep him as our life-tutor. When our Lord taught the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, he opened the Scriptures and he opened their minds until their hearts burned within them. What next? Shall the divine teacher pass on? No, no; they constrained him, saying "Abide with us; it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." The more he taught them the more they wished to be taught. This is ever the way with Christ; He is growingly dear, increasingly necessary. Oh my brothers, you cannot do without him. If you have your foot upon the threshold of pure gold, and your finger on the latch of the gate of pearl, you now need Christ more than ever you did. I feel persuaded that you are of Rutherford's mind, when he cried to have his heart enlarged till it was as big as heaven, that he might hold all Christ within it; and then he felt that even tin is was too narrow a space for the boundless love of Jesus, since the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, and so he cried out for a heart as large as seven heavens, that he might entertain the Well — beloved. Truly, I am content with what God has given me in all points, save that I long for more of Christ. I could sit down happy if I knew that my portion in the house and in the field would never grow; but I am famished to have more of my Lord. The more we are filled within of Christ, the more we feel our own natural emptiness: the more we know of him, the more we long to know him. Paul, writing to the Philippians, when he had been a Christian for many a year, yet says, "That I may know him." Oh, Paul, do you not know Christ yet? "Yes," says he, and "No": for he knew the love of Christ, but felt that it surpassed all knowledge. "All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full": this is not our case in one respect, and yet it is in another, for all the streams of grace and love and blessedness flow into our souls, and we are full; yet, being full, we are longing for more. Not thy gifts, Lord, but thyself: thou, thou art the desire of our hearts.

Christ alone is enough. Mark this. Nothing must be placed with Christ as if it were necessary to him. Some hold a candle to the sun by preaching Christ and man's philosophy, or their own priestcraft. When the blessed rain comes fresh from heaven they would fain perfume it with their own dainty extract of fancy. As for God's blessed air fresh from the eternal hills, they dream that it cannot be right unless by scientific experiments they load it with their own smoke and cloud. Come, clear out, let us see the sun! We want not your rushlights. Away with your gauges and your fineries, let the clear sunlight enter! Let the holy water drop from heaven; we want not your scented essences. Out of the way, and let the fresh air blow about us. There is nothing like it for the health and strength of the soul. We rejoice in Christ and nothing else but Christ: Christ and no priestcraft; Christ and no philosophy; Christ and no modern thought; Christ and no human perfection. Christ, the whole of Christ, and nothing else but Christ: he is the mystery of the gospel of the grace of God.

Brethren, what else but Christ can satisfy the justice of God? Look around you when a sense of sin is on you, and the dread tribunal is before your eyes: what can you bring by way of expiation but Christ? What can you bring with Christ? What dare you associate with his blood and merits? Oh, my God, nothing will content thee but thy Son, thy Son alone. What else can quiet conscience? Some professors have consciences as good as new, for they have never been used; but he that has once had his conscience thoroughly exercised and pressed upon with all the weight of sin till he has felt as if it were better for him not to be than to be guilty before God — that man acknowledges that nothing but Christ will ever quiet his agonized heart. See the bleeding Lamb, and you will be pacified! See the exalted Lord pleading his righteousness before the throne; and conscience is even as a weaned child; and all the storm within the spirit is hushed into a great calm. What else will do to live with but Christ? I do not find in times of pain and depression of spirit that I can keep up upon anything but my Lord. The mind can feed at other times on pretty kickshaws and fine confectionery such as certain divines serve out in the form of orations and essays, and the like; but when you are sore sick your soul abhors all manner of earthly meat, and nothing will stay on the stomach but the bread of heaven, even the blessed Christ of God. Think also, when you come to die, what else will do but Christ? Oh, I have seen men die with heaven in their eyes, the eternal Godhead seeming to transfigure them, because they rejoiced in Christ; but a death-bed without Christ, it is the darkening twilight of eternal night: it is the gloomy cave which forms the entrance of the land of darkness. Do not venture on life or death without Jesus, I implore you. "None but Christ, none but Christ," this has been the martyr's cry amidst the fire; let it be ours in life and

death.

II. Secondly, we are to consider The Sweetness Of This Mystery, Which Is Christ In You.

This is a grand advance. I know that there are a great many fishermen here this morning, and I heartily welcome them. When you are out at sea you like to know that there are plenty of fish in the sea all round your boats. It is a fine thing to get in among the great shoals of fish. Yes, but there is one thing better than that. Fish in the sea are good; but the fish in the boat are the fish for you. Once get them in the net, or better still, safe into the vessel, and you are glad. Now Christ in heaven, Christ free to poor sinners us precious, but Christ here in the heart is most precious of all. Here is the marrow and fatness. Christ on board the vessel brings safety and calm. Christ in your house, Christ in your heart, Christ in you; that is the cream of the matter, the honey of the honeycomb. Gold is valuable, but men think more of a pound in their pockets than of huge ingots in the Bank-cellar. A loaf of bread is a fine thing, but if we could not eat it, and so get it within us, we might die of starvation. A medicine may be a noble cure, but if it is always kept in the phial, and we never take a draught from it, what good will it do us? Christ is best known when He is Christ in you. Let us talk about that a little.

Christ in you — that is, first, Christ accepted by faith. Is it not a wonderful thing that Christ Jesus should ever enter into a man? Yes, but I will tell you something more wonderful, and that is, that he should enter in by so narrow an opening as our little faith. There is the sum; I do not know how many thousands of times the sun is bigger than the earth, and yet the sun can come into a little room or a close cell; and what is more, the sun can get in through a chink. When the shutters have been closed I have known him come in through a little round hole in them. So Christ can come in through a little faith — a mere chink of confidence. If you are such a poor believer that you can hardly think of assurance or confidence, yet if you do trust the Lord, as surely as the sun comes in by a narrow crack, so will Christ come into your soul by the smallest opening of true faith. How wise it will be on your part where you see your Lord's sunny face shining through the lattices to say, "I am not going to be satisfied with these mere glints and gleams, I would fain walk in the light of His countenance. Pull up those blinds; let the heavenly sun shine in, and let me rejoice in its glory." Grow in faith, and enlarge your receiving power till you take in Christ into your inmost soul by the Holy Spirit; for it is Christ in you by faith that becomes the hope of glory.

