

"Christ Is All"

(No. 3446)

A SERMON PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1915.

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"Christ is all." [Colossians 3:11](#).

MY text is so very short that you cannot forget it and, I am quite certain, if you are Christians at all, you will be sure to agree with it! What a multitude of religions there is in this poor wicked world of ours! Men have taken it into their heads to invent various systems of religion and if you look around the world, you will see scores of different sects. But it is a great fact that while there is a multitude of false religions, there is but one that is true. While there are many falsehoods, there can be but one truth—real religion is, therefore, one. There is but one Gospel—the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. What a wonderful thing it is that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should be born of humble parents and live as a poor Man in this world for the purpose of our salvation! He lived a life of suffering and trial and, at last, through the malignity of His enemies, was crucified on Calvary as an outcast of society. "Now," they said, "there is an end of His religion! Now it will be such a contemptible thing, that nobody will ever call himself a Christian—it will be discreditable to have anything to do with the name of the Man, Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth." But it is an amazing fact that this religion has not only lived, but is at this hour as strong as ever! Yes, the religion He founded still exists and is still powerful, and constantly expanding. While other religions have sunk into the darkness of the past, and the idols have been cast to the moles and to the bats, the name of Jesus is still mighty—and it shall continue to be a blessed power so long as the universe shall endure!

The religion of Jesus is the religion of God. Hence, notwithstanding all the disgrace and persecution which it has had to encounter, it still exists, and still flourishes! It is this religion which I shall attempt to preach to you—the one Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ—and the text embraces it all in the most comprehensive manner, "Christ is all."

I shall use it, first, as a test to try you and, afterwards, as a motive to encourage you. I want, first, to sift you, to see how many of you are the people of God, and how many are not. I shall make my text a great sieve and put you in it to see which is wheat and which is chaff. We must consider this passage in two or three senses in order, first, to use it as—

I. A TEST TO TRY YOU.

Christ must be all, as your Great Master and Teacher There are some who set up a certain man as their authority. They regard him as their master, they look up to him as their teacher—and whatever he says is right—it is the truth and is not to be disputed. Or, perhaps, they have taken a certain book, other than the Bible, and say, "We will judge all things by

this book"—and if the preacher does not teach exactly the creed written in that book, he is set down as not sound in the faith—and this they do not hesitate to say at once, because he does not come up to the standard of their little book! We meet with many people in this world who make their creed, their one little narrow creed, everything—and they measure everything and everybody by that. But, my Friends, I must have you say that "Christ is all," and not any man, however good or great, before I can allow that you are Christians. We have not to follow men. Our faith stands not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God! We are to follow no man, except as far as he follows Christ, who alone is our Master! Be not deceived—submit not yourselves to creeds, to books, or to men—give yourselves to the study of God's Word, derive your creed and the doctrines of your faith from it, alone, and then you will be able to say—

"Should all the forms that men devise
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind the Gospel to my heart."

Let Christ be your only Master, and say, in the words of our text, "Christ is all." Now can you say this, or are you boasting, "The Baptists are all"—"The Wesleyans are all"—"The Church of England is all"? As the Lord lives, if you are saying that, you do not know His Truth because you are not testifying that, "Christ is all," but simply uttering the Shibboleth of your little party! I should like to see the word, "party," blotted out from the vocabulary of the Christian Church! I thank God that I have no sympathy whatever with that which is merely sectarian, and have Grace given me to protest against it, and to exclaim—

"Let party names no more
The Christian world overspread"
since—

"Gentile and Jew, and bond and free, Are one in Christ, their Head."

If "Christ is all" to you, you are Christians, and I, for one, am ready to give you the right hand of brotherhood! I do not mind what place of worship you attend, or by what distinctive name you may call yourselves—we are Brothers and Sisters in Christ and I think, therefore, that we should love one another. If, my Friends, you cannot embrace all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, no matter to what denomination they may belong, and cannot regard them as your Brothers and Sisters in the Lord, and as belonging to the universal Church, you have not hearts large enough to go to Heaven because, if such are your contracted views, you cannot possibly say, "Christ is all."

