

A Sunday School Sermon

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon passionately emphasizes the tender yet powerful care of Jesus as the Good Shepherd who personally gathers, carries, and nurtures the lambs of His flock, urging believers to emulate His earnestness and love in ministering to the young.

Scripture: Isaiah 40:11, John 21:15, Matthew 19:14, Psalm 23:1, Proverbs 3:17, 2 Timothy 3:15

Description

In this heartfelt devotional sermon, C.H. Spurgeon explores the tender yet mighty character of Jesus as the Good Shepherd who personally gathers and carries the lambs of His flock. Spurgeon calls on believers, especially Sunday school teachers, to emulate Christ's earnestness, love, and divine strength in caring for the spiritual welfare of children. The sermon encourages fervent prayer, personal service, and patient nurturing of young believers, highlighting the importance of early faith and the joy of guiding the lambs in the fold.

Transcript

BY C. H. SPURGEON,

"He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom." Isaiah 40:11.

MINISTERS all over England have been specially requested to assist in exciting a spirit of prayer in connection with Sunday schools, today, and I feel that the training of the young is so important a part of Church work that it would be almost sinful to decline the seasonable request of the Sunday school Union. Therefore have I selected this subject this morning in the hope that God the Holy Spirit may bless it, not only to those who are teachers, but to those who ought to be, and afterwards to those of us who may be otherwise occupied in the Master's vineyard, that we, also, may be led more earnestly to pray for our Brothers and Sisters who are watching over the lambs of the flock.

The words of our text are spoken of One who is, in the 10th verse, called, "The Lord God with a strong hand," and of whom we are asked, in verse 12, "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out Heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" It is a wonderful proof of the tenderness of God that very generally, when He is spoken of by His glorious titles and is described in the infinity of His power, we are, before long, assured of His great gentleness by having some special deed of kindness ascribed to Him.

He is the Lord God with a strong hand and a ruling arm, but He carries the lambs in His bosom. He brings out the starry hosts by number. He calls them all by names in the greatness of His might and yet He "does gently lead those that are with young." How condescending it is on the part of the great Lord that He should come to shepherd men! How marvelous that it should be said of the Almighty God, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd"—shall act the Shepherd towards His chosen among the sons of men—guiding, feeding, protecting, nourishing and healing them. It is Jehovah Jesus, who, though He accounted it not robbery to be equal with God, yet came down to earth that He might be the Shepherd of men!

A shepherd bears among his flock, in wonderful conjunction, the offices of ruler and of servant. He rules and guides and controls his flock, but at the same time he waits upon them as the servant of all. Behold, in the Lord Jesus you see One who was justly recognized by His disciples as their Master and Lord and yet, as the servant of servants, He washed the feet of His disciples! He came as God to be a Prince and a Savior, but He made Himself of no reputation and took upon Himself the form of a Servant. He bowed Himself to save His people, to help their infirmities, to sympathize with their sorrows and even to suffer for their sins. Behold what manner of love the Great Shepherd of the sheep has manifested towards us!

It is notable that to accomplish this work the Lord is represented as coming with strength. "Behold the Lord God will come with a strong hand and His arm shall rule for Him." From which I gather that the work of saving men is one which requires the putting forth of strength, even when He who undertakes it is Divine. He is mighty to save, for it requires might to save a soul! If you and I, under God, are called to attempt the work of saving souls, we must certainly borrow Divine strength if we are to succeed, for what power to save can dwell in an arm offlesh? Nor must we ever treat the work of caring for the souls of men with indifference, nor go about it with carelessness.

It is not a secondary work to be pursued at leisure as a species of amusement. It filled the Savior's heart and hands, so that the zeal of it ate Him up—and unless you have the same power resting upon you which, also, dwelt in Him, and something of the same fervor, you will never be able to perform it rightly. O servant of the living God, see that your loins are girt with Omnipotence for such a task as this, for to save the soul of the smallest child in the Sunday school will need the same power that raised Christ from the dead!

The Lord would, also, have you feel that soul-winning can only be done in earnest—it requires energy and fervency. We must exercise every faculty, use all our intellect, awaken all our affection and continue laboring with unbounded perseverance if, by any means, we may save some. When I behold the Lord coming forth to save, even the Lord who made the heavens and the earth, I know what a work it must be! And when I see Him coming with a strong hand, making His arm to rule for Him, I comprehend that it is not child's play to be a soul-winner! If God Himself puts on strength, then you and I must ask for power beyond our own that we may be useful in this heavenly service.