By Christ in you we mean Christ possessed. You see nothing is so much a man's own as that which is within him. Do you tell me that a certain slice of bread is not mine, and that I have no right to it? But I have eaten it, and you may bring a lawsuit against me about that bread if you like, but you cannot get it away from me. That question is settled; that which I have eaten is mine. In this case possession is not only nine points of the law, but all the points. When a man gets Christ into him, the devil himself cannot win a suit against him to recover Christ; for that matter is settled beyond question. Christ in you is yours indeed. Men may question whether an acre of land or a house belongs to me; but the meat I ate yesterday is not a case of property which Chancery or any other court can alter. So, when the believer has Christ in him, the law has no more to say. The enclosure made by faith carries its own title-deeds within it.

It means, too, Christ experienced in all his power. There may be a valuable medicine that works like magic to expel a man's pains, and cure his diseases; but it is of no efficacy till it is within him! When it commences to purify his blood, and to strengthen his frame, he is in a fair way to know it without depending upon the witness of others. Get Christ in you, curing your sin, Christ in you filling your soul with love to virtue and holiness, bathing your heart in comfort, and fining it with heavenly inspirations, — then will you know the Lord. Christ believed in, Christ possessed, Christ experienced, Christ in you, this is worth a world.

Moreover, Christ in us is Christ reigning. It reminds me of Mr. Bunyan's picture of Mansoul, when the Prince Immanuel laid siege to it, and Diabolos from within the city strove to keep him out. It was a hard time for Mansoul then but when at last the battering rams had broken down the gates, and the silver trumpets sounded, and the prince's captains entered, then on a day the prince himself did ride down the city's streets, while liberated citizens welcomed him with all their hearts, hung out all their streamers, and made the church towers rook again; the bells rang out merry peals, for the king himself was come. Up to the castle of the heart he rode in triumph, and took his royal throne to be henceforth the sole lord and king of the city. Christ in you is a right royal word. Christ swaying his scepter from the center of your being, over every power and faculty, desire and resolve, bringing every thought into captivity to himself, oh, this is glory begun, and the sure pledge of heaven. Oh for more of the imperial sovereignty of Jesus! it is our liberty to be absolutely under his sway.

Yes, and then Christ in you is Christ filling you. It is wonderful, when Christ once enters into a soul, how by degrees he occupies the whole of it. Did you ever hear the legend of a man whose garden produced nothing else but weeds, till at last he met with a strange foreign flower of singular vitality. The story is that he sowed a handful of this seed in his overgrown garden, and left it to work its own sweet way. He slept and rose, and knew not how the seed was growing till on a day he opened the gate and saw a scene which much astounded him. He knew that the seed would produce a dainty flower and he looked for it; but he had little dreamed that the plant would cover the whole garden. So it was; the flower had exterminated every weed, till as he looked from one end to the other from wall to wall he could see nothing but the fair colors of that rare plant, and smell nothing but its delicious

perfume. Christ is that plant of renown. If he be sown in the soil of your soul, he will gradually eat out the roots of all ill weeds and poisonous plants, till over all your nature there shall be Christ in you. God grant we may realize the picture in our own hearts, and then we shall be in Paradise.

It may sound strange to add that Christ in you transfigures the man till he becomes like Christ himself. You thrust a bar of cold, black iron into the fire, and keep it there till the fire enters into it. See, the iron is like fire itself — he that feels it will know no difference. The fire has permeated the iron, and made it a fiery mass. I should like to have seen that bush in Horeb before which Moses put off his shoes. When it was all ablaze it seemed no longer a bush, but a mass of fire, a furnace of pure flame. The fire land transfigured the bush. So it is with us when Christ enters into us; he elevates us to a nobler state; even as Paul said “I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.” Jesus sanctifies us wholly, spirit, soul, and body, and takes us to dwell with him in the perfect state above.

Christ in you, — how can I explain it? We are the little graft and he is the strong and living stem. We are laid to him, bound to him, sealed to him, and when there is nothing between the new shoot and the old tree, at last the sap flows into the graft, and the graft and the tree are one. Ye know right well how Christ enters into us and becomes our life.

Christ in you means power in you. A strong man armed keeps his house till a stronger than He comes, and when the stronger enters the first tenant is ejected by the power of the new comer, and kept out by the same means. We were without strength till Christ came, and now we war with principalities and powers, and win the victory.

Christ in you! Oh, what bliss! what joy! The Bridegroom is with us, and we cannot fast: the King is with us, and we are glad. When King Charles went to live at Newmarket it is said that a most poverty-stricken village became a wealthy place; truly when Christ comes to dwell in our hearts our spiritual poverty suddenly turns to blessed wealth.

Christ in you! What a wonder it is that he should deign to come under our roof! Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in. See the honor which his entrance brings with it! He glorifies the place where his foot rests even for a moment. If Jesus doth but enter into your heart, his court comes within him: honor, and glory, and immortality, and heaven, and all other divine things follow where He leads.

“Oh,” says one, “I wish he would come and dwell in me.” Then, be humble, for he loves to dwell with him that is humble and of a contrite spirit. Next, be clean; for if they must be clean that bear God’s vessels, much more they that have Christ himself in them. Next, be empty; for Christ will not live amid the lumber of self, and pride, and carnal sufficiency. Learn abundantly to rejoice in Christ, for he who welcomes Christ will have him always for a guest. Jesus never tarries where he is not desired. If his welcome is worn out, away he goes. Oh, desire and delight in him; hunger and thirst after him; for Christ delights to dwell with an eager people, a hungry people, a people who value him, and cannot be happy without him.

Surely I have said enough to make you feel that the sweetness of true godliness lies in having Christ in you.

III. Thirdly, we are to consider that The Outlook Of All This Is Christ In You The Hope Of Glory.”

Last Sunday morning as best I could in my feebleness, I spoke to you about the time when this earthly house of our tabernacle shall be dissolved, when we shall find that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; but this morning’s text goes a little further: it speaks of glory, which is a hope for soul as well as body. Why glory! Glory? Surely that belongs to God only. To him alone be glory. Yes, but Christ has said, “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory”; and he also says, “And the glory which thou hast given me I have given them.”

Think of it. Glory for us poor creatures! Glory for you, sister; glory for me! It seems a strange thing that a sinner should ever have anything to do with glory when he deserves nothing but shame. We are neither kings nor princes, what have we to do with glory? Yet glory is to be our dwelling, glory our light, glory our crown, glory our song. The Lord will not be content to give us less than glory. Grace is very sweet might we not be content to swim for ever in a sea of grace? But no, our Lord “will give grace and glory.” “All needful grace will God bestow, And crown that grace with glory too.” We shall have glorified bodies, glorious companions, a glorious reward, and glorious rest.