Next, Christ must be all as your principal object in life—your chief good. Your great aim must be to glorify Christ on earth, in the hope and expectation of enjoying Him forever above. But as it regards some of you, Christ is not your all. You think more of your shop than you do of Him. You are up early in the morning looking at your ledgers, and all day

long toiling at your business. Do not misunderstand me—I dislike lazy people who let the grass grow over their shoes— and God disapproves of them, too! We want no lazy preachers of the Gospel. The true Christian will say, "I know that I am bound to be diligent in business, but I want to work for eternity as well as for time. I need something besides earthly riches. I need an inheritance not made with hands, a mansion not built by man, a possession in the skies." Are you making this world your all? Poor Souls, if you are, the world and the fashion thereof are passing away—your all will soon be gone! I fancy I see a rich man, one whose gold is his all, when he gets into the next world, looking for his gold, and wondering where it is, and being, at last, compelled to exclaim, in despair, "Oh, my all is gone!" But if you can say that Christ is your all, then your treasure will never be gone, for He will never leave you, nor forsake you. Not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, you shall be happy and blessed, for you shall be crowned with glory and made to sit with Christ on His Throne forever!

"Well," says some easy-going gentleman, "I do not make business my all, I assure you. Not I! My maxim is, let us enjoy this life, let us fill the glass to the brim and live in pleasure while we may." I also have a word for you. Do you think that such a course of conduct will fit you for Heaven, for the enjoyments of eternity? Do you imagine that when you come to die, it will be any pleasure for you to think of your drunkenness? When you are lying on a sick bed, will your oaths bring you any peace, as they reverberate upon your conscience, just as I hear my voice, at this moment, echoing back to my ears the words I am saying? I think I see you starting up as you hear your blasphemies against God thus returning upon you, while, with a mind oppressed with anguish and eyes starting from their sockets, you exclaim, in your terror, "I hear my own oaths again! God is coming to call me to judgment, to demand of me why I dare blaspheme His name!" And the Judge will say, "You, with oaths and curses, profaned My holy name! You asked Me to curse your soul and now I will do it! You prayed in your profane moments that you might be lost, and now you shall be!" How horrible that would be! You who say pleasure is all, let me warn you that you will have to drink the bitter dregs of the cup of pleasure to all eternity, no matter how sweet the draught may now be to your taste!

But there are some more moderate people who are by no means extravagant in their pleasures and are great sticklers for religion! They go to Church or Chapel every Sunday and believe themselves to be a very good sort of people—such as will be accepted at the Last Day, and placed at the right hand of the Throne of God. Again I put the question, can you say, "Christ is all"? No, you cannot say that. Many of you make the externals of religion your all, resting in the letter, but knowing or caring nothing for the spirit. This will not do! And you are not such Christians as Christ will acknowledge if you are making anything your all but Him! Religion is not to be stowed away in the dark attic of the brain. Christianity is a

heartreligion, and if you cannot say, from the very depths of your being, "Christ is all," you have neither part

nor lot in the blessings and privileges of the Gospel—and your end will be destruction, everlasting banishment from the Presence of the Lord! God grant it may not be so, but that in both your lives and mine we may each be enabled to say of a truth, "Christ is all"—and that we may meet again around the eternal Throne of God!

Next, Christ will be all as the source of your joy. Some people seem to think that Christians are a very melancholy sort of folk, that they have no real happiness. I know something about religion and I will not admit that I stand second to any man in respect of being happy. So far as I know religion, I have found it to be a very happy thing—

"I would not change my blest estate, For all that earth calls good or great."

I used to think that a religious man must never smile, but, on the contrary, I find that religion will make a man's eyes bright, cover his face with smiles and impart comfort and consolation to his soul, even in the deepest of his earthly tribulations! In illustration of this, I might tell you the story of a poor man who lives in one of the courts in Holborn, who experiences great joy in religion, even in the midst of the deepest poverty. A Christian visitor, going up into the poor man's room at the top of the house, said, "My Friend, how long have you been in this place?"

"I have not been downstairs, nor walked across the room, these 12 months."

"Have you anything to depend upon?"

"Nothing," he replied, but recollecting himself, he added, "I have a good Father up in Heaven, and I depend upon Him entirely, and He never lets me down. Some kind Christian friends are sure to call, and they never go away without leaving me something. And I get enough to live on and pay my rent, and I am very happy. I would not change places with anybody in the world, for I have Jesus Christ with me, and my heavenly Father will take me Home, by-and-by, and then I shall be as rich as any of them—shall I not, Sir? Sometimes I get very low, and Satan tells me that I am not a child of God, and that I had better give up all as lost, but I tell him that he is a great coward to come and meddle with a poor weak creature like I am, and I show him the blood, Sir. And I tell him the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin— and when I show Satan the precious blood, Sir, he leaves off tempting me, and immediately flees, for he cannot bear the sight of the Savior's blood."

