

An Earnest Entreaty (1917)

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon passionately urges listeners to abandon rebellion against God and to immediately trust and honor Jesus Christ as their Savior and King for reconciliation and eternal blessing.

Scripture: Psalm 2:12, Acts 16:31, Hebrews 1:3, John 14:6, Romans 5:1, 1 Timothy 2:5, Isaiah 53:5

Topics: "Salvation", "Christology", "Repentance"

Description

In this earnest and heartfelt sermon, C.H. Spurgeon addresses those who have opposed or neglected Christ, urging them to embrace Him as their King and Savior. Drawing from Psalm 2:12, Spurgeon emphasizes the urgency of immediate repentance and faith in Jesus as the only mediator between God and man. With pastoral warmth and biblical clarity, he calls listeners to abandon rebellion and trust fully in Christ's finished work for reconciliation and eternal blessing.

Transcript

"Kiss the Son lest He be angry, and you perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." Psalm 2:12.

LET us have a little quiet talk tonight. I have known a simple, earnest conversation turn the whole current of a man's life. I recollect a good man, who lived at a certain market town in Suffolk. He was no preacher, as far as I know. He had never tried to preach, yet he was a mighty soul-winner. He had noticed how commonly it happened in that town, as in most of our smaller towns, that the lads, as they grew up, sought employment in London, or in some other large center of industry and, consequently, they left their home, their parents, guardians and the associations amidst which they had been trained, to enter a new sphere—where they would lack much of the oversight that had hitherto checked them when prone to wander. His watchful eyes and ever-listening ears having ascertained within a little when any young man was going, he sent a polite invitation to tea. And at that tea table the words he used to speak, the cautions he gave, and the necessity he urged of being decided for Christ before leaving, and especially the earnest prayer with which he concluded the evening—these things have been remembered by scores of young men, who, on removing to the larger towns, could never shake off the impression which his quiet, devout conversation had made! Some of them even traced their conversion to God, and their subsequent perseverance in the paths of righteousness, to the evening they had spent with that humble, but wise and earnest individual! I wonder whether any of us remember, in our young days, any such talk as that which exerted an influence upon us? I wonder more if, instead of trying to preach anything great tonight which is

not much in my line, I try to talk very seriously and pointedly to all present who are unconverted, whether God will not bless it by His Holy Spirit and make it a turning point to decide the present course and eternal destiny of some of my hearers?

Our text contains some very sound advice. Let us ask—to whom was it originally addressed And to whom is it appropriately addressed now?

I. TO WHOM WAS IT ADDRESSED.

"Kiss the Son, lest He be angry Look at the 10th verse, "Be wise now, therefore, O you kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth." Thus to monarchs and potentates of this world—to those who made and those who administered the laws, in whose hands were the liberties, if not the lives of their subjects—were these words spoken! People make a great fuss about a sermon preached before Her Majesty. I must confess to having wasted a shilling once or twice over those productions. I could never make out why they should not have been sold for a halfpenny, for I think better sermons could have been bought for a penny. But, somehow, there is always an interest attached to anything that is preached before a king or a queen, and still more so if it is pointedly preached to a king. Now this was a little private advice given to kings and judges. Still, it offers counsel by which persons of inferior rank may profit. You, Sir, are not so great in station but this advice may be good enough for you! If it was meant for those who sat on thrones, wielded scepters and exercised authority, you will not have to humble yourself much to listen earnestly, and receive gratefully this admonition of wisdom!

Let me take you by your coat, and hold you for a minute, and say, Be wise now. This is the day for reason. Exercise a little judgment—put on your considering cap—do not spurn the monition, or put it on one side with a huff and a puff, as though it were not discreet or urgent. This was language meant for kings—listen to it—it may be a royal word to you! Perhaps—for strange things happen—it may help to make you a king, too, according to that saying which is written, "He has made us kings and priests unto God." The language which would command the attention of kings would certainly claim heed of such humble and obscure persons as are here assembled! Surely, when the expostulation proceeds from the mouth of God, and when it is spoken to the highest in the world, you might account it a privilege to have the matter made privy to yourselves! And as it intimately concerns you, there is the more cause that you take heed thereunto.