But how know we that we shall have glory? Why, first, he that has come to live in our hearts, and reigns as our bosom’s Lord, makes us glorious by His coming. His rest is glorious: the place of his feet is glorious, he must mean some great thing towards us, or he would never dwell in us. I saw a line carriage stopping the other day at a very humble hovel; and I thought to myself; “that carriage is not stopping there to collect rent, or to borrow a broom.” Oh, no; that lady yonder is calling round and visiting the poor, and I doubt not she has taken in some nourishment to an invalid. I hope it was so: and I am sure my Lord Jesus Christ’s carriage never stops at my door to get anything out of me: whenever he comes he brings countless blessings with him. Such a one as he is, God over all, blessed for ever, it cannot be that he took our nature, unless with high designs of love unsearchable. Thus we nourish large expectations upon the food of solid reason. I am sure our Lord Jesus would never have done so much if he had not meant to manifest the immeasurable breadth and length of a love which is beyond imagining. What he has done already surprises me even to

amazement. I think nothing can appear strange or hard to believe, let him do what he may in the future. If the Scriptures tell me my Lord is going to fill me with his own glory, and to set me at his own right hand, I can believe it. He who went to the cross for me will never be ashamed of me: he who gave me himself will give me all heaven and more: he that opened his very heart to find blood and water to wash me in, how shall he keep back even his kingdom from me? O sweet Lord Jesus, thou art indeed to us the hope, the pledge, the guarantee of glory. Friend, do you not feel that Christ in you is the dawn of heaven?

Besides this, Christ is he that has entered into covenant with God to bring his people home to glory; he has pledged himself to bring every sheep of his flock safe to his Father's right hand, and he will keep his engagement, for he never failed of one covenant promise yet.

Moreover, this we do know, that the Christ who is come to live with us will never be separated from us. If he had not meant to stop he would not have entered our heart at all. There was nothing to tempt him to come, and if in sovereign grace he deigned to live in the poor cottage of our nature, then, brethren, he knew what he was about; he had counted the cost, he had foreseen all the evil that would be in us and about us, and when he came he came with the intent to stay. Someone asked another the other day, "What persuasion are you of?" and the answer was, "I am persuaded that neither life, nor death nor things present, nor things to come, shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Are not you of that persuasion, brother? If so, you can see how Christ in you is the hope of glory.

Why, look ye, sirs, Christ in you is glory. Did we not show that just now? "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in!" You have heaven in having Christ, for Christ is the biggest part of heaven. Is not Christ the soul of heaven, and having him you have glory? What is more, having gotten Christ, Christ's glory and your glory are wrapped up together. If Christ were to lose you, it would be a great loss to you, but a greater loss to him. If I can perish with Christ in me, I shall certainly be a fearful loser, but so will he, for where is his honor, where his glory if a believer perishes? His glory is gone if one soul that trusts in him is ever cast away. Wherefore comfort yourselves with this word, Christ in you means you in glory, as sure as God lives. There is no question about that. Go your ways and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and let men see who it is that lives in you. Let Jesus speak through your mouth, and weep through your eyes, and smile through your face; let him work with your hands and walk within your feet, and be tender with your heart. Let him seek sinners through you; let him comfort saints through you; until the day break and the shadows flee away.

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Colossians 2:6 "As" and "So"

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"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." — Colossians 2:6

THIS is a very simple text, yet no human being has ever discovered its full meaning. It is a great deep; happy are they who know how to dive into its depths, and to swim at ease in its lengths and breadths. Blessed are they who, continually obey the exhortation which it contains, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."

The text divides itself into faith and practice. "Ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord," there is your faith. "Walk ye in him," that is to be your daily practice. The text also contains a model for that practice in the "as" and the "so" which are its cardinal points: "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." What we have done suggests the way in which we are to do what still lies before us: "As ye have received... so walk."

I. Notice in the text, first, The Fact Stated: Ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord."

Whatever else you have done or have not done, you have received Christ. The act of faith was the putting out of your empty hand to receive all the fullness of the Godhead in receiving Christ. There are some precious experiences to which you have not yet attained, some lofty heights to which you have not yet climbed, but you "have received Christ Jesus the Lord." That is the distinguishing mark of all true Christians. Though you may not all belong to the same denomination, yet without a single exception this is true concerning

you, whether you are old or young, whether you are well-instructed or ill-taught, whether you are full of faith or are troubled with many a doubt and many a fear, you “have received Christ Jesus the Lord.”

There is nothing in this fact to cause you one boastful thought. You have received, that is what emptiness does in order that it may be filled, that is what hunger does in order that its cravings may be satisfied, that is what the beggar in the street does when he craves and obtains alms. There is nothing whereof you can glory in the fact that you have received, for I may further remind you that even your very receiving you have received. The faith by which you received Christ was as much the gift of God to you as was the Christ upon whom your faith was fixed. You know that it is so, and therefore you also know that boasting is for ever excluded from the fact that you are saved. You have received Christ Jesus, that is all. I hope you prize the Gift, and praise the Giver; I trust that you often cry, with the apostle Paul, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift;” and that your soul makes her boast in the Lord concerning the Savior whom you have received, but no other boasting is permissible even for a moment.

I remind you once more, beloved, that, you have received Christ. It is true that you have received his doctrines, and that you still believe them. It is true that you have received his precepts, and that you have obeyed them, though, alas! your obedience has been far from perfect. It is true that you have received his ordinances, and that you have conformed to them by being baptized on profession of your faith in him, and by sitting down with your fellow believers at his table. But, after all, the main point is that you have received Jesus Christ, himself. Every word that he has spoken is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, but sweeter far are the lips with which he uttered those words. Every command of his is to be esteemed more highly than the finest of fine gold, but as for the King who gave those commands, “he is altogether lovely.” Human language cannot describe him, and yet you have received him, his very self; you have received him into your hearts, to dwell there as your sole Lord and Master. You have, received him as your life, for you live through him; and you receive him day by day as the Bread of life upon which your soul feeds, and as the Water of life which quenches the thirst of your soul. You have not merely received his offices, his gifts, his grace, his promises, but you have received him. He is the center of your confidence, the target of your hopes!