Thus we see that true religion can cheer the sick man's couch, can make the poor man feel that he is rich and bid him be joyful in the Lord! Well did the old man say that the devil cannot bear the sight of the Savior's blood! And if, beloved Friends, you can take Christ's blood and put it on your conscience, however sinful you may have been, you will be able to sing of Christ as all your hope, all your joy and all your support! I ask you who love Jesus—does religion ever make you unhappy? Does love to Jesus distress you and make you miserable? It may bring you into trouble, sometimes, and cause you to endure persecution

for His name's sake. If you are a child of God, you will have to suffer tribulation. But all the afflictions which you may be called upon to endure for Him will work for your good, and are not worthy to be compared with the glory which is to be revealed hereafter!

Now, then, let me ask, could you agree with me while I have been speaking? Can you now say that Christ is your only Master, your chief good, your only joy? "Oh, yes, I do love Jesus because He first loved me." Then, welcome, Brother! Welcome, Sister! You are one with Jesus, and we are one with each other! But if you cannot say it, how terrible it shall be with some of you when you shall find your gourds wither, the crops whereon you now lean struck down at a blow, your false refuges swept away and, deprived of all your feathers and finery, your soul will appear before God in its true character! May it not be so with any of you, but may you be united to Christ by living faith which works by love and purifies the heart! Secondly, I shall now consider the text as—

II. A MOTIVE TO ENCOURAGE YOU.

"Christ is all." My beloved Friends, in what is He all? Christ is all in the entire work of salvation. Let me take you back to the period before this world was made. There was a time when this great world—the sun, the moon, the stars and all which now exist throughout the whole of the vast universe—lay in the mind of God like unborn forests in an acorn cup. There was a time when the Great Creator lived alone and yet He could foresee that He would make a world, and that men would be born to people it. And in that vast eternity a great scheme was devised, whereby He might save a fallen race. Do you know who devised it? God planned it from first to last! Neither Gabriel nor any of the holy angels had anything to do with it. I question whether they were even told how God might be just and yet save the transgressors. God was all in the drawing up of the scheme, and Christ was all in carrying it out! There was a dark and doleful night!

Jesus was in the Garden, sweating great drops of blood which fell to the ground—nobody then came to bear the load that had been laid upon Him. An angel stood there to strengthen Him, but not to bear the sentence. The cup was put into His hands and Jesus said, "Father, must I drink it?" And His Father replied, "If You do not drink, sinners cannot be saved"—and He took the cup and drained it to its very dregs! No man helped Him. And when He hung upon that accursed tree of Calvary, when His precious hands were pierced, when—

"From His head, His hands, His feet, Sorrow and love flowed mingled down, there was nobody to help Him. He was "all" in the work of salvation!

And, my Friends, if any of you shall be saved, it must be by Christ alone! There must be no patchwork! Christ did it all and will not be helped in the matter. Christ will not allow you, as some say, to do what you can, and leave Him to make up the rest! What can you do that is not sinful? Christ has done all for us! The work of Redemption is all finished. Christ planned it all and worked it all out! And we, therefore, preach a full salvation through Jesus Christ!

What could we poor mortals do towards saving ourselves? Our best works are but mean and worthless to that great end. I am sure I could not do it. My preaching—I am ashamed of that, and there are a thousand faults in my prayers! God needs nothing of us by way of "making up" Christ's work, but He cancels all the sins and blots out all the transgressions of everyone who trusts to His Son's death!

If I have found Christ, I have found all. "I have not strong faith," you say. Never mind, Christ is all. "I do not sufficiently feel my sins"—but Christ is all. Many people think they must feel a load of repentance before they may hope Christ will receive them. I know every child of God will repent, but we are not all brought to the Cross by the terrors of the Law. It is not your feelings, my Friends, that will save you, but only Christ—Christ standing in your place, Christ being your Substitute! If, feeling your need of His Grace to pardon you, and His righteousness to justify you before God, you can but just look to Christ, though you have nothing good about you, you will have done all that is necessary to carry you to Heaven—because it is not your act that can save you—but the act of Christ alone! A little while ago I had a conversation with an Irishman who had been to hear me preach. He had come to ask me, he said, the way of salvation. "What troubles me," he said, "is this—God says that He will condemn the sinner, and punish him—then how can God forgive, because He must punish if He would keep His word?" I placed before him the Scriptural view of the Atonement, in the substitution of Christ for the sinner, and the poor man was astonished and delighted beyond measure, never having understood the beauty and simplicity of the Gospel way of salvation before! "Is it really so?" he asked. "It is in the Bible," I replied. "Then the Bible must be true," he said, "for nobody but God could have thought it!"