Beautifully does our text set forth not only the great power exerted by our Lord Jesus, but, also His tender love, for not only does He come forth to care for men as His sheep, but He undertakes work among the lambs, among the feeblest, the smallest, the youngest. No part of His work is beneath Him! He does all the work of a good shepherd! It is supposed by some that it needs greater genius and ability to care for the sheep than for the lambs. I have even known preachers speak of bringing their minds down to the comprehension of children! They know little of the matter, for to preach a child's sermon or write a really good child's book is a very difficult task and requires the highest ability.

Jesus evidently thinks not lightly of the little ones, nor of the service which they require. His shoulders may suffice for lost sheep, but His bosom is reserved for the lambs—they need and shall have our Lord's best! With Divine sweetness and tenderness the Redeemer carries the lambs in His fond embrace and lends both His heart and His arm to cherish and protect them. We have before us in the text a lovely outline portrait of the Good Shepherd. Let us look at the picture and notice its main beauties. And when we have sufficiently done so, let us see therein an example for the Church and a model for the teacher of the young.

I. We have to examine A PORTRAIT OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD. Let us study it with care. "He shall gather the

lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom." What do I see in this picture? First, I see the Lord of angels condescending to personal labor. Jesus Christ, Himself, gathers with His own arm and carries in His own bosom the lambs of His flock! He does not commit this work to an angel, nor does He even leave it to His ministers, but He, Himself, by His Spirit, undertakes it. He cared for the lambs while He was here below. He suffered the little children to come to Him and He took them in His arms and blessed them.

He spoke very plainly, so that the young could understand His words, for He cared for their souls. We have frequent indications that He was often followed by a great company of young people and we know that they were ready to give Him their hosannas with eager enthusiasm. After He had risen from the dead He did not forget the young of the flock, for He said to Peter, "Feed My lambs." He was the holy Child, Jesus, Himself, all His days and He was a dear lover of the little ones, the true "children's Friend." The Spirit of the Lord was upon Him, for the Lord had anointed Him to preach glad tidings to the meek and the poor, who are as lambs in the flock. He condescended to look after the feeble and weak of the flock, Himself, toiling many a weary mile and pleading through many a chilly night on their behalf.

Now, though He reigns in Heaven, His Divine Spirit looks after the young converts and causes them to grow up in His fear. Many are the Timothies taught from their youth to know the Scriptures whom His Grace meets with and saves. And when they are saved, being still His lambs, He watches over them, trains them, instructs them, confirms their faith, guides them in His way and preserves them to the end. All our mercies, as Believers, we owe to our Lord's personal service, "who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree." Not by proxy did He save either His sheep or His lambs!

He did not stand and bid others do it and merely give the command, but He, Himself, spent 30 years here below in personal service among the sons of men! At this moment He is personally pleading for His own and personally ruling Providence on behalf of His little ones. He still gathers and He still carries. And if, dear Brothers and Sisters, we are to be at all like Jesus, we must not merely write tracts about how Sunday school work is to be done, nor stand in eminence like a commander-in-chief and give orders, but we must each one, personally, bend our back and stoop to the lambs! We must put out the strength of our own arms to gather them and then carry the blessed load of infirmity in our own bosom. We must render personal service if we are to be like our Lord who gave Himself for us. This first line in the portrait is well drawn and adds much to its manly beauty—He condescended to personal labor.

The second noteworthy line in the portrait seems to me to be that Jesus was earnest to save and earnest to save little ones. The text does not merely say that He carries the lambs in His bosom, but that He gathers them. It were great love that He should carry those who come—it is greater love that He gathers those who do not come. Constraining Grace

goes out into the midst of the world to fetch in the wandering sheep and lambs—and therein the greatest love is revealed—even the love which puts forth its strength while yet we go astray!

The Good Shepherd sees that even children's hearts are far off from Him and will remain so unless His effectual Grace shall go forth to reclaim them from the error of their natural estate. And, glory be to His love, He still does fetch this one and that one, in early days, to Himself—not waiting till they come, but going after them, even as the parable of the good shepherd sets forth—for there the shepherd leaves the 99 in the wilderness and goes after that which is gone astray until he finds it. Brothers and Sisters, if we are to be like Christ—and I hold the picture up that we may endeavor to copy it—we must not only rejoice when children are saved and encourage them when we see signs of Grace, but we must go after the little tenants of the street, the little disorderly members of our class, the young rebels of our family and "compel them to come in."