The text says that you have received “Christ Jesus the Lord.” Here are three out of his many names; and, first, beloved, you have, received him as Christ, the Anointed of God. You see in him no amateur Savior, uncommissioned; but one sent by the Father, the authorized Representative of the Most High, the Christos, the Messiah, the Sent One, who could rightly apply to himself the ancient promise, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” Christ came to this world because the Father sent him; he said to the Jews, “I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” He lived and died here because it pleased the Father for him to do so, and he is still appointed by the Father to distribute unnumbered gifts to his people. “It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.” You believe that upon Christ the Spirit, rests without measure, that, he is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, and in receiving him as the anointed One, you also have an unction from the Holy One, and therefore you also are anointed to be kings and priests unto God. So you have received him as Christ, the Anointed.

But you have also received him as Jesus, and you love that charming name. No hymn more truly expresses your feelings than that one by John Newton which begins,-

**“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer’s ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.”**

You sing also, with Bernard of Clairvaux,-

**“Jesus, the very thought of thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far thy face to see,
And in thy presence rest.**

**“Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find,
A sweeter sound than thy blest name,
O Savior of mankind!”**

You received him as your Savior, and therefore he has saved you from the penalty of sin, and he will also save you from the dominion and power of Sin. If you are saved, you are saved entirely through Jesus; and you do not need, and you do not desire any other Savior. You look to Jesus for all that can be comprehended in the word salvation. His name means Savior, and you have found him to be a Savior to you. So you have received the anointed Savior, Christ Jesus.

And you have received him as the Lord. You have not accepted him as merely one of many anointed prophets, nor as a man sent from God, as John the Baptist was, but you worship him as the Lord; and oh, how blessed it is to adore the Son of God. We cannot make any terms of peace, with those who deny the Deity of Christ, nor ought they to want to be at peace with us; for if Christ is not the Son of God, we are idolaters; and if he is, they are not Christians. There is a great gulf between us and them, and we do not hesitate for a moment to say on which side of that gulf we stand. That same Jesus who was nailed to the tree is to us both Lord and Christ. By faith, we put our finger into the print of the nails, and our hand into his pierced side, and never questioning the fact that he is truly man, we rejoice to say to him, as Thomas did, "My Lord and my God." Jesus Christ is indeed to us "very God of very God." This being so, we have received him as our Lord to rule and govern us. In spiritual matters he is our only King, we own no master save him who is The Master, of whom Martha, said to her sister Mary, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." No teacher has any right to impart to us any instruction except that which he has received from the only infallible Teacher. "He is the head of the body, the church," and we recognize no other headship; but we joyfully acknowledge, that he is our sovereign Lord in the spiritual realm. He is the absolute Monarch of our soul. He is that perfect Husband who is the true Head of his mystical body, the Church, oh, that we more fully carried out, practically, in every thought, and wish, and action of our entire life, all that is implied in receiving Jesus Christ as Lord!

Beloved friends, as I look round upon you all, and gaze into your faces, this question rushes from my heart to my lips,-Have all of you received Christ Jesus the Lord? Alas! I am sorrowfully persuaded that there are some of you who have not received him. He has knocked again and again, with that pierced hand of his, at the door of your heart, but you have not let him in. This fountain of the water of life has flowed close to your feet, yet you have not drunk of it. Christ has been set before you as the Bread of life sent down from heaven, but you have not eaten of him; you have refused him even until now. "Nay," say you, "you are too severe in charging us with having refused Christ, for we have not done that." Well, it seems to me that this is just what you have done; but I will put it more softly, and say that, at any rate, you have not received him. You have put him off to a more convenient season, which will probably never come to you. O poor souls, poor souls, how sad is your state in not having received Christ Jesus the Lord! Leaving out heaven and eternity for the moment, and speaking only of to-day, how wretched you must be in not having received Christ! When I see a man who has never seen the sun, I pity him, but not as I pity you who have never seen the Sun of righteousness. If I heard of a child who had never known a father's love, and who had never looked up with affection into a mother's face, I should pity that poor orphan, but not as much as I pity you who are living without a Savior. If I knew a man who had never known what health was, but who, from, the day of his birth, was always sickly, and bowed down with pain and infirmity, I should pity him, but not as I pity you who are sick unto death, yet who will not accept healing from the great Physician. May God look down upon you now, not only with pity, as he always does, but also in the power of his almighty grace, and turn the heart of stone to flesh and lead you to receive Christ Jesus as Lord! That is all you have to do,-to receive Jesus, as the parched earth receives the refreshing showers, and as the wilted lilies receive the reviving rain drops, and lift up their drooping heads again. That is all you have to do,-to receive Jesus. A child can receive; the feeblest can receive; ay, one lying at the point of death, the sick man dying of fever may receive the cooling draught that is put to his lips. This is all that is asked of you,-that you will receive Christ Jesus the Lord. Oh, that you would all receive him now God grant that it may be so, and he shall have the praise.

II. Now, secondly, notice The Counsel Given: "so walk ye in him." The text, not only reminds us of what we have done, but it also tells us what we are now to do.

Brethren and sisters in Christ, it is not easy to decide whether this counsel is to be regarded as a permission or as a precept: "so walk ye in him." Taking them either way, the words are a sweet morsel in my mouth; yet I think I prefer to regard them as a permission. Suppose I had been to Jesus as a poor sinner, and that he had saved me; but, that he had then said to me, "there, you are saved, so go your way; you have been a prodigal, but you are forgiven; you have shoes on your feet, a ring on your finger, and the best robe to cover your nakedness; now go and do what you can for yourself;" — well, it would have been infinite mercy that would have welcomed me, and pardoned me; but, how much more gracious and tender is the Lord's message, "Come, my child take up your abode with me, and wander away no more." It is thus that God speaks to all who have believed in Jesus, "You have received Jesus Christ the Lord, so, now you may walk in him, and you may always walk in him. What he was to you at the first, he may be to you still, and he may be to you for ever and ever. Did you at the first eat him as the Bread of life to your soul? Then go on still eating him. Did you spiritually drink of him as the water of life? Then still drink of him. He, is yours for ever, so continue to draw from his fullness all that you need. As you have received him, so keep on receiving him." Surely, this is a most gracious permission as well as a very precious precept.

