

"To You"

(No. 2899)

A SERMON PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1904.

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, JULY 9, 1876.

"To you is the word of this salvation sent." [Acts 13:26](#).

MY text must be read in the light of the 46th verse, or else I may be thought to be guilty of wresting it from its true meaning. Paul originally said to the Jews and proselytes in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, "To you is the word of this salvation sent." But they rejected the message and, therefore, the Apostle said to them, "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." So, if Paul were now here, he might, in addressing you, use the very same words which he used in addressing Israel of old and say, "To you is the word of this salvation sent."

This fact furnishes us with a warning. Remember, Brothers and Sisters, that the Gospel was first sent to Israel. Our Lord Jesus Christ, Himself, confined His personal ministry almost entirely within the bounds of Palestine and He bade His disciples begin the preaching of the Gospel at Jerusalem—and such was the narrowness which naturally appertained to their nationality that it took a very long time to bring most of the Apostles to preach to any people beside the Jews. In this way the Jews had a full opportunity of knowing the Truth of God, but, because they were blinded by prejudice and sin, they could not see Christ. They judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, so Paul and the rest of the Apostles turned to the Gentiles. I would solemnly remind you who now have the opportunity of hearing the Gospel that if any nation shall be privileged to have the Gospel sent to it and yet shall continue to reject it, God may turn from that nation as readily as He turned from the Jews—perhaps even more readily than He turned from His ancient and peculiarly favored people, Israel.

If, in this country, men and women continue to go after the idolatrous calves of Ritualism, or turn aside to the modern Sadduceeism of skepticism, it may be that the Lord will remove the candlestick out of its place and that the Word of the Gospel will no longer be sent to us. At present there are many nations to which the Gospel has scarcely been sent by the way of preaching it in their own tongue. They have not yet heard it, but they must do so, sooner or later. There are other countries that were, at one time, the home of saints to whom Christ's name was known—yet they are now left in the darkness of Popery, or else Mohammedanism has brought the lies of the crescent to take the place of the Truth of the Cross. Go to the ruins of the seven churches of Asia and ask how it is that, as churches, we know nothing of them now— and learn from their doom not to trifle with the Truth of God when it comes

to you, nor to judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life lest, perhaps, the messengers of peace should be sent to other lands and the Light of the Gospel should no longer shine upon our highly favored island!

And you, dear Friend—speaking personally to you as an individual rather than to the nation in general—I pray you to take heed that while you are able to hear the Gospel, you also receive it, for it may be that very soon you will be unable to come to the House of Prayer, or your lot may be cast where the Gospel is not faithfully preached and you may have to rue these blessed days in which the Kingdom of God came so near to you, yet you did not enter in! Yes, you may lie a-dying and you may have to lament the Sabbaths that you have wasted and which never will come back to you. And oh, in the next world, with what regret you will have to look back upon the desecrated Sabbaths, the neglected means of Grace and the despised invitations of God's ministers! And you will mourn that you judged yourself unworthy of ever-

lasting life and, therefore, have passed away into that place of woe where Gospel invitations can never reach your ears! I am preaching with the hope that at least some of you may be saved from such a terrible doom as that and that, this very hour, the Gospel which is sent to you may be accepted by you!

There was a little boy whom his mother noticed as always wonderfully attentive to the Word. He would frequently put his hand to his ear so as to catch every word from the preacher. She said to him, "John, why do you do that, my Dear?" He replied, "Did you not hear the minister say, the other Sunday, that if there was any part of the sermon that would be sure to do us good, the devil would try to cause a disturbance just then, so that we might not hear it? So I am determined that if there is anything that is likely to do me good, I will hear it." Any man, or woman, or child who will hear like that, will not hear in vain—that is impossible!

I. My talk will be very simple and not very long. And, first of all, I am going to answer the question, WHAT IS THIS WORD OF SALVATION WHICH IS SENT TO US?

If you read the passage through, as we did just now, you will see that the word of salvation, which is sent to us, is the testimony that Jesus Christ is the promised Savior. Paul showed that He was of the seed of David, the Messiah whom God had promised to His people by the Prophets. Jesus of Nazareth was the Seed of the woman who was to bruise the old serpent's head, the One of whom the ancient seers spoke so sweetly and for whom the 12 tribes, watching night and day, waited so long. This is the Messiah, the world's only Hope, the one Redeemer—rightly called the King of the Jews—yet also the Savior of all who believe in Him!

