

## **Christ Our Peace**

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"He is our peace." [Ephesians 2:14](#).

THE true minister of Christ is not satisfied to be long away from his main theme. There are many things which it is very proper for him to speak upon in your hearing. We dare not forget the Doctrines of the Word of God, or the precepts, or the experiences of God's people. But recognizing the claims of all these, God forbid that we should glorify save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! It is the preaching of Christ which is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Therefore, wherever we may wander around the circumference, we always feel a drawing in of our soul toward the center, which is "Christ in you, the hope of Glory."

And if the preacher feels that he cannot go on long in the pulpit without preaching up his Lord and Master, I am quite sure that all the saints of God feel that they cannot be long content without this theme. They must constantly have Christ. As often as the table is spread in our homes, we need bread. We do not care to have the same meats and drinks in the morning, at mid-day and at the evening meal. We like to have a frequent change of food, but we always want the bread—and the table is badly furnished, let it have what it may upon it, if there is not there the bread which is the staff of life! So the Believer delights in the variety of God's Word and there is no Truth which is not precious to him. He counts the very shavings of truth to be like the dust of diamonds. Let every particle of it be gathered up and treasured, yes, so treasured that men may be ready to die for the slightest fragment of a Truth of God! But still, the purest diamond, the Koh-I-Noor of the whole, is the Doctrine of the Savior suffering for our sins—and if we do not hear much concerning the Lamb of God, if this is not the big bell that is rung most often, we feel that none of the others can make up for the lack! If this silver trumpet of Jubilee is not blown, the year is dull and dreary, and the service of God's sanctuary becomes an empty thing. Christ, Christ, Christ! Oh, that we may always make Him the sum and substance of our ministry and that you may always desire Christ as the Water of Life to your souls—your All-in-All, without whom you cannot be at rest! We come then, at this time, to our dear theme, praying God the Holy Spirit to take of the things of Christ and show them to us. It is His office—may He tenderly consider us and fulfill that office in our souls—here and now!

There are only four words in the text and, therefore, four things may suffice us for tonight. The first great word, or, at any rate, the second greatest, is the word, "peace," and we shall think for a little while upon that, considering—

I. IN WHAT SENSE WE ARE TO REGARD THE EXPRESSION, "HE IS OUR PEACE."

The text compels us to begin with the thought, the Lord Jesus Christ is peace between the Jew and the Gentile. There was an old enmity between these two, an enmity on both sides. The Jew looked down upon the Gentile. He said, "I am of the seed of Abraham, the friend of God—ours are the oracles, ours the true God and the Covenant—as for you Gentiles, you are an idolatrous seed whom God has left, as He did your father, to carry out the devices of your own hearts and to perish in your uncircumcision." The Jew called the Gentile a dog, thought him unclean, would have no friendly dealings with him, considered that uncircumcised men were little better than beasts and scarcely to be written down in the same list as the seed of Israel.

And the Gentiles, with equal earnestness and intensity, returned the enmity, for if the Jew taunted the Gentile with uncircumcision, much more did the Gentile ridicule the Jew because of his circumcision! The most severe edicts, especially under the Roman Empire, were passed against the Jews. Some of the Emperors expressed themselves as believing them to be the most detestable of all races! One of them said that he had seen the heathens of Sarmatia and had beheld the barbar-