If Jesus Christ is our Surety, Friends, we are safe from the demands of the Law. If Christ is our Substitute, we shall not suffer the penalty due to sin, for God will never punish the same sin twice. If I have nothing but Christ, I do not need anything else, for Christ is all! If Christ is your all, you will not need anything to help you, either in living or in dying! Now for two thoughts before I close.

1. If a man has Christ, then what else does he need? If a man has Christ, he has everything! If I need perfection, and I have Christ, I have absolute perfection in Him! If I need righteousness, I shall find in Him my beauty and my glorious dress. I need pardon, and if I have Christ, I am pardoned! I want Heaven and if I have Christ, I have the Prince of Heaven, and shall be there, by-and-by, to live with Christ and to dwell in His blessed embrace forever! If you have Christ, you have all! Do not be desponding, do not give ear to the whispers of Satan that you are not the children of God, for if you have Christ, you are His people and other things will come, by-and-by. Christ makes you complete in Himself. As the Apostle says, "You are complete in Him." I think of poor Mary Magdalene—she would have nothing to bring of her own—she would remember that she had been a harlot, but when she comes to Heaven's gates, she will say, "I have Christ," and the command will go forth, "Let her in,

Gabriel! Let her in!" Here comes a poor squalid wretch. What has he been doing—he has never learned to write, he scarcely went even to a Ragged School, but he has Christ in his heart! "Gabriel, let him in!" Next comes a rich bad man, with rings on his fingers and fine clothes upon his person—but the command is, "Shut the gates, Gabriel! He has no business here!" Then comes a fine flaming professor of the Gospel, but he never knew Christ in his heart. "Shut the gate, Gabriel!" If a man has Christ, he has all for eternity—but if he has not Christ, he is poor, blind, naked and will be miserable forever! Will not you, then, who are listening to me now, resolve,

in the strength of the Lord, to seek Him at once and make Him your Friend? No matter what may be your state or condition, you are invited to come to Him!

You blind, you lame, who are far from Christ, come to Him and receive your sight, and obtain strength! He is made your all—you need bring nothing in your hand to come to Him. "Ah!" say one, "I am not good enough yet." Beggars do not talk thus! They consider that the more needy they are, the more likely are they to obtain that for which they ask. The worse the dress, the better for begging. It is the same with respect to the Gospel—you are invited to come to Christ just as you are, naked and miserable—that He may clothe and comfort you!

2. My last thought is this—How poor is that man who is destitute of Christ! If I were to say to some one of you that you are poor, you would reply, "I am not poor—I have £250 a year coming in—a decent house and an excellent job." And yet, if you have not Christ, you are a poor man, indeed. Look at that poor worldling with a load of £10,000 upon his back, a quantity of stocks and annuities in one hand, policies and railway scrip in the other—but he is wretched with all his wealth, though he can hardly carry it! There is a poor beggar woman, who says to him, "Let me take a part of your burden." But the miserable man refuses all assistance and resolves to carry all his load himself. But by-and-by he comes to a great gulf and, instead of finding these riches help him, they hang around his neck like millstones and weigh him down! Yet there are some who would do anything for gold. If there is one man more miserable than another in Hell, it must be the man who robbed his neighbors to feather his own nest—such feathers will help the flight of the arrows which shall pierce his soul to all eternity! No matter what your wealth, if you have not Christ, you are miserably poor—but with Christ, you are rich to all eternity!

I think I see one of you ungodly ones in your last moments. Someone stands by your bedside and watches your face. The death-sweat comes over you and the big drops stand on your brow—the strong man is bowed down and the mighty one falls—and now the eyes close and the hand falls powerless—life is fled. Ah, but the soul never dies! Up it flies to appear at God's bar. How will it appear there? Oh, the poor soul without Christ! It will be a naked soul—it will have no garment to cover it—it will be a perishing soul, no salvation for it! Mercy cannot be secured, then! It will be in vain to pray, then, because the lamp will be put

out in eternal darkness! And the Judge will say, in tones that will pierce you to the quick, "Depart from Me, you cursed!"