"Walk in him." Does not this mean, first, look upon Jesus Christ, as your Way to heaven, and walk in him? Look upon him as your Forerunner, and follow him. Look upon him as your Companion, and lean upon him. Look upon him as your delight, and live in him, abide in him. The expression, "Walk in him," implies action and progress. Let your whole life be practically governed by your union with Christ, let your actions speak of your fellowship with him. But walking also means progress, so do not stand still in Christ, but go

on to know more and more, of him, make advances in the Christian life, “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” There is also something of the idea of permanence in the precept, “Walk ye in him.” It means, go nowhere else, but continue in him, let your ordinary life and your common conversation indicate your closeness of communion with him.

“Walk ye in him.” I trust that at least some of us know what it is to “walk in him.” Though we could not tell to others all that it means, yet it is a blessed fact in our experience; and we intend, by God’s grace, to “walk in him” as long as we live. I think this is what walking in him means,-to wake up in the morning, and to have our first thoughts full of the Savior; to seek his guidance and blessing in everything that is to happen to us during the day; to go down to our morning meal with our heart’s affection fixed upon Jesus; to go off to the business or the workshop in the full consciousness that he is going with us; when our hands are busy, and our mind is occupied with our trading or our working, still realizing that our heart is with our Beloved in the secret place where none can follow us, and so, as the hours run on, through the noontide heat Christ is our shade and shelter, in the cool of the evening his company is our supreme delight, and then, as we retire to our bed, our last thought being-

**“How sweet, to rest
For ever on our Savior’s breast!”**

Christian, this ought to be your way of living; and if you are right with God, this is the way in which you actually do live. You “walk in him.” What a lovely garden! What a delightful place! The air is balmy, the scenery all around is charming; there is, nothing to distract, or disturb, or disgust, but everything to delight, and gratify, and satiate the spirit; so “Walk in him.” Climb to every lofty hill of his infinite love, explore the deepest, recesses of his eternal purposes so far as they are accessible to mortal man; and in this way, “as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.”

III. Notice, thirdly, The Model Which Is Presented To Us In The Text: “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.”

The two emphatic words are “as” and “so.” We are to walk in Christ Jesus as we received him.

There is great safety in going back to first principles. To make sure of being in the right way, it is well to look back to the gate by which we entered the way. You know how, in ordinary life, in the matter of mutual love, we often look back upon the early days of that experience as the sweetest. Not long ago, I heard a good man, whose time had been very fully occupied in business, so that for many a year he had scarcely been able to have a holiday, say that, when at last he did manage to take one with his wife, it was like his honeymoon. You recollect also how the Lord said to Israel, “I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness.” God likes us to go back in thought, to the time when we began with him, and I want to take you who are Christians back to your first love of God. Perhaps, with some of you, religion has become a very mechanical sort of thing; you have become stereotyped in your religious observances. You need to go back to the place where you first received Christ. Jesus the Lord, and there refurbish your faith and love, and all your other graces.

So I ask you, how did you receive Christ? Possibly, your first answer is, “I received him in the depth of sorrow and humiliation of soul. I had been broken in pieces by the great plough of the law, and was rent and torn asunder by my own consciousness of guilt I lay before the cross, moaning and roaring like a wounded beast, and in, my extremity I received Christ as being the very Savior that I needed. I felt myself to be less than nothing, and I took him to be my All-in-all. Shivering in my nakedness through sin, I took his righteousness as my perfect covering. Famished to death, I took him to be both my life and the food of that life. I grasped Christ in my despair at finding there was nothing else to which I could cling. Out of the great deeps of my soul’s distress, I cast myself upon his mercy, saying,-

**“I can but perish if I go, I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know I must for ever die.”**

Our daily walk in Christ must be very much like that, not exactly so, for there should be no unbelief in it. As for myself, I must confess that I never realize Christ’s preciousness so much as when I feel myself still to be apart from him, an undeserving, ill-deserving, hell-deserving sinner. Sometimes, when our Lord gives us sweet enjoyments, we make too much of them by letting them come between himself and our souls; and when the Holy Spirit bestows upon us certain graces, we think we are very fine fellows, and carry our heads aloft very proudly, instead of giving all the glory to his holy name. Now, if we ever act like that, we may rest assured that, as we go up in our own estimation, Christ will go down, and that would be a sorry thing indeed. Grow in grace, but not in self-esteem. Have more faith, but do not boast of having it. Be full of zeal, but not of conceit concerning it. Be as holy as it is possible, for you to become, but do not prate and brag about your holiness, as some have done. Be not like those who push with horn and with shoulder the weak ones of the flock because they have not attained to such heights as these strong ones profess to have reached; though, possibly, the feebler and humbler ones are really nearer to God than the boasters are. Lie low, brother, lie low, sister; for what the old Essex ploughman used to tell me is true, “If you are one inch above the ground, you are just that inch too high.” So lie low, and thus

continue to walk in Christ, yourself being nothing, and Christ being everything. You know that, if you get to be something, Christ cannot then be everything to you; but if you are still nothing, and less than nothing in your own estimation, as you sink in self-esteem, your Lord will rise to his right position in your sight, and so you will be walking humbly in him as you ought.

Think again how you received Christ. When you really did lay hold of him by faith, I am sure that you received him with great certainty. There was no mockery, no sham about your reception of Christ. You were a lost sinner, and you were pointed to the only Savior, and you did really and truly look unto him who said, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." Whatever else there was in your look, there was intense earnestness in it; there was no presence or affectation about it, it was very real. Is all your religion as real as that first faith-look at Jesus was? Do you walk in him as truly and as decidedly as you did that first day? My dear brother, do you never pray sham prayers? My dear sister, do you never sing sham praises? Is there not a very great risk of our making our religion into a mere shell with no life in it? May God save us from everything that would be such a sham as that, and make us as sincere in our walk in Christ as we were in our first reception of him! I know that I was most anxious to be certain that I had really believed in Jesus to the saving of my soul. I was not satisfied with just one look at Jesus, but I looked, and looked, again and again, with a holy anxiety lest I might possibly have been mistaken, and not really have trusted Christ as my Savior. I wish we had more of that sacred anxiety concerning our walking in Christ.