ous tribes of the North, but he had seen all vices and all wickedness outdone among the Jews! It was not true—it was a gross lie—but it shows what was the enmity of the Gentile mind generally against the Jew, for the fact was that in those days the Jew was looked upon as unsocial. He never mingled with other nations. He could by no possibility be absorbed into other tribes, but held firmly to his nationality and would not be reckoned among the people. Hence there was a perpetual conflict. But my Brothers and Sisters, no sooner did the Lord Jesus Christ display the fullness of the Gospel in the Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Spirit resting upon the Jew, than the Jew began to preach to the Gentile! There was a little tug in Peter's heart at first. He hardly liked it, but still, God gave him a vision and immediately he went to preach the Gospel among those whom he had counted to be common and unclean! As for Paul, though a Pharisee of the Pharisees, though one of the strictest of Jews, yet he seems to have taken naturally to preaching among the Gentiles as soon as he was converted. He immediately went to these despised people and began to declare unto them the unsearchable riches of Christ! Now, in Christ Jesus, what fraternity there is, my Brothers and Sisters, between the seed of Israel and the Gentile stock! How we all feel that we are one! How many of the Jewish people has the Lord called! I hear it sometimes said that He called a larger proportion of the Jews than He has of the Gentiles, for, remember, the seed of Israel is but small, while the Gentiles at the present time number, I suppose, a thousand millions at least, so that a small number of Christian Jews make a large proportion to the bulk! But wherever you meet with a converted Jew, a true Believer, there is no more hearty lover of the Gentiles, no one more desirous to see the Gentiles saved!

And when you meet with a genuine, converted, instructed Gentile, how his heart goes out toward the seed of Israel and how rejoiced he is when he hears that some of the Lord's Brothers and Sisters, according to the flesh, are converted to the faith in the crucified Jesus! Yes, there is now no longer enmity. It is all over. Nothing can be more un-Christian than for a Christian to despise a Jew! Nothing is more unlike the spirit of our Master than when you laugh at the Jew and speak of him with contempt. Remember that the King of kings was a Jew! The Lord Jesus Christ, Himself—whom we adore as true Deity—came in our humanity as of the stock of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. Let there always be love and concord between us—and when the Lord shall be pleased to take the veil from Israel's eyes—then shall be our happy time as well as theirs. The Lord send it soon that He may be glorified.

Enough, however, upon that. The Lord Jesus Christ is our peace in a second sense, namely, in making peace between nations. That there are wars in the world at the present time is not the consequence of anything that Christ has said, but of the lusts of our flesh. As I understand the Word of God, I always rejoice to find a soldier a Christian, but I always mourn to find a Christian a soldier, for it seems to me that when I take up Christ Jesus, I hear one of His Laws, "I say unto you, resist not evil. Put up your sword into its sheath; he that takes the sword shall perish by the sword." The followers of Christ in these days seem to me to have forgotten a great part of Christianity. How many of you would go tomorrow into a court of law and, if you were called upon to do it, would take an oath, whereas if there is anything taught in Scripture, it is expressly taught that you are not to swear at all, neither by Heaven, nor by earth, nor by any other oath! If Christ ever delivered a plain precept, it is this—and yet all denominations of Christians seem to have cast it to the winds, with the exception of the Society of Friends. And so with regard to this matter of war. Our Apostle does not mince matters when he says, "Whence come wars? Whence come fights? Come they not from your own lusts?" That is the top and bottom of it, but, wherever true Christianity prevails, war becomes less frequent. It is owing to Christianity that war is far less common—though still too frequent—than it used to be. The length of human life has been much increased by the prevalence of peace—and wars, devastating wars, though, alas, they still break out—are not so constant as once they were and we are confidently looking forward to the time when the Messiah shall wield His blessed scepter and wars shall cease to the ends of the earth! Then shall men—

"Hang the useless helmet high, And study war no more."

Then shall the shrill clarion of the battlefield yield to the pipe of shepherd's plaintive melody. Then shall the weaned child play upon the horn of the asp and the lion shall eat straw like an ox. Oh, that the Prince of Peace would come and establish His empire upon a firm foundation! Then could we, indeed say, "He is our peace!"

