

Christ About His Father's Business

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon emphasizes that Jesus Christ's unwavering dedication to fulfilling His Father's will exemplifies perfect obedience and calls believers to adopt the same spirit of consecration and commitment in their own lives.

Scripture: Luke 2:49, Isaiah 53:12, Philippians 2:6-8, Isaiah 61:1, Psalm 110:1, Hebrews 4:15, John 19:30

Topics: "Obedience to God", "Christ's Example", "Divine Calling"

Description

In this devotional sermon, C.H. Spurgeon explores Jesus Christ's profound commitment to fulfilling His Father's will, highlighting the perfect obedience and self-sacrifice that characterized His earthly ministry. Spurgeon calls believers to embrace the same spirit of consecration and zeal, urging them to live out their faith with unwavering dedication. Through vivid illustrations and biblical insights, the sermon challenges Christians to imitate Christ's example and faithfully engage in the work God has entrusted to them.

Transcript

"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"—Luke 2:49.

Behold then, how great an interest God the Father takes in the work of salvation. It is called "his business;" and though Jesus Christ came to accomplish our redemption, came to set us a perfect example, and to establish a way of salvation, yet he came not upon his own business, but upon his Father's business—his Father taking as much interest in the salvation of men as even he himself did—the great heart of the Father being as full of love as the bleeding heart of the Son, and the mind of the first person of the Trinity being as tenderly affected towards his chosen as even the mind of Christ Jesus, our substitute, our surety, and our all. It is his "Father's business" Behold, also, the condescension of the Son, that he should become the servant of the Father, to do not his own business, but the Father's business. See how he stoops to become a child, subject to his mother; and mark how he stoops to become a man, subject to God his Father. He took upon himself the nature of man, and though he was the Son, equal in power with God, who "counted it not robbery to be equal with God," yet he "took upon himself the form of a servant and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Learn, then, O believer, to love all the persons of the Divine Trinity alike. Remember that salvation is no more the work of one than of the other. They all three agree in one, and as in the creation they all said, "Let us make man;" so in salvation they all say, "Let us save man;" and each of them does so much of it that it is truly the work of each and undividedly the work of all. Remember that notable passage of Isaiah the prophet—"I will divide him a portion with the great and he shall divide the spoil with the strong." God divides, and Christ divides. The

triumph is God's; the Father "divides for him a portion with the great;" it is equally Christ's, he "divides the spoil with the strong." Set not one person before the other; reverently adore them alike, for they are one—one in design, one in character, and one in essence; and whilst they be truly three, we may in adoration exclaim, "Unto the one God of heaven and earth the glory, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

But now I shall invite your attention, first, to the spirit of the Saviour, as breathed in these words, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" and then, secondly, I shall exhort the children of God, with all the earnestness which I can command, with all the intensity of power which I can summon to the point, to labour after the same spirit, that they too may unfeignedly say, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

I. First, then note THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST. It was a spirit of undivided consecration to the will of God his Father. It was a spirit urged onward by an absolute necessity to serve God. Note the word "must." "Wist ye not that I must?" There is a something in me which prevents me from doing other work. I feel an all-controlling, overwhelming influence which constrains me at all times and in every place to be about my Father's business; the spirit of high, holy, entire, sincere, determined consecration in heart to God. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

First, what was the impelling power which (as it were) forced Christ to be about his Father's business? and then, secondly, how did he do his Father's business, and what was it?