It must be the aim of our teaching that children, as children, should become children of the living God! For this we should pray! For this we should seek to be anointed of the Holy Spirit that we may bring in these lambs from the dark mountains to the green pastures! Whereas they are wayward, inattentive, difficult to rule, forgetful and inept in spiritual things, we must, with great patience, gather them, win their hearts, impress their minds and introduce them, by Divine Grace, into the fold of love! Look at the picture before you and you can see that your Lord is earnest to save. His face, His hands, His feet, His side all prove what an eager Savior He is! He does not tarry at home till wanderers, of their own free will, seek His face, but He goes forth to seek the lambs which lie about neglected in these great wilderness cities! He finds them in the fields of ignorance and under the hedges of vice, pining and perishing for lack of knowledge—and He gathers them with His arm.

Thirdly, a very superficial glance will show us that our Lord is willing to receive. If He is so eager to gather those who do not come, depend upon it, He is willing to receive all who do seek Him. There is never a heart that yearns after Christ, though it is the heart of a little child, but Jesus Christ delights to note those early desires. There is little knowledge, as yet, in the child's heart about the Lord—and little knowledge, as yet, of the evil of sin—but Jesus does not expect much from tender youth. Only a feeble ray of light has gleamed into the soul. Only a gentle breath of the Divine wind has turned the little soul towards Christ—but our Lord perceives it and delights in it. It were well if we could copy this trait in our Lord's Character.

I am afraid we are not very quick to notice the first impressions of boys and girls, or else we harshly judge that such impressions are written in water and, having been frequently disappointed, we have grown incredulous of children's convictions and children's faith. But it should not be so, for if our Lord gathers the lambs, it is clear that He is willing enough to receive those lambs when they come. And if you are to be like your Master, I would exhort each of you to receive with gladness even the least among your scholars when they come to tell you of their newborn faith in Christ. Do not quench the sparks, but fan them to a flame! Never crush the bruised reeds, nor throw them away as useless, for with a little care they may be so bound up that your Lord may get music out of them to His eternal praise!

Despise not the day of small things! Look not for ripe Graces and mature judgment in the early spring of youth, but rejoice in the buds and blossoms. Receive the lambs as lambs, though they are the weakest and most troublesome of the flock. See what your Lord does. The loving tenderness of Christ and His willingness to receive those who seek Him early should make our hearts willing to believe in childish piety, quick to perceive it and ready to rejoice in it! Wisely may we receive those whom Jesus receives! If they

are capable of coming to Him and lying in His bosom, they will do no dishonor to the bosom of the Church.

How carefully does Christ watch over the lambs! He is lovingly watchful over the entire flock, for not one under His care shall perish—but towards these young ones His tenderness is more manifest, for they need it more. It is with Him even as with a mother who is more anxious concerning her little babe or her sick child than concerning the strong of the family. Where the need is greatest, the love is most fervent. Christ carries the lambs in His bosom because the greatest need requires the most luxurious resting place and the most calm repose.

Beloved Friends, we must be very careful to protect young Christians if we would see them become strong in Christ. We should anxiously endeavor to keep them out of temptation. And since they must be tempted, more or less, we should endeavor to strengthen them to endure the various forms in which it assails the young. Let us lead them away from habits which debase and amusements which degrade. Let us try to keep from them many of those sinful doubts which have perplexed ourselves and those heresies which have been a snare to others. Above all, let us, by a pious example, endeavor to preserve them from the corruption that is in the world through lust, carrying them in our bosoms to the Throne of Grace, to the House of God and to everything which is pure, holy and acceptable to God!

As Mr. Greatheart is described by Bunyan as convoying the women and children to the Celestial City and fighting the giants for them, even so should we. We must, in the name of the Lord, watch for their souls as those that must give account, keeping guard from week to week lest our hope should be disappointed. Thus shall we be like the Good Shepherd who is ever careful to protect His own—

"Shepherd of the chosen number, They are safe whom You keep. Other shepherds faint and slumber, And forget to watch the sheep. Watchful Shepherd! You do wake while others sleep."

But our Lord's act means more than that, for He might have put the lambs on His shoulders if mere safety were all that He designed. We see by the picture before us that He is tender to cherish the little ones. It is said that He carries them— this is mercy! But this is not all, for He carries them in His bosom—this is tender mercy! To carry is kindness, but to carry in the bosom is loving kindness!