May God give all of you Grace to repent and to embrace the salvation which is revealed in the Gospel! Every sin-sick soul may have Christ, but as for you who are Pharisees and trusting in yourselves that you are righteous—if you know nothing about sin, you can know nothing about Christ. The way to be saved is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "But what is it to believe?" you ask. I have heard of a captain who had a little son, and this little boy was very fond of climbing aloft. One day he climbed to the masthead, and the father saw that if the boy attempted to return, he would be dashed to pieces. He therefore shouted to him not to look down, but to drop into the sea. The poor boy kept fast hold of the mast, but the father saw it was his only chance of safety, and he shouted once more, "Boy, the next time the ship lurches, drop, or I will shoot you." The boy is gone! He drops into the sea and is saved. Had he not dropped, he would have perished. This is just your condition! As long as you cling to works and ceremonies, you are in the utmost peril! But when you give yourselves up entirely to the mercy of Christ, you are safe! Try it, Sinner! Try it, that is all. "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved," is Christ's promise, and it shall never fail you. The invitation is to all who thirst. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is thirsty come, and take the Water of Life freely."

I have heard that in the deserts where they can only get water at long intervals, they send a man on a camel in search of it. When he sees a pool, he springs off his beast, and before he drinks, he calls out, "Come," and there is another man at a little distance, and he shouts, "Come," and one further away still repeats the word, "Come," until the whole desert resounds with the cry, "Come," and they come rushing to the water to drink! Now I do not make the Gospel invitation wider than the declaration of the Word of God, "Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Whoever you are, and whatever you may have been, if you feel your need of Christ, "Come," and He will receive you, and give you to drink of the Water of Life freely!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: COLOSSIANS 3; 4:1-4; PSALM 28:1-6.

COLOSSIANS 3.

Verse 1. If you, then, are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. Oh, how often we need to be called to this, for the flesh is groveling and it holds down the spirit. Very often we are seeking the things below as if we had not yet attained the new life, and did not know anything about the resurrection power of Christ within the soul! Now, if it is that you, Believers, have risen with Christ, do not live as if you had never done so, but "seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God."

2. Set your affection. Not "your affections." Tie them up into one bundle. Make one of them.

2. On things above, not on things on the earth. You say that you were dead with Christ and that you have risen with Christ. Live, then, the risen life, and not the life of those who have never undergone this matchless process! Live above.

3. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. The old life is dead. You are dead to it. You will not be consumed by it—you cannot be controlled by it. You have a newer and higher life. Let it have full scope.

4. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory. Christ was hidden while He was here. The world knew Him not. So is your life. But there is to be a glorious manifestation! When Christ is made manifest, so shall you be. Wait for Him.

5. Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth—fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Since you are dead, let all the lusts of the flesh be put to death. Kill them! They were once a part of you. Your nature lusted this way. Mortify them! Do not merely restrain them and try to keep them under! These things you are to have nothing to do with.

6. 7. For which things the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience. In which you also walked some time, when you lived in them. "When you lived in them." But now you do not live in them. You are dead to them. If it should ever come to pass that you fall into any of these things, you will loathe yourself with bitterest repentance that you could find comfort, satisfaction, life in them. You are dead to them.

8-10. But now you also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not to one another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. No lies. Such communications are filthy. But you put these things away through your union with Christ in His risen life. Therefore, abhor them. Avoid the very appearance of them and cry for Grace to be kept from them, for you have been "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."

11. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. In the new life there is no distinction of race and nationality! We are born into one family. We become members of Christ's body and this is the one thing we have got to keep up—separation from all the world! No separations in the Church, no disunion, nothing that would cause it, for we are one in Christ and Christ is all! Now, as we have to put off these things, that is the negative side—that is the Law's side, for the Law says, "You shall not." But now look at the positive side.

12. Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, hearts of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering. This is what you have got to wear, even on the outside—to put them on, not to have a latent kindness in your heart and a degree of humbleness deep down in your soul if you could get at it—but you are to put them on. They

are to be the very clothes you wear! These are the sacred vestments of your daily priesthood. Put them on!

13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man has a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do you. Just as readily, just as freely, just as heartily, just as completely!

14-15. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts. For that is the great foundation of every godly fruit. We are in such a hurry, in such dreadful haste, so selfish, so discontented, so impetuous, and the major part of our sins spring from that condition of mind! But if we were godly, restful, peaceful, how many sins we would avoid! "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."