But, Brothers and Sisters, there is another meaning in the text. The Lord Jesus is the great cause of peace between man and man. As soon as you become a Christian, you cannot hate anybody. To be angry without a cause is a sin to you as soon as you are a Believer in Christ! Unless you are a fearful hypocrite, you then forgive every man his offenses and you continue to forgive your brethren even unto 70 times seven, once you become the sincere disciple of Jesus. It is utterly inconsistent with Grace in the heart to harbor malice against your fellow man. Through our infirmity we may be, and sometimes are, quick of temper and sharp—and this we ought to regret and mourn over—but to carry in our soul any enmity against any man is contrary to the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ! Give me your hand, my Brother, my Sister, for the sake of Him who died for us! We cannot quarrel at the foot of the Cross! We cannot look up and see the streaming wounds and then break the King's peace! I mean the peace that the bleeding, thorn-crowned King has made! Especially among Christians, there must not be anything like a shadow of division or discord. And I do pray you, as I have often done, if you would be followers of Christ, be you as little children and lay aside everything like enmity, hatred, variance, strife and jealousies! You will have to live in Heaven together, I hope. Oh, live like heavenly ones together here! You profess to have one Lord, one faith, one Baptism. You say that you are filled with the Holy Spirit—then let no root of bitterness springing up trouble you, lest thereby many are defiled! May that sweet and holy dove, the Spirit of Christ, rest upon all mankind, so that each man may see in his fellow man a Brother or a Sister. May divisions between sects and par-ties—and especially between nations and men of different colors—be laid aside and may we all rejoice in one universal confraternity. May the day soon break when there shall be true liberty the world over and fraternity established everywhere after Christ's own model!

Still, Brothers and Sisters, these are only secondary applications of the text. The great peace which Christ has made is between God and man. There was war between man and his God. Man offended and loved to offend. God would have him return and be obedient, but man would not, for his heart was set on mischief. Man had so offended the Divine Law that punishment was inevitable! Jesus Christ came in and bore "the chastisement of our peace," suffering an equivalent for what His redeemed would have suffered!

Now, God can with strictest justice pardon human transgressions. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other at the Cross of Christ. God was merciful and yet was just in our forgiveness—and now, between Him and those who are in Christ Jesus—there is no difference, no division, no strife, no war! Therefore, being reconciled by His blood, "we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord." We are brought near by the blood of the Atonement. The chasm is bridged, the mountain is removed! Do you enjoy this peace, my dear Hearer? Can you look up to God, the great God, and feel that there is no alienation between you—that what He loves, you love? That the object of His heart is the supreme object of yours? That if there has been any idol set up, contrary to Him, in your heart, you

desire to have it thrown out? Oh, if it is so, then bless God that He has given you Christ to be your peace!

And then, Brothers and Sisters, there follows from this peace between man and God peace between man and himself for man is as much at war with himself as he is with God, and until Christ comes in, he enjoys no rest. "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked." Some of you know experimentally what it is to have a strife and a warfare going on within—and you will never get a deep and settled calm until Christ comes into the vessel of your soul and says to the winds of your fear, and to the waves of your sins, "Peace, be still."

He that has Christ has a peace that passes all understanding! He that has Christ has great peace and nothing shall offend him. But he that has no Christ has no solid peace. He may say, "Peace, peace," where there is no peace, and daub his wall with untempered mortar, but the hail shall sweep away all his refuges of lies! And after his false peace there shall come a terrible alarm. Oh, my Hearer, have you had peace made between God and you by the precious blood? If so, then you are now at rest! But if you are tossed to and fro between one thought and another, you have nothing to rest upon! I pray you listen carefully to what I have to say concerning the Lord Jesus, and may the Holy Spirit bless it to you! Thus much upon that priceless gem, that blessed word, "peace."

The next great word in the text worthy of our adoring thought is that little one of two letters only, the pronoun "He." "He is our peace."

## II. WHO IS SAID TO BE "OUR PEACE"?

What are we to understand by the Lord Jesus Christ being our peace? I want you carefully to notice that it does not say that His work on our behalf is the source of our peace. That, of course, is true, but here it says, "He is our peace." He, personally—HE—Christ Himself, is the peace of His people! It does not say that He makes our peace, or that He brings us peace. That is very true, most true, but it is a greater Truth that He, Himself, is our peace!