The words were spoken to those who had willfully opposed the reign of our Savior, the Son of God, the Lord's Anointed. They had determined to reject Him. They said, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." A terrible, a disastrous course to resolve upon in the teeth of a destiny that no plot can hinder, no confederacy can avert! Hence, the caution and the counsel appeal to all or to any who have been opposers of Christ and of true religion. I do not suppose there are many such here, who are actively and ostensibly revolting against the Gospel, yet there may be some such and, if there are, I would sound an alarm and ring loudly the warning, "Be wise now, therefore! Be instructed! Do listen a little!" It is good to be zealous in a good cause. But suppose it is a bad cause? Saul of Tarsus was vehement against Christ, but after some consideration, he became quite as enthusiastic for Him. It may cost you many regrets another day to have been so violent against that which you will find out to have been worthy of your love rather than of your fierce opposition! Every wise man, before he commits himself to defend or withstand a policy, should make quite sure, as far as human judgment can, whether it is right or wrong—to be desired, or to be deprecated! Surely I do not speak to any who would willfully oppose that which is good. Or, if prejudice has prompted you, there is all the more reason why your judgment should now be impartial. Stop, therefore, and give ear! It may be your relenting will be kindled, and wisdom will

enlighten your heart. These words were spoken to those who ought to have been wise—to kings and judges of the earth. Those mighty ones had been mistaken, otherwise the rebuke would have been untimely and superfluous—"Be wise now, therefore, O you kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth." It appears they had rebelled— partly through ignorance, but mainly through jealousy and malice—they had rebelled and revolted against the Christ of God. Doubtless they did not rightly understand Him. Perhaps they thought His way was hard, His Laws severe, His government tyrannical. But He meets your wild rage with His mild reasoning! To the gusts of your passion, He responds with the gentle voice of His mercy, "Be wise, O you kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth." Learn a little more. Get a little more knowledge—it may correct your vain imaginations. A ray of light shining into your minds might make you shudder at the darkness in the midst of which you dwell! A view of the right might, perhaps, show you that you have been wrong. It might take the tiller of your soul and turn the vessel around into another course. We are, none of us, so wise but we could profit by a little more instruction! He that cannot learn from a fool, is a fool himself. When a man says, "I know enough," he knows nothing! He who thinks that his education is "finished," had need begin his schooling afresh, for a fair start he has never yet made. With a sound basis, the edifice of education may proceed satisfactorily, but it never can be completed. Excelsior is the student's motto. He sees higher and higher altitudes as he rises in attainment—and as long as he sojourns in this world, fresh fields of enquiry will continue to open up before him!

Once again, I believe the words of our text leave an especial reference to those who are thoughtless and careless about their best interests. The kings of the earth were deliberating how they might successfully oppose Christ, but they were strangely and culpably negligent of their real interest. Hence the remonstrance, "Be wise now; be instructed, you judges of the earth." The general lack of intelligence in the present day with respect to religion is, to my mind, appalling. The knowledge with which most men are content is superficial in the extreme. They do not think! They do not take the pains to make reflections and draw inferences from the facts within their reach, but they allow themselves to drift with the tide of what is called "public opinion." Were it the fashion for people to carry brains in their heads, some religions which are now very rife would soon come to an end! I have stood aghast with wonder and with awe at the sublime folly of mankind, when I have seen how eagerly and devoutly they will bow down before baubles and street shows, while they vainly imagine that they are worshipping God! Have they no brains within their skulls? Have they no faculty of thought? Have they no reasoning power? What singular defect can be traced to their birth, or with what fatal folly have they renounced their commonsense? Ought we to pity, to chide, or to scorn them? In indictments for witchcraft, I suppose, you punish the impostor as a knave, while you laugh at the victim as a dupe. But in cases of priestcraft, you divide the scandal more equally. So the Sunday theatricals run their course till the force of thought, the voice of conscience, and, I might add, the love of liberty, shall pronounce their doom! People do not think. Some of them are of the religion of their ancestors, whatever that may be! You hear of Roman Catholic families and Quaker families. Not conviction, but tradition shapes their ends. Others are of the religion of the circle in which they live, whatever that may be. They are good Protestants, they say—had they been born in Naples, they would have been as good Papists! Or had they been born at Timbaktu, they would have been as good heathens—just about as good in any case! Thought, reason, or judgment never entered into their reckoning. They go up to their place of worship—they pray as others do, or they say, "Amen," in the service. Thought they have none. They sing without thought, hear without thought and as the thing is to be done, I suppose, they preach without thought!