What has this Truth of God to do with you? Why, it has this to do with you—that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sin/That same Jesus who was the Son of God, took upon Himself our human nature, lived in this world and worked righteous-

ness. And when the due time came, He took upon Himself the sins of all His people. The Lord laid them upon Him and He carried them up to the Cross and there, upon the tree, He bore the full penalty for all the transgressions of His people. The penalty for sin was death, so Jesus died. And Paul writes, by Inspiration, "God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Now, because Christ died in the place of the ungodly, the forgiveness of sins is being preached, at this moment, in tens of thousands of places all over the world! Whoever believes in Jesus Christ—that is, simply trust in Him—shall receive at once the forgiveness of all his sins—a complete and irreversible forgiveness by which the whole of his sin is blotted out as when a man strikes his pen through the record of a debt or writes below it, "Settled." All his sin is removed, as when the North wind drives away the cloud and the sky is bright and clear. All his sin is removed, as when the fuller cleanses the filthy garment and makes it white as snow. All his sin is removed forever, "as far as the East is from the West." So who can lay anything to the charge of the man whose sins Christ has forgiven? This forgiveness is preached unto you through the Man, Christ Jesus, even to you who believe on His name!

The word of this salvation is the proclamation of perfect salvation through the risen Redeemer, for the Apostle adds, "by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses." That is to say, there were some sins which the Law given to Moses never thought of forgiving, but there are no sins which Christ is either unable or unwilling to forgive. The Law of Moses could not, in very deed, put away anysin, so fresh sacrifices had to be continually offered under the Mosaic dispensation. "But this Man" whom we preach unto you, "after He had offered one Sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God," having no need to present any more sacrifices. So that if you believe on Him, your sins shall be not figuratively, but actually put away forever—and there shall remain to you no more consciousness of sin. Washed in the precious blood of Christ, you shall be whiter than snow and shall enter into Heaven, none daring to accuse you, for who shall accuse the man or woman whom Christ has justified? This is the word of salvation, then, that is sent to you, my dear Friends, as much as to those to whom Paul spoke. "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life." He shall never perish, for he is forgiven by God and is "accepted in the Beloved."

If there are any of you who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, it seems to me that you are like a ship that is derelict—left to the mercy of the winds and waves. O Soul, yours is an unhappy condition for anyone to be in! Though as yet you are not destroyed. Though as yet you are not in Hell, it ought to be misery enough for a man to feel, "I am not under the direction of God. I have not Christ on board to be my Pilot." Stop, young woman! Stop, young man! If that is the case with you, go no further as you are, but ask the Lord to direct you from this time forth and even forever more! I stand here as a living witness to this fact that it is the highest wisdom and happiness to trust in the Lord! I have relied upon

Him since I was 15 years of age and my only grief is that I did not trust Him earlier! But since the hour that brought me to His feet and enabled me to rest in Him, He has been a good Helper, a sure Guide and a blessed Friend to me! And speaking from my own experience, I would entreat my Brothers and Sisters who are younger than I am to delay no longer, but to take my Heavenly Father to be their Guide also! May the Lord, the Holy Spirit, lead you to do so this very hour, for Jesus Christ's sake!

II. Now let us pass on to a second question which is, IN WHAT MANNER IS THIS GOSPEL SENT TO YOU? Let me have your ears and your heart while I try to answer this important question as the Holy Spirit shall guide me.

Well, first, it was sent to you, dear Friend, whoever you may be, in Christ's universal commission which He gave to His disciples, "Go you into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." You are a creature, are you not? Then the Gospel is to be preached to you! Paul wrote to Timothy, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." You are a sinner, are you not? Then, Christ came to save you and this faithful saying is worthy of your acceptance! Our Lord Jesus Christ, in His last invitation in the Book of Revelation, says, "Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Surely, "whoever will" must include you, whoever you may be, for you have a will and you can come to Christ if you will—

"Let every mortal ear attend, And every heart rejoice"—

for, to everyone of woman born—

The trumpet of the Gospel sounds With an inviting voice."