1. What was the impelling power which made Christ say, "I must be about my Father's business?" In the first place, it was the spirit of obedience which thoroughly possessed itself of his bosom. When he took upon him the form of a servant he received the spirit of an obedient servant too, and became as perfect in the capacity of a servant as he had ever been in that of a ruler, though in that he had perfectly executed all his of life. Beloved believer! Do you not remember when you were first converted to God, when the young life of your new-born spirit was strong and active how impetuously you desired to obey God, and how intense was your eagerness to serve him in some way or other? I can remember well how I could scarcely abide myself five minutes without doing something for Christ. If I walked the street I must have a tract with me; if I went into a railway carriage I must drop a tract out of the window; if I had a moment's leisure I must be upon my knees or at my Bible if I were in company I must turn the subject of conversation to Christ, that I might serve my Master. Alas, I must confess, much of that strength of purpose has departed from me, as I doubt not it has from many of you who, with a greater prominence, have also received diminished zeal. It may be that in the young dawn of life we did imprudent things in order to serve the cause of Christ; but I say, give me back the time again, with all its imprudence and with all its hastiness, if I might but have the same love to my Master, the same overwhelming influence in my spirit making me obey because it was a pleasure to me to obey God. Now, Christ felt just in the same way. He must do it. He must serve God; he must be obedient; he could not help it. The spirit was in him, and would work, just as the spirit of disobedience in the wicked impels them to sin. Lust, sometimes, drags the sinner on to sin with a power so strong and mighty that poor man can no more resist it than the sere leaf can resist the tempest. We had lusts so omnipotent, that they had but to suggest, and we were their willing slaves; we had habits so tyrannical that we could not break their chains; we were impelled to evil, like the straw in the whirlwind, or the chip in the whirlpool. We were hurried whithersoever our lusts would bear us—"drawn away and enticed." Now, in the new heart it is just the same, only in another direction. The spirit of obedience worketh in us, impelling us to serve our God, so that when that spirit is unclogged and free we may truly say, "We must be about our Father's business." We cannot help it.

2. But Christ had what some men only have. He had another motive for this, another impelling cause. He had a sacred call to the work which he had undertaken, and that secret call forced him on. You think, perhaps it is fanatical to talk of sacred calls; but call it fanatical or no, this one thing I will own—the belief in a special call to do a special work is like the arm of omnipotence to a man. Let a man believe that God has set him to do a particular work, and you may sneer at him: what cares he? He would give as much for your sneer as he would for your smile, and that is nothing at all. He believes God intends him to do the work. You say nay: but he never asked you for your vote upon the question; he has received God's message, as he thinks, and he goes on, and you cannot resist him. If he sits still for a little while, a spirit haunts him—he knows not what it is, but he is unhappy unless he engages in a business which he feels is the commission of his life. If he hold his tongue when God has commanded him to speak, the word is like fire in his bones—it burns its way out, until at last he says, with Elihu, "I am bled with matter; I am like a vessel that wanteth vent;" I must speak, or burst; I cannot help it. Depend upon it, the men that have done the greatest work for our holy religion have been the men who had the special call to it. I no more doubt the call of Luther than I doubt the call of the apostles, and he did not doubt it either. One of the reasons why Luther did a thing was because other people did not like it. When he was about to smite a blow at the Papacy by marrying a nun all his friends said it was a fearful thing. Luther consulted them, and did the deed, perhaps, all the sooner because they disapproved of it. A strange reason it may seem, that a man should do a thing because he was dissuaded from it; but he felt that it was his work to strike the Papacy right and left, and for that he would give up everything, even the friendship of friends. His business, by night and by day, was to pray down the pope, to preach down the pope, to write down the pope, and do it he must, though often in the roughest, coarsest manner, with iron gauntlets on his hands. It was his work; do it he must. You might have done what you pleased with Luther, even to the rending out his tongue: he would have taken his pen, dipped it in fire, and written in burning words the doom of Papacy. He could not help it, heaven had forced him to the work, he had a special commission given him from on high, and no man could stay him any more than he could stay the wind in its careering, or the tide in its motions. Christ had a special work. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, the Lord hath anointed me to preach glad tidings to the poor." And he felt the effects of this anointing—the power of this impelling. And stay he must not, he could not, he dare not. "I must," said he, "be about my Father's business."