Talk of preaching, I have specimens at home of sermons which can be bought for nine pence each. They are underlined, so that the proper emphasis is apparent—and the pauses to be made between the

sentences are fairly indicated. Preaching made easy! We shall be favored, one of these days, with preaching machines—we have already got down to hearing machines. The mass of our hearers is not much more animated than an automaton figure. Life and liveliness are lacking in both. Preaching and hearing may both, perhaps, be done by steam! I would it were not so. Men are evidently thoughtful about other things. Bring up a sanitary problem and there are men that will work it out somehow. Is some new invention needed, say, a gun or a torpedo, to effect wholesale destruction of life? You shall find competitors in the arena, vying, one with another, in their study of the murderous science! Man seems to think of everything but of his God—to read everything but his Bible—to feel the influence of everything but the love of Christ, and to see reason and argument in everything except in the inviolable truth of Divine Revelation. Oh, when will men consider? Why are they bent upon dashing into eternity thoughtlessly? Is dying and passing into another world of no more account than passing from the parlor to the drawing room? Is there no hereafter? Is Heaven a dream and Hell a bugbear? Well, then, cease to play with shadows! No longer foster such delusions! Be these things true or false, your insincerity is alike glaring. Like honest men, repudiate the Scriptures if you will not accept their counsel. Do not pretend to believe the solemnities of God's Word and yet trifle with them! This is to stultify yourselves, while you insult your Maker! I appeal to the conscience of every thoughtless person here, if reason or commonsense would justify such vacillation. Having thus tried to find out the people to whom my text applies, let me now direct your attention to the advice it gives them.

II. THE ADVICE WHICH IS GIVEN.

The advice is this—rebel no more against God. You have done so, some of you actively and willfully. Others of you, by ignoring His claims and utterly neglecting His will. It is not right to continue in this rebellious state! To have become entangled in such iniquity is grievous enough, but to continue therein any longer were an outrageous folly and a terrible crime. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Do you say, "We hear of advice and are willing to take it—our anxiety now is to find out the way in which we can become reconciled to God. How can we be restored to friendship with Him whom we have so bitterly wronged and so grossly offended?" Here is the pith of the advice. "Kiss the Son, pay Him homage, yield the affectionate fealty of your hearts to the Son of God." Between you and the great King, there is an awful breach. You can obtain no audience of Him. So grievous has been your revolt, that He will not see you. He has shut the door and there cannot be any communication between you and Himself. He has hung up a thick veil, through which your prayers cannot penetrate. But He refers you to His Son. That Son is His other Self—One with Himself in essential Deity, who has condescended to become man, has taken your nature into union with Himself, and in that Nature has offered unto Divine Justice an expiatory Sacrifice for human guilt. Now, therefore, God will deal with you through His Son. You must have an Advocate—as many a client cannot plead in court, but must have some counselor to plead for him who is infinitely more versed in the law and better able to defend his cause than he is—so the Lord appoints that you, if you would see the face of your God, must see it in the face of Jesus Christ! The short way of being at peace with God is not to try and mend your ways, or excuse yourself, or perform certain works, or go through certain ceremonies, but to repair to Christ, the one and only Mediator, who once was fastened to the Cross, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. He is now at the right hand of God, and you are required to worship Him, to trust in Him, to love Him. Thus do, and the reconciliation between you and God is effected in a moment! The blessed Jesus will wash you from your guilt, and the righteousness of Christ will cover you with beauty which will make you acceptable in the sight of God. "Kiss the Son." It means render Him homage, just as in our own country they speak of kissing the Queen's hands when certain offices are taken and homage is required. So come and kiss the Savior! No hard work

this! Some of us would gladly forever kiss His blessed feet It would be Heaven enough for us. Oh, come and pay your homage to Him! Acknowledge that Christ is your King! Give up your life to His service. Consecrate all your powers and faculties to do His will. But do trust Him. "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." That is the true kiss! Trust Him, rely upon Him, depend upon Him—leave off depending upon yourself, and rely upon Jesus! Throw yourself flat down upon the finished work of Christ! When you have so done your faith has reconciled you to God, and you may go your way in peace. Only go your way henceforth to serve that King whose hand you have kissed, and to be the willing subject of that dear Redeemer who ought to have you because He bought you with His precious blood!