Young or old, rich or poor, whomever you may be, "to you is the word of this salvation sent" by Him who bade us go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, saying, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned."

But it is also sent to you in another sense, for the preaching of it has actually come to you. The word of this salvation is sent to every creature under Heaven, but the great mass of mankind has not yet heard it. "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they are sent?" O Church of the living God, what a sin lies at your door because they are not sent and, therefore, the heathen do not hear and hence they are not saved! But, "to you," the preacher has come! You have heard the Gospel—some of you from your childhood. Can you recollect the time when you did not hear it? You say, sometimes, that it has been dinned into your ears until you are almost weary of it. When we come into the pulpit, we cannot tell you anything fresh—it is just the same old story that you have heard so long. "To you" the word of this salvation has been sent and you have heard it and know what it is!

Perhaps some of you may say to me, "Sir, we live in a place where the Gospel is not preached. We have rank Ritualism in the parish church and nothing but vapid intellectualism

in all the Dissenting chapels." I am sorry if that is true, but look here, Sirs—you have all got this Bible, or you can all get it and it will be a stern witness against everyone of you, whether you hear the Gospel preached or not! I suppose that a copy of the Bible is in almost every Englishman's house—I wonder whether there is one home in this land without it—there should not be. Well, then, as long as this invaluable preacher is with you—as long as you can read the Word of God in your home, or in the field, or in the barn or the shop—to you, indeed, is the word of this salvation sent!

Further, I believe that, to some people, the Gospel is sent in a yet more remarkable manner. Possibly the very fact that you are here, at this service, is one of the many instances in which the Gospel has been sent to you. There was a young man, some years ago, who dishonored his father's name in the village where he lived—a scapegrace, as they called him—and he ran away from home to a distant land. He came to London and went on board a vessel, at the docks, expecting to sail. This was on a Saturday, but an "accident" occurred and the ship was delayed, so he had a Sunday in London. He remembered that his father had often spoken of the Tabernacle, so he enquired the way and came here—an utterly ungodly young man. Some months after, in a letter which he wrote to his home, his father was surprised to find that he was commencing to preach the Gospel. He said that on that Sunday night when he came here, the Lord met with him and saved him. That was a blessed "accident" that kept him from sailing on the Saturday and that brought him here to listen to the Gospel of Jesus!

I never know who may be in my congregation. Ah, Tom, you scapegrace, I should not wonder, as you have come in here, if there was another wonder in store for you! And I trust that the Lord has sent the Gospel to you by that singular Providence which has brought you among us! Out of this crowd there must be some who are here under very peculiar circumstances. Some of you have come up from the country and you have been persuaded by friends to come here. I do not know you, or anything about you, but my Lord does and I trust that to you is the word of this salvation sent by the very Providence which has brought you here! A child takes the seed of a weed, when it is fully ripe, and blows upon it in sheer sport—away go the little parachutes, bearing the seeds through the air—and you may find that weed over hill and dale miles away! We, though not little children, take the Divine Seed of the Truth of God and, with our anxious, but believing breath, we blow it abroad in this congregation. Where that seed may fall, we cannot tell. It may fall upon some stranger from the backwoods of Canada, or some Brother from a great city of America, or some lonely worker who has been toiling far away in India, or on some at home, unknown to us, who, nevertheless, shall receive into good soil the seed, not of a weed, but of a precious flower of God! And if the world is not sooner brought to its close, even a thousand years hence there may be plants growing that can trace their spiritual parentage to the sowing of tonight! O

young man, young woman, worker for Christ—you can never tell the infinite issues of what seemed so small a matter as the sowing of the good Seed of the Kingdom!

Sometimes God sends the Truth very specially home to the heart and conscience of the hearer by the singularity of the preacher's words. He has been guided by the Holy Spirit to paint the man's portrait to the life and the man has been astounded at it. He has imagined that somebody must have informed the preacher about him, yet the speaker was, all the while, quite innocent of the man's affairs. "Why, the very words I have used," says he, "and the inmost thoughts of my heart were laid bare!" Do you not know that this is one of the characteristics of the Word of God? Paul says that it "is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." If anything in the preaching at any time comes right home to you—as though the preacher looked right into you, knew all about you and reckoned you up as a boy does a sum in arithmetic on His slate—do not begin to wonder how it is done, but realize that, in this way, "to you is the word of this salvation sent." Oh, that the blessed Spirit would now arrest some of you—laying His hand of Grace upon your shoulder as the sheriff's officer does when he arrests a man in the name of the law! May the Lord say to you, "You are My prisoner. You shall give your heart to Me. Make haste and come down and receive Me into your heart, for there I must dwell forever"—

"Thus the eternal counsel ran— 'Almighty Grace, arrest that man!'"—

And when the eternal counsel so runs and the Divine decree so determines, so shall it be, for the Lord God is mighty to save and none shall be able to withstand the power of His Omnipotent Grace!