We were not only very sincere in our early repentance and faith, but our reception of Christ was very vital. Salvation was to us a matter of life or death; it was not, something about which we were only slightly concerned. It would be well if we manifested a similar vitality about our daily walk in Christ. There are some professors, whom I know, who do not seem to me to be alive much above their ankles; they have not sufficient vitality to reach up to their knees, so as to make them mighty in prayer. They are alive, I hope, but they remind me very vividly of a remarkable but gruesome picture of the resurrection that I once saw. There were skeletons coming out of the graves, with the bones only partly covered with flesh. One man had a head without any eyes in it; another was stretching out an arm, that was all bone; and the rest of the figures in the picture were of a similar character. It was a strange conception on the part of the painter, yet I fear it was only too true a representation of the spiritual state, of many nominal Christians. I hope they are really rising from among the dead, but they have not risen yet into fullness of life. Many professors appear to have a very low vitality, if they are alive at all. Their hearts are hard and horny, their consciences unsensitive; sin does not shock them as it shocks the young convert. He is startled and alarmed at the very appearance of evil, but they have become so callous that they walk, unconcerned, among scenes that ought to break their hearts. May the Lord save you, beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, from all such callousness as that! May you have the same tender sensitiveness to sin that you had when you received Christ Jesus the Lord; and as you welcomed him then with warm, loving, overflowing emotion, so may you walk in him, all your days, as one who is alive from the dead, thoroughly alive, with all your powers and faculties in active exercise, and your whole soul brimming over with love to him!

Did you not also, beloved, receive Christ very eagerly? Have you ever helped to feed a man who had long been without food? If so, you know that it is a great treat to see how eagerly he eats. He does not pick over the meat to see if it is well done; it is all well done to him. He does not leave a scrap of food upon the plate, and he looks round to see if there is any more that he can beg. It was in such a fashion that we feasted upon Christ when we first received him. We had been for months, perhaps even for years, longing with a great heart-ache to find the Savior; and when we did find him, and began to feast upon him, we thought we never could have enough of him. Do you recollect how eager you were, in those days, to go where you could hear the gospel? You went to a place which was so crowded that you could not get a seat; but you did not mind standing in the aisle, and you did not feel tired then. But now you want a nice soft, cushion to sit on, and a hassock for your feet, and you are weary long before the sermon is finished. In those early days, you would have tramped many miles to hear about Jesus Christ, and even if the preacher's language was somewhat rough and uncouth, what cared you for that so long as he faithfully preached Jesus Christ and him crucified? That is the way in which we should eagerly walk in Christ still, feeling that we can never have too much of his company, longing to be often where he meets with his people, delighting in his worship, charmed with everything he says and does. We received Christ eagerly, so let us walk in him with the same eagerness and earnestness.

Many of us also received Christ very resolutely. I know that I asked the question, over and over again, "Shall I go to him?" and at last, when I was almost driven to despair, I cried, "I must, I will,-

**“I'll go to Jesus, though my sin
Hath like a mountain rose I know his courts,
I'll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.”**

That was how many of us received Christ Jesus the Lord. There were difficulties in our way, but we overcame them, for we were determined to be saved if it was possible. What sacred doggedness, what holy pertinacity will a soul bestow when it is resolved on being saved! Hunger will make a man break through stone walls and iron bars, but a soul that is hungering and thirsting after Christ does not know that there are any walls or bars, so overpowering is its eagerness to get to him. It was with such eagerness as this

that we received Christ Jesus the Lord; are we just as eager to walk in him? I know that some of you are sorely tempted; are you standing fast? Are you standing up for Jesus as you used to do when you first knew him? Are you firm as a rock in your resistance to everything that is opposed to him and to his truth? You ought to be; your song should still be that one of which you were so fond in those early days,-

**“Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead,
I’ll follow where he goes.”**

A lion-like spirit was in you then; you would gladly have gone to prison for Christ’s sake, or even to death if he had required it. If somebody had told me, when I was converted, that I should have to go to prison, and lie there for twelve years, as John Bunyan did, if I became a Christian, I verily believe that I should have leaped for joy at the prospect of so high an honor. To be a martyr for the truth’s sake,-the prospect looked glorious; the ruby crown glowed in the sunshine of our ardent anticipation, and we envied those who had been privileged to wear it. It was so then; but, beloved, is it so now? Can You cleave to Christ as tenaciously now as you did then? Can you bear to be in ill repute for his sake? Can you rejoice in being scoffed at because you are a Christian as you did when you received Christ Jesus the Lord? If you cannot, blush and be ashamed, and from henceforth pray that, with the same undaunted courage and determination with which you received him, you may continue to walk in him.

I will not weary you by multiplying words, but I must ask whether you do not recollect how joyfully you received Christ. Ah, you cannot forget that; for, in proportion to your sorrow before, was your joy when you accepted Christ as your Savior. No wonder you sang,-

**“Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away!”**

We are not surprised that Miriam and the women went out with timbrels and with dances when Pharaoh and all his host were drowned in the Red Sea, and we do not, marvel at Miriam’s jubilant song, “Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously,” for our soul took a timbrel, and our feet danced before the Lord, as we sang unto him who had triumphed so gloriously for us. As I go back, and remind you of those early joys, I ask you again whether you are as joyous now as you were then; you ought to be a great deal more joyous, for you have had so much more cause to praise the Lord than you had then. Come, brothers and sisters, let us go again to Jesus, as we went to him at the first; let us go as poor, guilty, needy sinners, to Jesus Christ, upon the cross, just as though we had never gone before. If we do so, I can tell you what the consequence will be just as it was at the first. As we —

**“View the flowing Of our
Savior’s precious blood,
With divine assurance knowing
He hath made our peace with God,” —**

we shall feel as though we were young converts once again. We may be getting old and grey, and perhaps cold as well as grey, but we shall become like little children again, and we shall shout “Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!” as the Son of David rides in triumph down the streets of our soul. Oh, that it may be so with many of us here! It ought to be so, and it will be so, if you walk in Christ Jesus the Lord as you received him in the hour of your conversion.