Now, I beseech you, Believer, to look at this Truth of God very carefully, and you, Unbeliever, too! The unbeliever thinks that in order to get peace, he must perform good works. But see, Man, your good works are not your peace! If they had been, God would have said so plainly, "Your good works shall be your peace." But not so, "He is our peace." It is not that you are to be a peace unto yourself, nor does it say that your repentance, or tears, or prayers can give you peace. These are good and they are to be used, but the ground of your peace must never be, "I have prayed. I have re-pented"—but He—He is our peace! There are many things that you may do and that you shall do by the power of the Holy Spirit, but I tell you that none of these things are to be the basis of your comfort! Your soul's fountain of crystal comfort is to be Christ and Christ alone! He, He, He—HE is our peace! Nothing in you, nothing you can do, nothing you can feel, but Christ, to whom you must look or perish. He must be your peace!

Now, Believer, look this in the face. Christ is to be your peace—not your communion with God, nor your high and holy experiences. All these are very precious and I wish we could always be on Tabor's brow. It were well for us if, like, Enoch, we always walked with God, but still, our communion must never be looked upon as the ground of our peace with God. It is Christ and Christ, alone, that is our peace! Though you could mount as high as Gabriel and soar aloft through Heaven, as on a wing of fire—like the swift archangel, your rapid flight must not be your comfort, nor all the glorious service which you could render to your God, but Christ, Christ, Christ and Christ, alone, must be your peace. Beloved, it is all in vain for any of us to look back and try to find peace in what we have done!

It is a very great comfort to us, in some respects, to have been called by Grace in early youth—to have been enabled to preach the Gospel year after year with success—and I know what it is to think of all the souls who have been converted under my ministry. I know what it is to remember how many times I have addressed immense crowds of people. But I also know what it is to think, "Well, I may do all this and only be more condemned for it! I may do all this and yet be found out to be a miserable hypocrite, after all." Therefore, there is no abiding comfort to be found in this. It is not our doing for Christ, but Christ, Himself, that is our peace! Now, some of you have been in the Sunday School, today, and you do not feel that you have got on well with the children. Well, I am glad if you have a passionate yearning for the salvation of the children's souls, but do not begin to lose your hope and confidence in Christ because you do not succeed! If you had succeeded, you would have been very mistaken had you taken it as an evidence of your redemption! And if you fear you have not succeeded, have spoken in vain and spent your strength for nothing, do not be greatly cast down by it, for your peace does not lie either in your service, or in your success—it lies entirely in Christ!

I like the remark that was once made by a poor bricklayer who tumbled from the top of a house. A clergyman went to see him and, as he thought the man was dying, he said to him, "My dear Fellow, you must try to make your peace with God." "Ah, Sir," said the man, "you do not understand it, I can see. Make my peace with God? Why that was made for me in the Eternal Covenant before the world began! That was made for me on Calvary's tree of shame, when Christ laid down His life. If Christ had not made my peace with God, I know I could not make it!"

So put all the things you have done and can do, into the scale, Believer, and when they are all there—kick them all out again—for they are not worth a single ounce of weight in your soul's salvation! Christ must be there! And Christ alone!

One of the occupations of the dying saint must be the tying up of his bad works and of his good works in one bun-dle—for they are wonderfully much alike—and throwing them all overboard, every one of them, and floating to Glory on the plank of Free Grace in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is our peace! HE is our peace! If Believers would al-