This advice is urgent. Do it at once. I am not speaking, now, after the fashion of the orator, but I am talking to you as a friend. I wish I could pass along those aisles, or over the tops of those pews, and gently take the hand of each one, and say, "Friend, God would gladly have you reconciled to Him, and it only needs the simple act of trusting Jesus and accepting Him to be your Leader and your King." Do it now. If it is ever worth doing, it is worth doing at once! It is a blessed thing to do. Why delay? It is a simple thing to do! Why hesitate? It is the very least thing God could ask of you, and even that He will not require you to do in your own strength. Are you willing, but weak? He will help you to do what He commands you to do! Now, as you sit in your pew, what say you to this? "I will think it over," says one. Does it need any thinking over? If I had offended my father, I should wish to be at peace with him immediately—and if my father said to me, "My son, I will be reconciled to you if you will go and speak to your brother about it," well, I would not think it difficult, for I love my brother as well as my father, and I would go to him at once—and so all would be well. God says, "Go to Jesus. I am in Him. You can reach Me there—go round by His Cross—you will find Me reconciled there. Away from the Cross I am a Judge and my terrors will consume you. With the Cross between you and Me, I am a Father, and you shall behold My face beaming with love to you." "But how am I to get to Jesus?" you ask. Why, have I not told you?—simply to trust Him—to rely upon Him! Faith is trusting Christ. This is the Gospel, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." Put your entire trust in Him. Renounce all lordship that has ever been exercised over you by any other master and become Christ's servant! Rely on Him to land you safely at the right hand of God, and He will do it. "Kiss the Son." Oh, Friend, I cannot make you do it—it must be done of your own will. God alone can lead that will of yours to yield itself up to Christ's will! But I pray you do it—kiss the Son, and do it now! Pursuing our quiet talk, I come to my third point, which is—

III. HOW IS THIS ADVICE PRESSED HOME UPON US?

The vanity of any other course is made palpable. Be reconciled to God because there is no use in being at enmity with Him. The kings of the earth opposed God, but while they were plotting and planning, God was laughing. "Yet," says He, "have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." I think if I were a king and had the misfortune to be driven to go to war, I would not like to fight one that had ten times my own strength! I would rather engage in a somewhat equal combat, with a prospect that by dint of valor and good generalship, victory might be gained. To contend against Omnipotence is insanity! For any man, I care not who he may be, to put himself in opposition to God is utter folly! I have often watched, as doubtless you have done, the foolish moth attracted by the glare of the candle or the gas. He plunges at it, as though he would put it out, and he drops, full of exquisite pain, upon the table. He has enough wing left to make another dash at the flame, and again he is filled with another pain, and unless you mercifully kill him outright, he will continue as long as he has any strength to fight with the fire which destroys him! That is an apt picture of the sinner's life—and such will be the sinner's death! Oh, do not so, dear Friend—do not so! Speak I not with voice of reason when I thus dissuade you? If you must fight, let it be with someone that

you can overcome. But sit down now and reckon whether you can hope to win a victory against an Almighty God! End the quarrel, Man, for the quarrel will otherwise end in your death and eternal destruction!

We are further pressed to the duty commanded by the claims of the Son. "Kiss the Son." As I read the words, they seem to me to have a force of argument in them which explains itself and vindicates its own claims. Kiss! Kiss whom? "Kiss the Son." And who is He? Why, He is Jesus, the Well-Beloved of the Father! And among the sons of men, the Chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely! Surely Christ is such a princely One that He ought to receive homage of mankind! He has done such great things for us and He has shown such good will towards us, that to pay Him reverence seems not so much the call of duty as the natural impulse of love! The worship which is His due should flow spontaneously from the instincts of Grace rather than be exacted by the fiat of law! Even those who have denied the authenticity of Inspiration have always been charmed with the Character of our Lord, and you will notice that the most astute opponents of Christianity have had little, if anything, to say against the Founder of it, so transparent His virtue, so charming His humility. Oh, Kiss the Son, then! He is God—trust Him. He is Man, a perfect Man—confide in His friendship. He has finished the work of human redemption, therefore, hail Him as your King and pay your homage to Him now! Oh, that God's eternal Spirit may lead you so to do without hesitation or objection!

Were I talking to some of you in a quiet corner I might gather an argument from the simplicity of the promise here offered you. "Kiss the Son." Is that all? Pay Jesus homage. Is that all? The Emperor of Germany, in the olden times when Popes were Popes, had offended his Unholiness—and before he could be restored to favor, he had to stand for three days (I think it was) outside the castle gate, in the deep snow, in the depth of winter, and do penance. I have seen, myself, in Rome and elsewhere, outside of the older churches, places uncovered and exposed to wind and rain, to the heat of summer and the frost of winter, where backsliders were made to stand, sometimes for years, even, before they were restored, if they had committed some offense against ecclesiastical statutes! You will sometimes see in old country churches of England little windows that run slanting and just look toward the communion table, through which poor offenders who professed repentance, after some months of standing in the church yard, or perhaps outside of it, were at last allowed to take a peep at the altar, at the expiration of their weary term of penance! All this is contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, for the spirit of the Gospel is, "Come, now, and let us reason together; though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as wool." The spirit of my text is, "Kiss the Son, now"—and that is all. Though those lips were once blaspheming, let them kiss the Son! Though these lips have uttered high words and proud words, or perhaps lying and lascivious words, "Kiss the Son." Bow down at those dear pierced feet and trust Emmanuel, and acknowledge yourself His servant, and you shall be forgiven—forgiven at once, without delay and this night you shall be accepted in Christ! I am right glad I have got so good a message to tell! I would that you would receive it with gladness. May it drop like the snowflakes on the sea, which sink into the waves. May each invitation sink into your soul, there to bless you henceforth and forever!