15. To which, also, you are called in one body; and be you thankful. It looks like a very small virtue to be thankful. Yet, dear Friends, the absence of it is one of the grossest of vices! To be ungrateful is a mean thing. To be ungrateful to God is a base thing! And yet how many may accuse themselves of it! Who among us is as grateful as he should be? Be thankful.

16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you. Alexander had a casket of gold studded with gems to carry Homer's works. Let your own heart be a casket for the command of Christ. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you."

16-18. Richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with Grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. See how our being Christians does not relax the bonds of our Christian relationship? On the contrary, it calls us to the higher exercise of the responsibilities and duties connected therewith!

19. Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Oh, there are some spirits that are very bitter! A little thing puts them out and they would take delight in a taunt which grieves the spirit. I pity the poor woman who has such bitterness where she ought to have sweetness—yet there are some such husbands.

20-21. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. The duties are mutual. Scripture maintains an equilibrium. It does not lay down commands for one class, and then leave the other to exercise whatever tyrannical oppression it may please! The child is to obey, but the father must not provoke.

22. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers. How much there is of that! How quickly the hands go when the master's eye looks on! But the Christian servant remembers God's eyes and is always diligent. "Not with eye service as men pleasers."

Colossians 4:1-2. But in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord you shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for you serve the Lord Christ But he that does wrong shall receive for the wrong which he has done; and there is no respect of persons. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that you, also, have a Master in Heaven. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. See how he keeps putting that in—"Be you thankful"—"with thanksgiving." Why, that is the oil that makes the machinery go round without its causing obstruction! May we have much of that thanksgiving.

3, 4. Meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak So the preacher of the Gospel asks your prayers—and it is a part of the duties arising out of the relationship between Christians that those who are taught should pray for those who teach God's Word.

PSALM 28.1-6.

Verse 1. Unto you will I cry, O LORD my Rock: be not silent to me: lest, if You are silent to me, I become like those who go down into the pit. Oh, if God did not hear prayer, we would become like dead men—yes, like lost men. Our fall or despair would be terrible, indeed. "Lest, if You are silent to me, I become like those who go down into the pit."

2. Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto You, when I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary. Is that the way you pray, dear Friend? I know there are some who, if they have uttered certain good words—got through a form of prayer—are perfectly satisfied. As to whether God hears them or not, that does not trouble them. But if you are a true child of God, it will be your main thought in prayer, "Will He hear me? Will He hear me? Will He answer me?" And you will think nothing of a prayer at all unless you have the comfortable, believing persuasion that your prayer has reached the ear and heart of God. Oh, believe us, for some of us know by experience that prayer is a real thing! It is no repetition of words. It really is the heart speaking into the ear of God—and God does graciously respond when prayer is truly offered.

3. Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbors, but mischief is in their hearts. We are often afraid lest we should get numbered with them—

"Oh, were it not for Grace Divine,
Their fate so dreadful had been mine."

"Gather not my soul with sinners," is the prayer of many a godly man. When he looks within and sees the sin that is there—and what he deserves from the hand of God, apart from the blood and righteousness of Christ—he begins, indeed, to pray, "Draw me not away with the wicked. O Lord, do not let me wander into doctrinal error or into errors of life, or into laxity of behavior, or into backslidings, but keep me fast, for unless You hold me fast—

I'll feel I must, I shall, decline,

And prove like them at last.' Draw me not away with the wicked."

4. Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert. And a just mind feels that such ought to be the case. God is a Judge and He will punish sin—and gracious men do not wish that it should be otherwise. Even to that terrible side of God's Character which is seen in His vengeance upon the ungodly, the Christian turns the loving eye. He is not reconciled to half a god, or to a god with half the attributes of God, namely, love and tenderness, but he loves God as he finds Him. He loves that God who is a consuming fire! I would be afraid if I could not love God under any aspect in which He is presented to me, because just as I would feel that I did not love a man truly if I said, "In such a character I cannot endure him," I would feel that there was some difference between him and me. We must love God in ever/Character—upon the Throne of Justice, as well as upon the Seat of Love.

5, 6. Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of His hands, He shall destroy them, and not build them up. Blessed be the LORD, because He has heard the voice of my supplications. Can you say this? Excuse me putting the question again and again to all now present, for it is a very vital question. If you never knew what answered prayer means, God help you to begin to pray, "Blessed be the Lord, because He has heard the voice of my supplications."