The shoulders are for power and the back for force, but the bosom is the seat of love! Jesus would warm, cheer, comfort and make them happy. The Lord wishes all His people to be happy—"Comfort you, comfort you My people, says your God." It is a worthy object to try and make any Christian happy, but especially a young Believer whose weakness needs great gentleness. To clothe religion with gloom is to slander the name of Christ! We should always be most eager to prevent young Believers from imagining that to follow Christ is to walk in darkness, for, indeed, it is not so. Has He not, Himself, said, "He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness"? Did not the wise man say concerning Wisdom, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace"? The Good Shepherd looks to the comfort, peace and enjoyment of His lambs—and He carries them where they will be most happy.

If you are to be like your Master, you will try to take away from young Believers' hearts all temptation to despondency. You will set before them the richness and freeness of the Gospel, the "exceedingly great and precious promises," the oath and Covenant and the stability of the engagements of God. Yes, you will try to let them see the preciousness of Christ and tell them how exceedingly faithful and true you have found Him to be in your own experience. All this will help them to ride at ease on the breast of Jesus' love if the Holy Spirit graciously assists your endeavors. Do not sow mistrust in their hopeful nature, nor instruct them to be as unbelieving as their fathers. Do not sternly judge and condemn them. Cruelty to children is

the worst of cruelty—unkind and harsh judgments upon inexperienced Believers are barbarous and unworthy of the Christian name! Endeavor to comfort and not to distress, to cheer and not to censure, to gladden and not to discourage the babes in Grace, for they are dear to the heart of Christ!

Once more, dear Friends, you see in the text that Christ, the Good Shepherd, is loving in His estimate of the lambs. Men carry in their bosoms their gems, their jewels—and so does Christ carry the lambs of the flock, regarding them as His peculiar treasure! He knows that in themselves they are worth nothing, but then He puts an estimate upon them according to His own relationship to them. He prizes them because His Father gave them to Him of old to be His portion. The little child that believes in Christ was given to Christ before the foundations of the world and, therefore, He

looks upon it as a choice treasure and it is exceedingly dear in His eyes. "All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me," He says.

He knows, too, what the child cost Him, for to redeem a little child from going down into the Pit, He must bear the penalty due to Justice and suffer even unto death. He sees the purchase of His agonies in every youthful Believer. For him the precious blood flowed from the Redeemer's own heart and bought the child to be His own redeemed forever. He remembers, moreover, what that child will come to if He does not save it by carrying it in His bosom. It has sinned. It has knowingly and willfully sinned and, therefore, it lies under the curse of the Law and Jesus mourns to see a soul in that condition, obnoxious to the wrath of God. A soul is a precious thing to Christ, for He believes in its immortality. We know He does, for He speaks of a place, "where their worm dies not and their fire is not quenched," and He told us that the wicked will be driven away into "everlasting punishment."

He values souls at a rate unknown to those who dream that men are mere animals and will one day cease to exist. If they are to pass away and be no more, like things of the dust and of the mist, why should He die for them at all? Why should He care to gather them? But because no diamond can ever equal in value the soul, even of a beggar's child, therefore does Christ carry His little ones in His bosom as exceedingly precious to Him. And He knows, too, what may come of that child if He saves it—for the possibilities of the blessing within one little saved child—who shall estimate but the Lord who knows all things? I read the other day a pleasing anecdote of what one lamb may come to. A ewe brought forth three lambs and the brutal shepherd threw the third into the hedge, that there might be the more milk for the other two.

A poor woman passing by begged for the thrown away lamb, employed her utmost care in nursing it by means of a sucking bottle and reared it till it could eat grass for itself. She turned it upon the common and in due course it produced her twins. By much care she, at length, raised a whole flock of sheep from the single ewe, and in process of time she became a woman of considerable estate. See what one poor half-dead lamb may yet produce? Who knows what one poor trembling soul may yet bring forth? Jesus knows that a boy may be here who will be the spiritual father of scores and hundreds of thousands before he dies! There may be in the congregation of today a Chrysostom or an Augustine!

Among us may sit a little Whitefield, or a young Luther, or some other honorable character who shall lead many to Christ! There was a dreadful snowstorm one Sunday morning when Dr. Tyng, of New York, set out to preach. When He reached the Church there was only one poor little girl there. Most preachers would have gone home when one child made up the whole of the congregation, but Dr. Tyng went through the service as earnestly as if the pews had been crowded. He preached to the little girl and God gave him that girl's soul—and never was he better repaid! To his knowledge she has been the means of bringing

some 25 to the Lord Jesus—and among them was one of his own sons!