III. Now, thirdly, I am going to keep to the same theme, yet to touch another string while I reply to this question— IN WHAT POSITION DOES THE GOSPEL PLACE A MAN WHEN IT COMES TO HIM?

The word of this salvation has been sent to many of you. In what position does it put you? Well, first, in a position of great indebtedness, for you owe—I dare not try to calculate how much—God for sending the Gospel to you. That there should be a Gospel to send to you—that Christ should be given for you—that His precious blood should be shed for you—that there should be full and free forgiveness for you, though you feel that you are altogether undeserving of it— all this makes up a stupendous favor from God. May you never dare to thrust it from you!

Then think of what you owe to the Providence that has sent the Gospel to you. For you, dear Friends, Apostles lived, labored, suffered and journeyed so that even to these distant isles of Britain the Gospel of Jesus might be brought. For you Reformers battled, bled and died that they might dispel the darkness of error and falsehood and bring out the Light of the Truth of God. For you, martyrs suffered by the thousands! Go to Smithfield and recall

what your brave sires endured in order that their sons might have the Gospel freely preached to them—that very Gospel which many of them despise! Wonderful have been the arrangements of Divine Providence to keep the Light of Truth burning in these lands!

The fact that at this moment you are hearing the Gospel preached imposes a great obligation upon you. Who built this place, but for the most part generous Christian people—who are even now praying for your conversion—God's servants who love you and desire your eternal welfare? And, though I ask no thanks of you, yet does my soul yearn over

you, poor Soul, longing that you may find the Savior as I have found Him and be as happy in Him as I am. Well, you cannot be thought of and loved by others thus, you cannot have the great wheels of Divine Providence continually revolving to bring the Gospel to you and, above all—transcendently above all—you cannot have the Lord Jesus Christ bleeding on Calvary's Cross that there may be a Gospel to preach to you without your being put under very solemn obligations!

Further, the fact that you have the Gospel sent to you puts you into a very hopeful position. I like to think about how many people are going to be saved every time the Gospel is faithfully preached. It is not preached in vain—we deliver a message from God that never misses the mark at which He aimed! We are sure that it is so, for we preach it in faith. We always expect to hear of sinners being saved and we are never disappointed, nor shall we ever be while we can preach the Truth of God with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven. It is in His power that we preach, for we have sought the aid of the Holy Spirit! And thousands of you have sought His aid, too, and we have not sought in vain as we look for conversions and we, therefore, feel, dear Friends, that you are in a hopeful condition—and we believe that many of you will be brought to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ!

But remember—and here let me throw the whole emphasis of my soul into my message—you are put into a very responsible position, for if the Gospel is thus brought to you and you reject it, it will be a savor of death unto death to you! To every person to whom the word of this salvation comes, I have to say, in my Master's name—If you are not saved by it, you will have the blood of your soul on your own skirts. Woe unto you if you judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life and declare that you will not have Christ to reign over you! Woe unto you if you are disobedient and stumble at this stumbling-stone! Ah, my dear Hearers, it may seem but a trifling thing to you to hear the Gospel, but this makes your position very different from what it would otherwise have been! The Last Great Day will call me to account for every word I utter in delivering my Master's message—and it will also call each one of you to account for the reception or rejection of that message! You young men and young women, and you graybeards will have to answer in that day for the way you deal with tonight's message! You will not be able to excuse yourselves by saying, "We never heard of pardon through the blood of Jesus." You will not be able to say, "The preacher did

not proclaim the Gospel to us. He gave us some fine language and tried to play the orator—and finished off with a grand display of fireworks." You will never be able to truthfully say that! You know that there is nothing that I desire but to set Christ plainly before you and to beseech, entreat and implore you to put your trust in Him, for He is worthy of all the trust of your heart!