ways remember this, they would not be so often depressed and distressed. Ah, I have often heard this cry, as I told you this morning, "I do not grow in Grace as I could wish. I do not serve my Lord as I should. I live at a great distance from Him. I am afraid I dishonor His holy name." I like to hear that! That is all good, very good, but then they go on with this—"I am afraid that I shall perish, after all"—and that is all wrong, very wrong, for if the question is put, "Do you trust in Christ?" and if the answer is that you do, well then, if God is true, you cannot perish! If all your help comes from Him who made Heaven and earth, and who died upon the bloody tree for your sins, then Heaven and earth may pass away and shall, but His promise cannot! He has given you two immutable things, wherein it is impossible for God to lie, that you may have strong consolation if you have fled for refuge to Christ Jesus! Do you believe in Jesus? Do you hang upon Christ wholly and entirely? Then are you saved and God's Word is pledged to bring you safely home at the last! Sanctification must never be put in the place of justification—when we do so, we shall miss sanctification, as well as jus-

tification. When Believers say, "I cannot grow in Grace as I would, and therefore I doubt," do you see what they do? It is as though they said, "Here is a plant that will not grow and therefore it shall not have any water." It is impossible for any one of us—for you—to get sanctification through doubts! Your doubting takes away the water which alone can nourish the roots of your sanctity. If, in the teeth of all your sins, you still believe in Christ—believe over the head of all your shortcomings and your negligence—then your belief will breed love and admiration! And then your love of Christ and your admiration of Him will breed imitation—and so there will come holy living to the glory of God! Love is the forceful mainspring of a gracious life, but doubt makes it grow limp and feeble. Doubt snaps the string of your bow, takes off the edge of your sword, makes you languid and powerless and causes all your Divine Graces to flag. Therefore, keep to it, Christian, keep to it and let not the devil, himself, drag you from it! "He is our peace"—my peace—not myself, nor anything that is in me, but Christ Jesus alone!

I have thus put the negative of it, but now let us take the positive. "He is our peace." By this is meant, first, that the Person of Christ is our peace. He is God. I rest on Him. I have perfect peace, then, for He is Almighty, He cannot fail me. He is inimitable—He will not leave me. He is Truth itself—He will not belie His word.

Jesus Christ is also Man, and if Man, then He sympathizes with me, being touched with a fellow feeling for me in my infirmities. Then with such a heart of tenderness, He will not throw up the work of Grace, but He will bear with my ill manners and be my "Brother born for adversity," even to the end. So, then, the complex Person of Christ, as God, as well as Man, is the peace of the Believer when he trusts Him.

In the next place, the perfect righteousness of Christ is another part of our peace. In a delightful little book upon the Person of Christ by good Mr. Bonar, he speaks about our

sins as though they were so many mud creeks—our sins of unbelief, neglect, lack of love and so on. Well, but wherein we have failed, Christ has not failed—every duty in which we have come short, He has fulfilled! For every sin that we commit, you will always find an opposite virtue in Christ. Well says Mr. Bonar, "Then Christ is the flood tide which comes up and fills all these creeks and covers all the mire—and there is not a little creek nor a great bay but what this tide of Christ's glorious merits fills all!" Perhaps this thought may give you the meaning of the text, "Your peace shall be like a river and your righteousness like the waves of the sea"—the many waves which come up and cover all the sands and the mire of our iniquities till God sees no sin in us, because He sees the righteousness of Christ standing for us—and looks upon us, not as we are separately, but as we stand in Him—and so He makes us to be "accepted in the Beloved." Oh, Believer, if you can wrap the righteousness of Christ around you, you can feel, then, the sweetness of the truth of our text, "He is our peace."

Yet once more. After His person and His righteousness, there comes His precious blood. Oh, Beloved, there is no balm for the soul like the Cross! Sometimes I like to sing to myself, when I get a little fluttered in my soul, that precious hymn—

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing, Which before the Cross I spend! Life and health, and peace possessing, From the sinner's dying Friend! Here it is I find my Heaven, While upon the Cross I gaze. Love I much? I'm more forgiven— I'm a miracle of Grace."

I have sometimes used this simile and will use it again. If you ride through London, mile after mile, mile after mile, and see the great swarms of people, you say to yourself, "I cannot make out how all these people are fed. I cannot see how there is always a meal for these four millions and more." But go off tomorrow morning and make a round of the great markets—the cattle market, the meat markets, the fruit markets and I know not what besides—and now you say, "I cannot make out where the people can be found to eat all this! How does such a tremendous mass of provisions of all kinds ever get consumed?"