The greatest orator, the most spiritual teacher, the most useful evangelist may not dare to despise one of Christ's little ones! It were worthwhile for all the ministers in England to journey round the world to save the soul of a single shoeblack or of one girl in the workhouse! Value the little ones by their possibilities and you will reckon one lamb to be an untold treasure, worthy to be preserved in the jewel case of your loving care! Luther's schoolmaster always used to take off his hat to his boys when he entered the schoolroom, because, he said, he did not know what they might become. Had he known that Martin Luther had been there, he could not have done better than he did! Jesus Christ knows what He can make of little children in Heaven and so He carries them in His bosom because they shall be forever near the Father's Throne to behold His face. He has learned to estimate them at their eternal value—a value which His Grace has put upon them and which He never forgets.

Now, if there were time to take my text and handle it in another shape I should divide my subject thus—first, here are two evils about young Believers and young children—wandering and weakness. They are far away from God by nature and when they are brought near, they are very weak as to Divine things. Secondly, there are two attributes in the Lord Jesus to meet with and overcome the two evils. Here is strength to gather the wandering with His arm and here is love to cherish weakness till it forgets itself and becomes strong. Thirdly, here are two operations performed by the two attributes to meet the two infirmities—here is gathering and here is carrying.

It is very delightful to note how our blessed Lord, whose marred face I seem to see at this very moment, does the gathering and the carrying with equal ease. Even now, by faith, I see His pierced feet pursuing the truant lambs, His wounded hands laying hold upon them and His bosom so full of the most Divine Love receiving and bearing them. Do

you not hear His sweet voice saying, "Suffer the little children to come to Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven"? He is still gathering and still carrying by His Word and Spirit! And so will He do until He shall come. God help us in this to imitate Him to the end.

II. Let us now remember in our text we have AN EXAMPLE FOR THE CHURCH. There are two great things which a Church ought always to have, namely, an arm to gather with and a bosom to carry in. I need to speak to you members of the Church, now, not merely about the Sunday school, but concerning every other part of our soul-seeking and soul-saving work. I want you all to try, in the name of God and in the energy of the Holy Spirit, to be the arm to gather with. "He gathers the lambs with His arm." They are scattered now, the blood-bought—the ordained of God unto eternal life—are scattered here and there and know not the Lord.

We are bound to gather them from all places into which they have wandered. They will not come of themselves. The mass of them despise, even, the outward means of Grace. We need a strong arm to gather with so that they may be compelled to come in. The Church's arm is partly the ministry of the Word in her midst. Preaching should be attractive enough to gather the people together, for how shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear if they will not gather around the preacher? Though certain wise persons pretend to despise the power to gather the multitudes to hear the Word, you and I need not mind their decrying it since we shrewdly suspect that their depreciation of the gift is caused by their not possessing it themselves—the grapes are always sour if they hang above our reach.

But we know who has told us that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. If it is the Gospel that is preached, we should rejoice that by any means the people can be gathered to hear it—and it is plain as a pikestaff that a part of the preacher's aim should be to preach so that men may be gathered to the hearing of it, for if he preaches and none gather to hear, to what end does he preach? He might as well get away to the woods or to the wilderness and repeat the Gospel to himself in solitude if he has no desire that men should listen to him. The preacher's voice is to gather, but amid such teeming multitudes as those of London, so few preachers can never be expected to be the arm of the Lord to gather alone!

We must gather the young by Sunday schools and endeavor to retain them when they grow up! We must gather them by the distribution and sale of good books and other pure literature! The bookseller has, in this respect, his work to do to gather in the villages and hamlets. We must gather them by visiting from house to house—you tract distributors, you city missionaries, you Bible women—you must be the arm of the Church to gather many! But still, the work will not be done unless we have more help than these. Every Christian must be a gatherer! Each one must gather his one! In the power of the Holy Spirit we must all seek out the wanderers. If you cannot bring sheaves, you must glean ear by ear! If you cannot preach to hundreds, you must endeavor to gather individuals by your holy conversation, by your pious lives, by the orderly ruling of your family and by using every occasion that God gives you to speak a good word for Christ.