So, have done with all other confidences and with the love of sin—and lay hold on eternal life! But, whether you will do so or not, you can be sure of this—to you is the word of this salvation sent and the Kingdom of God has come near to you!

IV. My last question is this. HOW ARE YOU GOING TO TREAT THE WORD OF THIS SALVATION, NOW

THAT IT IS SENT TO YOU?

First, are any of you going to contradict it and blaspheme it? I trust not, although that sin is not an uncommon one nowadays. Yet I most sincerely hope that I am not addressing one who blasphemes the Christ who died for sinners—such love as His ought to be free from blasphemy!

If you do not commit that sin, I fear that you may say, as so many others have said before you, "I will think of it tomorrow." You do not really mean to think of it if you talk like that. When Felix said to Paul, "Go your way for this time: when I have a convenient season, I will call for you," what he meant was, "I do not want to listen to you any longer; you are a nuisance to me." Let me put the matter to you very plainly. You either love Christ or do not love Him— which is it? That "tomorrow" plea is a lie! Satan has invented it in order that he may enable men to reject Christ and yet flatter their souls with the notion that they are not doing so. Come, then, it may be that this is the last time the question will ever be put to you in this fashion. I have you, as it were, by the button-hole now and, as the "Ancient Mariner" detained the wedding guest with his weird story, so would I hold you with this earnest personal pressure upon your heart and conscience! Do you mean to give Christ the go-by, or not? Remember that the bell shall toll before long for you— and six feet of earth shall hold down each one who comes to this Tabernacle and who now sits and listens to the word of this salvation!

Oh, whatever you do, do not procrastinate! Say, "No," if you mean, "No." Say "Yes," if God the Holy Spirit enables you to say it, but do not say it as some have too readily done in certain revival services, without fully considering

the matter! They have jumped into religion and jumped out again just as quickly. Like the rocky-ground hearers, the seed quickly sprang up and there was the green blade, but there was no depth of earth, so it soon withered away. Ask the Lord to plow your soul and to break up the soil of your heart that there may be roothold for the good Seed of the Kingdom!

And, in order to attain to this end, look right away from yourself to Jesus—away from your repenting, pleading and chapel attendance and anything else—to Jesus only, with that true faith which has nothing to do with anything but the finished work of the Christ who says, "Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth." Do not trust to going into enquiry-rooms and talking with earnest evangelists and other Christian workers. If you would be saved, your soul must come to grappling terms with Christ—and Christ must come to close terms with you—otherwise you will be none the better for having heard the Gospel! Indeed, the very fact that you have heard it will only increase your condemnation!

I think I hear someone say, "Gladly would I have Him now! I would give my eyes to have Him." Well, you need not give your eyes, or anything else—you may have Him for nothing! I have told you the story of the vessel that was out at sea, as the captain thought, but he was out of his reckoning. They ran short of water, they had not a drop to drink. So at last they hailed a vessel and, speaking through the trumpet the captain cried, "We need water! We are perishing for lack of water." Imagine his surprise when there came across the wave this reply, "Dip it up! You are in the river Amazon! It is fresh water all round you. Dip it up!" You perhaps think that you are out on the salt sea, but you are not—God's mercy is all around you! Throw your bucket overboard; dip it up! Trust in Jesus—

"Only trust Him! Only trust Him!

He will save you now!

Only trust Him, Only trust Him!

He will save you now!"

Do you ask, "What shall I do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." That was Paul's answer to the question and I cannot give you a better one. Believing does not take a week, or even a minute. Your heart rests and relies on Christ and Christ saves your heart. See me leaning here, with all my weight, upon this platform rail? Lean so upon Christ, with all your weight. Have done with everything but Jesus—and when you have believed on Him, then obey Him by being baptized in His name, for He put belief and Baptism together when He said, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved."

So, accept the whole of the Gospel and keep to the command of Christ in every point—and then you may look to the faithful God to fulfill His promise that you shall be saved! The Lord bless you and save every one of you, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: ACTS 13:13-49.

Verse 13. Now when Paul and his company set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem. 'John'—that is, John Mark, as we see by chapter 15:37.