I will close my discourse, when I have just, reminded you that, when we received Christ Jesus the Lord, we received the whole of him. We took him for all that we knew of him, and we found that he was much more than we then thought he was; but we did not pick and choose, and say, “We will have his pardon, but we will not have his sanctification.” We took the many-sided Christ, the Christ of many glorious characters, the Christ of ten thousand times ten thousand beauties; we took Christ to teach us, Christ to lead us, Christ to feed us, Christ to cheer us, Christ for us to obey, and Christ for us to delight in; we took a whole Christ. And then we gave him our whole selves. We said, “Lord, take us, body, soul, and spirit; “we prayed that the sacrifice might be bound with cords to the horns of the altar for ever. We made no bargains with him; we gave the freehold of our souls to Jesus, and of our bodies too, and we only asked that we might not have a pulse beating except for him, or our lungs heaving except as he was our very life. And we took Christ-at least I know I did,-for better or worse, in health or in sickness, to have and to hold so that even death should never part us. We put our hand in his, and asked him to take us and keep us for ever; and we took him, and said, “We will hold to thee, and will not let thee go.” Since then, there has been many a tug from Satan, who has tried to drag us away from Christ, or to make us think that Christ was going away from us, but we have managed to hold to him to this hour. Perhaps you feel as though you had only got a hold of the hem of his garment; if so, try to get a firmer hold on him; grasp him, hold him by the feet, throw your arms about him, and tell him that, without a smile from him, your spirit cannot rest. Tell him that you are sick of love, and want his presence, and must have it; and beg him, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, to come to you. Say unto him, “My Lord, if thou dost love me, come and show thy love. If, indeed, there be between thee and me, a union of an eternal nature, come to me. Be not strange to thine own flesh, but be now as thou wast of old. Come to me again, and let thy left hand be under my head while thy right hand doth embrace me.” Oh, for more of these blessed hungerings and longings! Beloved, we will never let Christ go. We took him for ever, and we will

hold him for ever; and, blessed be his name, he will hold us for ever. We are in his hand, and none can pluck us thence. There shall we be when earth and heaven are in a blaze, there shall we be when he shall sit upon his judgment-seat; and there shall we be world without end. Amen.

I leave this sermon with God's people, but I cannot help adding that I do earnestly pray that all of you may receive Christ Jesus the Lord. Oh, come to him to-night! He is willing that you should have him, and every soul that wills to have Christ may have him; for "the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come find let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Amen, and Amen.

Colossians 2:6 As And So Sermon Notes

THERE is great safety in going back to first principles.

To make sure of being in the right way, it is good to look back at the entrance gate. Well begun is half done.

The text is addressed, not to the ungodly, nor to strangers, but to those who "have received Christ Jesus the Lord." They have commenced well; let them go on as they have begun.

For the spiritual good and establishment of such in the faith, the apostle longs, and to this end he gives the exhortation.

I. NOTICE IN THE TEXT THE FACT STATED. Sincere believers have in very deed "received Christ Jesus the Lord."

This is the old gospel word. Here is no evolution from within, but a gift from without, heartily accepted by the soul.

This is free-grace language: "received," not earned or purchased.

It is not said that they received Christ's words, though that is true, for they prize every precept and doctrine, but they received Christ.

Carefully observe—

The personality of him whom they received, "Christ Jesus the Lord": his person, his godhead, his humanity, himself.

They—

Received him into their knowledge.

Received him into their understanding.

Received him into their affections.

Received him into their trust.

Received him as their life at their new birth. When they received him, he gave them power to become the sons of God.

2. The threefold character in which they received him.

The words of the text, "Christ Jesus the Lord," indicate this.

They received him—

As Christ, anointed and commissioned of God.

As Jesus, the Savior, to redeem and sanctify them.

As the Lord, to reign and rule over them with undivided sway.

3. The looking away from self in this saving act of reception.

It is not said, as ye have fought for Jesus and won him, or studied the truth and discovered Christ Jesus, but, as ye have "received" him. This strips us of everything like boasting, for all we do is receive.

4. The blessed certainty of the experience of those to whom Paul wrote, "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord." They had really received Jesus; they had found the blessing to be real: no doubt remained as to their possession of it.

II. NOTICE, NEXT, THE COUNSEL GIVEN. "So walk ye in him."

There are four things suggested by that word "walk."

1. Life. Vially enjoy the Lord Jesus.
2. Continuance. Remain in Christ. Make him your constant place of daily movement and occupation.
3. Activity. Busy yourselves, but not with a new way of salvation. Work for Jesus, with him, and in obedience to him.
4. Progress. Advance, but ever let your most advanced thought remain in him.

III. NOTICE, LASTLY, THE MODEL WHICH IS PRESENTED TO US. We are to walk in Christ Jesus the Lord "as we received him."

And how was that?

1. We received him gratefully. How we blessed his name for regarding our low estate!
2. We received him humbly. We had no claim to his grace, and we confessed this and were lowly.
3. We received him joyfully. Our first joy was bright as the dew of the morning. Have we lost it?
4. We received him effectually. We brought forth many spiritual fruits and abounded in life, faith, love, and every grace.
5. We received him unreservedly. We made no conditions with him, and we reserved nothing for the flesh.

Thus, we should continue to walk in him, evermore in our daily life excelling in all these points.

Alas, some have never received Jesus!

Our closing words must be addressed to such.

If you will not receive Jesus, you refuse mercy here and heaven hereafter.

What! will you not receive so great a boon?

Explanatory

Inquirers are not infrequently counseled to give their hearts to Christ or to consecrate themselves to the Lord. We would not be overcritical with what is well meant; but really this is not the gospel. The good news of grace is that God hath given to us eternal life and redemption through his Son, and that in order to be saved, the sinner has nought to do but to accept it.

But having received the gift of God and having become partakers of his converting grace, then and therefore the divine obligation for service begins to press upon us. The Lord becomes an asker as soon as we have become recipients. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Let consecration crown conversion, let self-devotion to Christ answer to his self-devotion for you. — Dr. A. J. Gordon

If you would know how faith is to be exercised in thus abiding in Jesus, to be rooted more deeply and firmly in him, you have only to look back to the time when first you received him. You remember well what obstacles at that time there appeared to be in the way of your believing. There was first your vileness and guilt: it appeared impossible that the promise of pardon and love could be for such a sinner. Then there was the sense of weakness and death: you felt not the power for the surrender and the trust to which you were called. And then there was the future: you dared not undertake to be a disciple of Jesus while you felt so sure that you could not remain standing, but would speedily again be unfaithful and fall. These difficulties were as mountains in your way. And how were they removed? Simply, by the word of God. That word, as it were, compelled you to believe that, notwithstanding guilt in the past, and weakness in the present, and unfaithfulness in the future, the promise was sure that Jesus would accept and save you. On that word, you ventured to come and were not deceived: you found that Jesus did indeed accept and save you.