Moreover, the exhortation of our text is backed up with felicitations for those who yield to it. "Blessed are all they who put their trust in Him." Those of you who do not know anything about trusting in Christ must have noticed how joyously we sang that hymn just now—

"Oh, happy day that fixed my choice

On You, my Savior and my God!

Well may this glowing heart rejoice,

And tell its raptures all abroad." Don't you think there was some fervor in our tones? Was it not sung as if we meant it? If nobody else meant it, I did! And I could see by the look of your eyes that a good many of you were stirred with grateful recollections. It was the happiest day in all our lives when Jesus washed our sins away! Far be it from us to deceive any of you by saying that to be a Christian will save you from the sorrows of the world, or from trials and tribulations, from physical pain or from natural death. Nothing of the kind! You will be liable to sickness and adversity in their manifold forms, as other men are, but you will have this to comfort you in every dark, distressing hour—that these light afflictions, which are but for a season—will come to you from a loving Father's gentle hand, with a gracious purpose, and they will be dealt out to you in weight and measure according to His judgment, while some sweet consolations will always be sent with them. And, above all, there is perpetual joy and perennial satisfaction in that man's heart who knows that he is right with God. Although his house may not be as he would have it, yet he has accepted God's way of reconciliation—he is reconciled by the blood of Christ! God loves him and he loves God! He is confident, therefore, that whether he lives or dies, he must be blessed, because he is at peace with God! Oh, happy day, happy day, thrice happy day, when a man comes into this blessed state! I have heard many regret that they have pursued the pleasures of sense and been fascinated with them, but I never yet heard of one who had found the dear delights of faith pall on his taste! It has never fallen to my lot yet to attend a dying bed where I have heard a Christian regret that he put his trust in his Savior! Neither have I ever heard at any time of anyone who died believing in Jesus who has had to say, "Had I but served the world with half the zeal I served my God I should have been a happier man." Oh, no! Such bitter reflections on misspent and misused talents befit the worldling, and the world's poet put it into the dying man's mouth in another form from that in which I gave it, for, "what we might have been," and, "what we might have done," make the sum of life's bewailing when death in view makes such repentance unavailing! The Christian's satisfaction is, on the other hand, only shaded by the wish all feel that they had loved the Savior more intensely, trusted Him more confidently and served Him more diligently! Never have I heard any other kind of compunction and self-reproach.

"Come along, then, Friend, Come along," they say to us! "What matters so long as you are happy?" I have often heard them say so. And let me say to you, if that is one of your slogans and you really do seek after happiness, you cannot do better than pay homage to the Son of God, end the awful rupture between you and your Creator, and henceforth put your trust in Him. One other motive I must mention. "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little." A striking expression! If Christ gets a little angry, men perish from the way! Then what must His great anger be? If His anger, kindled but a little, burns like a devouring fire, and men perish from the way of life, and from all hope of salvation, what must His great wrath be? Is there a fear suggested here that anybody will provoke Christ to fiercer anger? There is. Alas, there is! Shall I tell you the likeliest person to do it? Not, I think, that abandoned sinner who was born and bred in an immoral atmosphere and has followed a vicious course to the present hour. To him I would say, "Come to Jesus, and He will wash you now, and cleanse you from all your pollution." But the man I tremble for as most likely to make Him swear in His wrath is such a one as I was—privileged with godly parents, watched with jealous eyes, scarcely ever permitted to mingle with questionable associates, warned not to listen to anything profane or licentious—taught the way of God from his youth up! In my case there came a time when the solemnities of eternity pressed upon me for a decision and when a mother's tears and a father's supplications were offered to Heaven on my behalf. At such a time, had I not been helped by the Grace of God, but had I been left alone to do violence to conscience, and to struggle against conviction, I might have been at this moment perhaps dead, buried,

and doomed, having, through a course of vice, brought myself to my grave! Or I might have been as earnest a ringleader among the ungodly as I desire to be for Christ and His Truth! When there is light given, when one is not left to grope in darkness, when conscience is kept tender, a little provocation may then very much anger Christ!