You change your note directly. When you only looked at the people's needs, you thought, "How can they all be supplied?" but when you look at the supply, you say, "How can there be needs great enough for all this?" So you look at your sins and you say, "How can there be merit enough to put all these sins away?" But if you will but look at the Son of

God dying on the Cross for sinners, you will change your note and you will say, "Where could there be sinners great enough to demand such an immense Sacrifice as the giving up of the life of the Son of God to redeem men from their iniquities?" You must go to the Cross if you want to have peace concerning your sins, for "He is our peace."

Further, Beloved, the ever-living Christ is always our peace. The thought that there beats a heart in Heaven that is always loving us, that there moves a tongue in Heaven that always pleads for us, that there is an arm in Heaven that always fights for us and that there is a foot in Heaven that will be swift to run for our defense—oh, this is a precious consolation! If



faith can but perceive that Jesus Christ is within the veil at the Father's Throne, with His heart full of love towards those who trust in Him, then will He be to us our peace!

I shall not, however, enlarge farther upon that point, though it is a very fruitful subject. But I must say that the more you know of Christ's Character and work, the deeper will be your peace. Ignorant professors who do not know that Jesus Christ "is the same yesterday, today, and forever," are sometimes afraid that the promises will not be fulfilled. But they must be fulfilled, for He is not only full of Grace, but of Truth! Know Christ and trust Him—and you need not be afraid. Poverty shall not make you poor, sickness shall not make you diseased, death shall not make you die! You shall triumph over all these in your inmost soul and come off more than conqueror through Him who has loved you and is your peace!

We have only as yet handled two words, but they are two big, colossal words. "He is our peace." But we must now speak briefly upon those two diamond rivets which fasten Christ and peace together. So we look now at—

### III. WHOSE PEACE IS HE?

Notice that word, "our." "He is our peace." To whom, then, is this splendid peace given? Every man that has Christ as his Savior! I have half a mind to ask those who have trusted Christ to be their peace, to say aloud, here and now, "He is our peace." There is a gray-headed man here, and if he were to rise and lean on his staff, he could say, "Yes, blessed be God, without doubt I can say that He is my peace." There is a valiant soldier of Christ yonder, and he would declare boldly, "He is my peace." But I daresay there is some timid Hannah here who would wipe the tears from her face and quietly say, "Yes, He is my peace." And there are some youngsters here, whom the Lord has but lately brought in, and they can say, tremblingly, but yet meaning it from their inmost souls, "He is my peace." It is all the same, whether we are old or young, whether we are advanced in the Divine Life, or are only just in the beginning of it—we have no other peace except the Lord Jesus Christ!

But who are these people who have Christ to be their peace? Well, they are those who could not get peace anywhere else, for we never come to Christ until we are driven to Him by stormy weather. He is such a blessed port that we might all wish to cast anchor in Him, but yet we are such fools that we keep out at sea as long as we can—and only when we feel our sins to be like hurricanes howling in our ears, do we fly to Christ! Well, if you have nowhere else to go and you come to Him with all your hunger and nakedness—and trust in Him—whether you sink or swim, then shall He be your peace!

I cannot delay upon that, however, for our time is gone and, therefore, I must take that other word—"is."

### IV. WHEN IS HE OUR PEACE?

I know the world says, "I hope He will be my peace." Dear Hearer, do not be satisfied with that! Never be content with "may be," but seek after a present salvation! I was soundly enough asleep the other morning when, about half-past three my bell rang very sharply,

and then rang again. And when I put my head out of the window to see who was there, I heard someone say, "Oh, if you please, Sir, there is a poor man dying, and he wants to see you badly! Do come." "Oh, yes, where does he live? I will be there as quickly as I can." And away I went.