Apply this, your experience in coming to Jesus, to the abiding in him. By faith you became partakers of the initial grace; by that same faith you can enjoy the continuous grace of abiding in him. — Andrew Murray

Since they had received the doctrine of Christ, they could not again part with it without convicting themselves either of imprudence in having mistaken a false doctrine for a true one or of instability, in quitting and altering a doctrine which they knew to be good and sufficient when they received it. If your belief be good, why do you change it? If it be otherwise, why did you entertain it? Though it be a heinous sin not to receive the Lord Jesus when he presents himself to us in his gospel, yet it is much more evil to cast him out after having received him; as it is a greater outrage to thrust a man from your house when you have admitted him, than to shut your

doors against him at the first. — Jean Daille

Colossians 3:11 Christ is All

Sermon Notes

THERE are two worlds, the old and the new.

These are peopled by two sorts of manhood: the old man, and the new man, concerning whom, see verses 9 and 10.

In the first are many things, which are not in the second.

In the second are many things, which are not in the first.

Our text tells us what there is not and what there is in the new man.

Let us begin by asking whether the hearer knows where he is; for the text turns on that word "where."

I. WHAT THERE IS NOT IN THE NEW.

When we come to be renewed after the image of him that created us, we find an obliteration of:

1. National distinctions: "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew."

Jesus is a man. In the broadest sense, he is neither Jew nor Gentile. We see in him no restrictive nationality. Our own peculiar nationality sinks before union with him.

Jesus is now our nationality, our charter, and our fatherland.

Jesus is our hero, legislator, ancestor, leader.

Jesus gives us laws, customs, history, genealogy, prestige, privilege, reliance, power, heritage, conquest.

Jesus furnishes us with a new patriotism, loyalty, and clanship, which we may safely indulge to the utmost.

2. Ceremonial distinctions: "There is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision." The typical separation is removed.

The separating rite is abolished, and the peculiar privilege of a nation born after the flesh is gone with it.

Those who were reckoned far off are brought near.

Both Jew and Gentile are united in one body by the cross.

3. Social distinctions: "There is neither bond nor free."

We are enabled through divine grace to see that—

These distinctions are transient.

These distinctions are superficial.

These distinctions are of small value.

These distinctions are nonexistent in the spiritual realm.

What a blessed blending of all men in one body is brought about by our Lord Jesus! Let us all work in the direction of unity.

II. WHAT THERE IS IN THE NEW.

"Christ is all and in all," and that in many senses.

1. Christ is all our culture. In him we emulate and excel the "Greek."

2. Christ is all our revelation. We glory in him even as the "Jew" gloried in receiving the oracles of God.

3. Christ is all our ritual. We have no "circumcision," neither have we seven sacraments nor a heap of carnal ordinances; he is far more than these. All Scriptural ordinances are of him.

4. Christ is all our simplicity. We place no confidence in the bare Puritanism which may be called "uncircumcision."

5. Christ is all our natural traditions. He is more to us than the freshest ideas which cross the mind of the "Barbarian."

6. Christ is all our unconquerableness and liberty. The "Scythian" had not such boundless independence as we find in him.

7. Christ is all as our Master, if we be "bond." Happy servitude of which he is the Head!

8. Christ is our Magna Carta, yea, our liberty itself if we be "free."

In closing, we will use the words "Christ is all and in all" as our text for application to ourselves. It furnishes a test question for us.

Is Christ so great with us that he is our all?

Is Christ so broadly and fully with us that he is all in our all?

Is he, then, all in our trust, our hope, our assurance, our joy, our aim, our strength, our wisdom — in a word, "all in all"?

If so, are we living in all for him?

Are we doing all for him, because he is all to us?

Embroideries

What a rich inheritance have all those who are truly interested in Jesus Christ! *Christus meus et omnia*. They possess him that is all in all, and in possessing him, they possess all. "I have all things, my brother," saith Jacob to Esau (Gen. 33:11, margin). He that hath him that is all in all cannot want anything. "All things are yours," saith the apostle, "whether things present or things to come, and ye are Christ's" (1 Cor. 3:22-23). A true believer, let him be never so poor outwardly, is in truth the richest man in all the world; he hath all in all, and what can be added to all? — Ralph Robinson

Christ is not valued at all unless he be valued above all. — Augustine

He is a path, if any be misled;
He is a robe, if any naked be;
If any chance to hunger, he is bread;
If any be a bondman, he is free;
If any be but weak, how strong is he!
To dead men life he is, to sick men health,
To blind men sight, and to the needy wealth;
A pleasure without loss, a treasure without stealth.

— Giles Fletcher

All, then, let him be in all our desires and wishes. Who is that wise merchant that hath heart large enough to conceive and believe as to this? Let him go sell all his nothings, that he may compass this pearl, barter his bugles for this diamond. Verily, all the haberdash stuff the whole pack of the world hath, is not worthy to be valued with this jewel.

I cannot but reverence the memory of that reverend divine (Mr. Welsh) who, being in a deep muse after some discourse that had passed of Christ, and tears trickling abundantly from his eyes before he was aware, being urged for the cause thereof, he honestly confessed that he wept because he could not draw his dull heart to prize Christ aright. I fear this is a rare mind in Christians, for many think a very little to be quite enough for Jesus, and even too much for him! — Samuel Ward

"At length, one evening, while engaged in a prayer-meeting, the great deliverance came. I received the full witness of the Spirit that the blood of Jesus had cleansed me from all sin. I felt I was nothing, and Christ was all in all. Him I now cheerfully received in all his offices: my Prophet, to teach me; my Priest, to atone for me; my King, to reign over me. Oh, what boundless, boundless happiness there is in Christ, and all for such a poor sinner as I am! This happy change took place in my soul March 13th, 1772." — William Carvosso

Dannecker, the German sculptor, spent eight years in producing a face of Christ; and at last wrought out one in which the emotions of love and sorrow were so perfectly blended that beholders wept as they looked upon it. Subsequently, being solicited to employ his great talent on a statue of Venus, he replied, "After gazing so long into the face of Christ, think you that I can now turn my attention to a heathen goddess?" Here is the true secret of weanedness from worldly idols, "the expulsive power of a new affection."

I have heard the voice of Jesus,
Tell me not of aught beside;
I have seen the face of Jesus,
All my soul is satisfied.— Dr. A. J. Gordon