14, 15. But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue went unto them, saying, You men and brethren,

if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say so. The rulers of the synagogue had noticed them as strangers coming in and perceived that they were Jews, probably by their wearing the same kind of garments as other Jews did.

16. Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and you that fear God, give audience. Or, rather, "and you Gentile proselytes, give audience."

17. The God of this people of Israel choose our fathers and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm He brought them out of there. It is always well to begin with our hearers upon some common ground. So, wishing to persuade these people to receive the Lord Jesus as the promised Messiah, Paul begins with that which was always attractive to their ears—the history of their nation—with a special mention of the peculiar

favor which God had shown to His chosen people, Israel, in bringing them up out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage.

18-21. And about the time of forty years He put up with their manners in the wilderness. And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot And after that He gave unto them Judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the Prophet And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul, the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. Do you not sometimes hear people speak disparagingly about certain parts of Scripture and say, "Oh, that is the historical part"? Dear Friends, never fall into the error of thinking less of one part of Scripture than of another, but remember that "all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God and is profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the men of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This sermon by Paul is a rehearsal of Old Testament history—and he would not have spoken unprofitably—you may depend upon that! I would urge you to bear a protest against the method which seems to be springing up, nowadays, of saying, "That part of the Bible is for the Jews." Or, "That particular Epistle"—for they speak thus even of the New Testament—"is not for us." It is all for us and we are to seek to profit by every word of it, praying the Holy Spirit to apply it to our hearts!

22-25. And when He had removed him, He raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also He gave testimony, and said, I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, which shall fulfill all My will Of this man's seed has God, according to His promise, raised unto Israel a Savior—Jesus—after John had first preached before His coming, the Baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Who do you think I am? I am not He. But, behold, there comes One after me, whose shoes of His feet I am not worthy to loosen. Paul went on with his narrative as far as the history of Saul and David—and so he came to great David's greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He had come by way of Old Testament history to Christ and by way of John the Baptist to

Christ— and that is how the preacher of the Gospel should travel. On whatever road he journeys, his terminus must be Christ. The motto of all true servants of God must be, "we preach Christ and him crucified." A sermon without Christ in it is like a loaf of bread without flour in it! No Christ in your sermon, Sir? Then go home and never preach again until you have something worth preaching!

26. Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whoever among you fears God. Or, "is a proselyte to God."

26, 27. To you is the word of this salvation sent For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the Prophet which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him. See how easy it is for people to hear the Bible read and yet to know very little about what it contains? They may have the lessons read every Sabbath in their hearing and yet they may not understand anything that is in them. They may even become great readers of the Scriptures, yet not come to Christ as it was with those to whom the Lord Jesus said— "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. But you will not come to Me, that you might have life." If you are content with merely reading or hearing the Scriptures and do not come to Christ, Himself, you stop short of salvation! Yes, you stay in a position where you may be capable of the grossest sin—as were these people at Antioch in Pisidia.

28-37. And though they found no cause of death in Him, yet desired they Pilate that He should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of Him, they took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulcher. But God raised Him from the dead: and He was seen many days of them which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God has fulfilled the same unto us, their children, in that He has raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the Second Psalm, You are My Son, this day have I begotten You. And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He said on this wise, I will give You the sure mercies of David. Why He says also in another Psalm, You shall not allow Your Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but He, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Note how Paul keeps to Scripture! An Inspired Apostle, himself, yet He appealed to the Old Testament to support his case. That was the best argument he could possibly use with Jews—and often it will be the best that we can use with Gentiles.

38-42. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest

that come upon you which is spoken of in the proverb; Behold, you despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you. And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. They did not mind hearing sermons twice in those days! We are not often asked to preach the same sermon over again. But these people wanted to know the Truth of God and, therefore, they asked to have it repeated. If our people will not receive the Gospel the first time we preach it, we must tell it to them over and over again. With the hammer of the Word of God, we must strike the same nail on the head again and again. Even if we do not utter the same words there must always be the same Subject, Sabbath by Sabbath and week by week.

43-46. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the Grace of God. And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spoke against these things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold. Though Jews themselves, they could not bear to see the bigotry of their nation.

46. And said, It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. And a blessed turning it has been for you, dear Friends, and for me!

47-49. For so has the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set you to be a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the Word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the Word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.