Gather! I give you this word, all you dear members of the Church, as your watchword! Gather! Gather! Gather the people together! Bring them in where Jesus is uplifted and His Gospel sounded forth! Try and find them in the lonely places where they are scattered in the cloudy and dark day. There are many of you and you can go into all sorts and nooks and corners, for you dwell in all sorts of places. Let no spot be unvisited in your mission of love! Go, you rich, and gather in from the parlor and from the drawing room! Go, you poor, and gather in from the cottages and even from the workhouse! Go, you who labor, and gather among the sons of toil! Go, you that toil not, neither do you spin, and spend your ample leisure in winning souls from among those with whom you associate! So shall the blood-redeemed ones be fetched out and formed into a goodly flock and Christ, by you, shall gather both lambs and sheep with His arm!

But the Church's second work is to carry in her bosom. Those who are brought to Christ need nurture, instruction, example, edification. "Feed My sheep," He says, and yet again, "Feed My lambs." The preacher should try to do this, suiting his discourse to the weakest and feeblest lamb. But since he is but one and takes not upon himself the responsibility of others, the whole Church should try to be a nursing mother unto those who are born unto her. Beloved, carry the young converts! Take the convicted of sin and pity them, cheer them, fight against their despondencies, battle with their doubts, enlighten their ignorance and so bear them in your bosom.

And then, when they begin to grow strong and work for Christ, encourage them, carry them in the bosom of your earnest prayers, asking God to make them workmen not to be ashamed of doing the Master's work right wisely and well.

When they succeed in their service, carry them in the bosom of your loving admiration. And when you see them grow in Grace till they are strong, carry them in the bosom of your fellowship, remembering that no child of God can afford to be unloved and lonely. Those who do not need your help will need your love! Those who do not require encouragement will, nevertheless, be glad of your sympathy. Carry all your Brothers and Sisters in your bosom! You will be Christ-like if you do so. It is the Church's work, in this, to imitate her great Lord and let the Beloved of Christ be carried in her bosom of affection.

May your arm always have strength to labor and your heart love with which to cherish! May this Church never lack for arms that shall encompass the neighboring population and never lack for a heart that shall be warm towards those who love our Lord Jesus Christ! Hand and heart must go together—by these two our work must be fully done. May they be both evermore in full activity, even as they are seen in Christ, our blessed Exemplar.

III. We shall close with a practical word or two upon THE MODEL TEACHER. He who gathers the lambs with His arm and carries them in His bosom is the Model for a Sunday school teacher. In what points? First there should be about the teacher attractiveness in order that he may gather. You cannot gather hearts and spirits by force. The Board School may gather its children by law, but you must gather yours by love. You cannot keep a class of children around you by the fear of punishment. It must be by some attraction which will hold them with the cords of love and the bands of a man. Our Lord Jesus gathers with His arm because He is so full of love and of that which wins love. His Character is so amiable that it draws men to it as a loadstone draws the needle. This is the arm with which He gathers. Oh that all teachers had more of it!

A little child, one morning, was eating her breakfast with a spoon and the sun shone in upon her little mess of broth. As she lifted a spoonful to her mouth, she said, "Mother, what do you think? I have eaten a spoonful of sunshine." I recommend that diet to all Sunday school teachers—take a great many spoonfuls of sunshine into your nature and let it shine in your very face and glitter in your talk! Your Master had it! The people loved to listen to Him. They felt, when they drew near to Him, as if they were like a ship that had entered into port and could cast anchor. Even when they did not receive all that He said, there was a charm about His manner, His spirit and His tone. Ask, O you teachers, ask for yourselves that God would give you that holy charm which gathers! Pray that He may deliver you from the angry spirit which scatters. Let your charm be in this, "I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." Carry the love of Christ with you and you will not fail to gather the lambs with your arm!

The next thing is, after you have attracted, lift up. He carries the lambs in His bosom and, therefore, He must lift them up! They were on the ground till He raised them. Everything about a teacher should tend to raise the children. You are to go down to the child, first, and make yourself understood. But you are not to stay down and become, yourself, childish. To tell children a lot of tales merely to amuse them is but to roll in the dust with the lambs and not to carry them. You may tell the tale and so come down to the lambs—but it must have its holy lesson with which you lift the lamb upward towards better things. Think of this and let your whole life act in that direction. Your example, your temper, your very dress must be a lifting up for the child.