I am afraid some of you young people that are growing up here stand in deep need of remonstrance. You have got good parents. You have been instructed in the Scriptures from your infancy and you have had great many deep impressions while sitting in these pews listening to the sound of the Gospel—and yet you are playing with them, you are trifling with them! Nothing bad about you, so you think. You are not conscious of having grossly violated any moral law. But have you never heard of a gentleman in India who had a tame leopard that went about his house? It was as playful as a cat, and did no one any harm till one day, as he lay asleep, the leopard licked his hand and licked until it had licked a sore place and tasted blood. After that there was nothing for it but to destroy it—for all the leopard-nature was aroused by that taste of blood! And some of you young people, with all the godly associations that are round about you, will—I am always afraid—get a taste of the devilry outside, of the world 's vice and sin. And then there is the leopard 's nature in you. If you once get the taste and flavor of it, you will be prone to be always thirsting for it. Then, instead of the hope we now cherish, that we shall soon see you at your parents ' side, serving Christ—see you take your father 's place, young man, in later years—see you, young woman, grow up to be a matron in the Church of God, bringing many others to the Savior—we may have to lament that the children are not as the parents, and cry, "Woe is the day that ever they were born." I, therefore, want you to decide, lest you perish from the way—from the way of God and the way of righteousness—while His wrath is kindled but a little, lest He say, "Let them alone," and throw the reins on your neck, for if He should once do that, woe the day! Nothing can happen worse to a man than to be left to himself. Kiss the Son, then!

Affectionately and earnestly do I entreat you—not standing here ex-officio to deliver pious platitudes, but from my very soul, as though I were your brother or father, I would say, Young man, young woman, kiss the Son now! Yield your heart up to Jesus now! Blessed are they who trust in Him now. Oh, tonight, tonight, tonight—your first night in Grace, or else your last night in hope! Tonight, tonight! The clock has just struck. It seemed to say, "Tonight." God help you to say, "Yes, it shall be tonight, for God and for Christ!"—

"Songs of triumph then resounding

From your happy lips shall flow!

In the knowledge of salvation

You true happiness shall know,

Through Christ Jesus,

Who alone can life bestow."

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: LUKE 7:36-48.

Verse 36. And one of the Pharisees desired Him that He would eat with him. And He went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. They sat according to the Eastern custom of sitting, which was rather lying at length, with the feet far out upon the couch or sofa.

37. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner In a particular sense, a sinner—one whose very trade was sin.

37. 38. When she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment and stood at His feet, behind Him, weeping. As she could do, you see, without coming into the room, except for a few yards, especially if the Savior 's feet were close against the door.

38. And began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment For water she gives her tears, for a towel, her hair—to heal the blisters of His weary pilgrimage, there are her soft lips for liniment and then, for ointment, comes this precious salve.

39. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden Him saw it, he spoke within himself, saying, This Man, if He were a Prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is who touches Him; for she is a sinner "She is a sinner, and does He let her touch Him, kiss His feet and show such tokens of affection? What Man must He be who allows a harlot's kiss, even though it is upon His feet?" Ah, poor foolish Pharisee! He judged according to the sight of the eyes, or else he might have known that the best of men would never be angry at a harlot's tears, for the tears of repentance, come from whatever heart they may, are always like diamonds in the esteem of those who judge rightly.

40-42. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have something to say unto you. And he said, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay—And were, therefore, likely to be cast into prison, and to be sold as slaves.

42-43. He frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most And He said unto him, You have rightly judged. There were no bonds, no promises of what they would do in the future, but he frankly forgave them both.

44. And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, See you this woman? I entered into your house—And it was, therefore, your duty to attend to Me.

44. You gave Me no water for My feet Though that was the common custom.

44. 45. But she has washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head You gave Me no kiss. Which was the customary welcome to every honored guest—a kiss upon the cheek or upon the forehead.

45. But this woman since the time I came in has not ceased to kiss My feet She has done what you ought to have done; she has done it better than you could have done it; she has done it when there was no claim upon her to do it, except that she has been forgiven much, and, therefore, loved much.

46. My head with oil you did not anoint This, too, was the usual custom.

46-48. But this woman has anointed My feet with ointment Therefore I say unto you, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little. And He said unto her, Your sins are forgiven.

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