The dying man said to me, "I beg your pardon, Sir, for sending for you at this time of night, but it is very hard for a man to go out of this world and not know where he is going. Do tell me the way I may be saved." I was glad enough to tell him about Him who is our peace, but how I wished and wished again that he had not needed to be told about it then! As I said to those who were round about him, "Now see, he has enough to think of with his dying pains, without having to think of finding a Savior now! Oh, the rest of you seek Him while you have health and strength!" And I now say that to you! You will find other work when you come to die without having to search for a Savior! Besides that, what a joy it is to get Christ now—to say, "He is my peace." Why, there are some of us who are as happy now in Christ as we could well wish to be! We find that our religion is no misery to us. It is not a chain, but like the wings of a bird and it helps us

to mount! We feel at perfect peace with God right now, and if Death were to come to-night, or tomorrow, or while we are sitting here, I trust we should not think of him as an adversary, but our Father's servant, sent to take us into our Father's Presence! Oh, my dear Hearers, some of you, when you come to dying, will, perhaps, have to think, "I used to attend a Sunday school. I used to go to a place of worship, but I gave it all up when I came to London. When I got into business and had a family, I thought I needed Sunday for recreation, and so I neglected my soul, and now where am I? Far off from God!" Oh, I hope I shall not have to come and tell you in your extremity about a Savior, but may you now receive Him! All that He asks of you is to trust Him—and that He gives you! My poor friend said the other night, "I cannot think, Sir. I cannot settle my thoughts." Yes, but you can think now and, therefore, now, before the evil days come and the dark night draws on, turn, turn! May God turn you! May effectual Grace lead you to see my bleeding Master with His five streaming wounds, with the crown of thorns about His brow, mocked and despised, and spit upon for us, that we might escape the thorn and not have to be wounded with the arrows of death, but might live through Him! May the Lord Jesus Christ be to everyone of you your peace tonight, that you may take the text and say, "He is now, even tonight, our peace."

God grant it for His name's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: JOHN11:27-46.

Our Lord's greatest miracles were always the reward of faith.

Verse 27. She said unto Him, Yes, Lord I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, which should come unto the world. By which she as good as said, "I believe that and I believe everything else. I have an implicit faith in You. Whatever You say, whatever You have said

or shall say, I am prepared to believe it all, for I believe in You. I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."

28. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly. Because she knew that the Jews hated the Savior. She could not tell what would come of it if they knew of His coming, so she whispers to her—

28-30. Saying, The Master is come, and calls for you. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto Him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was at that place where Martha met Him. Their cemeteries were outside the town and probably the Savior was near the very grave where Lazarus slept.

31-32. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goes unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, Lord, if You had been here, my brother had not died. Her thought was the same as the thought of Martha, but she did not say as much as Martha. She never did. Martha had a dialogue with the Savior, but Mary bowed at His feet.

33. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, and said, Where have you laid him? They said unto Him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved him! And some of them said, Could not this Man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? Jesus, therefore, again groaning in Himself came to the grave. Many have asked why Christ groaned. Why, Brothers and Sisters, it is the way in which He gives life—by His own death! We sometimes say of one who does a great action, "It took so much out of him." So it did out of the Savior. He must groan that Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus may rejoice. It is not without the stirring of His very life that He gives life to the dead!

38-39. It was a cave and the stone lay upon it Jesus said, Take you away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, said unto Him, Lord, by this time he stinks: for he has been dead four days. "It were a pity to roll away the stone."

40-41. Jesus said unto her, Said I not unto you, that if you would believe, you should see the Glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. That is grand praying, is it not? Sometimes we ought to say, "Just so." "Father, I thank You that You have heard me."

42-44. And I knew that You hear Me always, but because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that You have sent Me. And when He had thus spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth! And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. He probably slipped

himself off from the ledge in the tomb upon which he been laid and there he appeared before them bound so that he could not move farther.