How often, in this evil city, do home influences drag the child downward? The habits, manners and customs with which it is surrounded tend to make it grovel in the earth. You have to lift it up, dear Teacher, as the Great Shepherd of the sheep did—away from its childishness, away from its worldliness, (for it gets to be worldly even while a child)—away from its sin, away from the corruptions of the wicked world. Ask for Grace that every time you see your children you may lift them up and that God, the Holy Spirit, would lift you up all the while. Lift up your heart, or you cannot lift up your child.

The third thing to be noticed is that when He lifted up the lamb, He laid it on His heart. Oh, Sunday school Teacher, this is a very important point with you! If you are to bless the little ones, they must be on your heart! You must make them feel the life of your religion—there must be a heart and a bosom to it. Let them know that there is something in your religion which looks towards them. Let them know that you love their

souls, that you sorrow if they neglect the great salvation and that you will rejoice exceedingly if they are brought to Christ! Lift them up and then lay them on your heart and let that heart be warm with holy love!

Next, bear them forward. The lamb is put into the shepherd's bosom, not that he may stand still with it all day long, but because the sheep are going this way and the lambs must go that way, too, and, therefore, he carries it. It is of no use

for you to lay a child upon a cold heart—your own heart must be glowing or it will not be a fit candle for a babe in Grace. And then the bosom will be of small service unless the teacher is active as well as affectionate. A child in the bosom of a sluggish teacher will make no progress. You must be always going forward, yourself, if the child is to go forward with you. I do not believe that any preacher will have a growing congregation if he does not grow himself, nor will any teacher have an advancing class if he or she is not advancing, too. Advance in holiness, advance in communion with Christ, advance in perfect consecration to your Lord—and as you do so, the dear little children who are in your bosom will, by God's Grace, be carried with you.

The next word is guard the children. Did we not say that Christ placed the lambs in His bosom to protect them? Good Sunday school teachers try to keep the children out of sin and out of harm's way on week days as well as on Sundays. Spiritual teachers of the noblest order need to know what the children do on ordinary days. They try, if they can, to be their guardian angels from the Monday morning to the Saturday night. They never relax their endeavors to lead the children away from the terrible temptations which surround them in this huge Babylon.

The next word is cheer. Did I not say that the Good Shepherd laid the lamb in His bosom to keep it warm and cherish it? So should the good teacher always have a smile for the children and a word of encouragement for them in their little battle of life, for to them it is a great one. Beloved, do all that you can to comfort the little hearts of the young converts. Help them to believe as God helps you. By the Divine Spirit try to lead them on in holy joy as the Spirit leads you. So shall you be imitators of "that Great Shepherd of the sheep," who—

"Gently leads the wearied lamb,

Gently binds the bruised limb.

And His bosom bears the lamb

Like an infant dear to Him.

He the simplest thoughts instills

He the mildest rules imparts,

Arms with power the weakest wills,

Fills with joy the saddest hearts." And, last of all, delight in them. That 10th verse, with which I shall conclude, has a great charm for me. "The Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him." Well, what did He have before Him but the sheep that He went forth to find and the lambs which He gathered and carried in His bosom? They were His work, but they were also His reward! Teachers of Sunday schools, your work is before you in your

class—your reward is before you, too! These boys and girls are to cost you service—do not grudge it for they will be your reward! Look them in the face and know that they are immortal and that these are they whom God is able to win for His Son through you, to be the jewels of His diadem and to be your crowns of rejoicing!

The harder and more stubborn a human heart, the more honor it is to win it for the Lord Jesus. The less attention you get at first, the higher will be your reward if, winning the attention, you shall, by-and-by, win the soul! I reckon that your Master will count you to have served Him all the more faithfully if you bring from the ragged school the most degraded, the most ignorant, the least taught and the most depraved! To bring to Christ the children of godly parents is a thing worthy of anyone's ambition, but to gather to Him the children of the back slums, the children of the debauched and the depraved—this seems, to me, to be a more illustrious ambition!

Therefore do I say to you as you traverse these streets of London—Christian men and women, your work is before you! Your reward is before you! The teeming masses are at once your sphere of labor and your recompense. There is the soil you have to sow and there is the harvest which you have to reap. The fields are white, but they are white for the harvest! God give you faith in the Gospel that you teach, faith in your Master who taught it before you and faith in your Master who teaches it with you! Now, go forth, one and all, each one according to his or her ability and calling—and gather with your arms and carry in your bosom those for whom Christ died. Amen.

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