3. But once more, Christ had something which few of us can fully know. He had a vow upon him—the vow to do the work from all eternity. He had become the surety of the covenant, he had sworn that he would execute his Father's business. He had taken a solemn oath that he would become man; that he would pay the ransom price of all his beloved ones; that he would come and do his Father's business, whatever that might be. "Lo, I come," said he. "In the volume of the book, it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God." Therefore, being faithful and true, the covenant, the engagement, the suretyship, the sworn promise and the oath made him say, "I must be about my Father's business." Whenever you make a vow, my dear friends—and do that very seldom—take care that you keep it. Few should be the vows that men make, but they should always be sincerely kept. God asketh no vow of us, but when his Spirit moveth us to make a vow—and we may do so honestly if we make a vow in his strength—we are bound to keep it. And he that feels that he has made a vow, must then feel himself impelled to do the work which he hath vowed to do. Let the difficulty be never so great, if you have vowed to overcome it, do it. Let tire mountain be never so high, if you have made a vow to God that you will attempt it scale its summit, and never give it up. If the vow be a right one, God will help you to accomplish it. O ye upon whom are the vows of the Lord! (and some of you have taken solemn vows upon you, by making a profession of religion) I beseech you, by the sacrament in which you dedicated yourself to your Lord, and by that other sacrament in which you found communion with Jesus, now to fulfill your vows, and pay them daily, nightly, hourly, constantly,

perpetually; and let these compel you to say, "I must be about my Father's business." These, I think, were the impelling motives which forced Christ on in his heavenly labor.

Secondly. But now, what was his Father's business? I think it lay in three things—example, establishment, expiation.

1. One part of his Father's business was, to send into the world a perfect example for our imitation. God had written divers books of example in the lives of the saints. One man was noted for one virtue, and another for another. At last, God determined that he would gather all his works into one volume, and give a condensation of all virtues in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now he determined to unite all the parts into one, to string all the pearls on one necklace, and to make them all apparent around the neck of one single person. The sculptor finds here a leg from some eminent master, and there a hand from another mighty sculptor. Here he finds an eye, and there a head full of majesty. He saith, within himself, "I will compound those glories, I will put them all together; then it shall be the model man. I will make the statue par excellence, which shall stand first in beauty, and shall be noted ever afterwards as the model of manhood." So said God, "There is Job—he hath patience; there is Moses—he hath meekness, there are those mighty ones who all have eminent virtues. I will take these, I will put them into one; and the man Christ Jesus shall be the perfect model of future imitation." Now, I say, that all Christ's life he was endeavoring to do his Father's business in this matter. You never find Christ doing a thing which you may not imitate. You would scarcely think it necessary that he should be baptized; but lo, he goes to Jordan's stream and dives beneath the wave, that he may be buried in baptism unto death, and may rise again—though he needed not to rise—into newness of life. You see him healing the sick, to teach us benevolence; rebuking hypocrisy to teach us boldness; enduring temptation to teach us hardness, wherewith, as good soldiers of Christ, we ought to war a good warfare. You see him forgiving his enemies to teach us the grace of meekness and of forbearance; you behold him giving up his very life to teach us how we should surrender ourselves to God, and give up ourselves for the good of others. Put Christ at the wedding; you may imitate him. Ay, sirs, and you might imitate him, if you could, in turning water into wine, without a sin. Put Christ at a funeral; you may imitate him—"Jesus wept." Put him on the mountain-top; he shall be there in prayer alone, and you may imitate him. Put him in the crowd; he shall speak so, that if you could speak like him you should speak well. Put him with enemies; he shall so confound them, that he shall be a model for you to copy. Put him with friends, and he shall be a "friend that sticketh closer than a brother," worthy of your imitation. Exalt him, cry hosanna, and you shall see him riding upon a "colt, the foal of an ass," meek and lowly. Despise and spit upon him, you shall see him bearing contumely and contempt with the same evenness of spirit which characterised him when he was exalted in the eye of the world. Everywhere you may imitate Christ. Ay, sirs, and you may even imitate him in that "the Son of Man came eating and drinking" and therein fulfilled what he determined to do—to pull down the vain pharisaism of man, which saith that religion standeth in meats and drinks, whereas, "Not that which goeth into a man defileth a man but that which goeth out of a man, that defileth the man." And that is wherein we should take heed to ourselves, lest the inner man be defiled. Never once did he swerve from that bright, true mirror of perfection. He was in everything as an exemplar, always doing his Father's business.

2. And so in the matter that I have called establishment, that is the establishment of a new dispensation; that was his Father's business, and therein, Christ was always doing it. He went into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Was he doing it then? Ah, sirs, he was; for it was necessary that he should be "a faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." When he speaks, you

can see him establishing his Word, and when he puts the finger of silence to his lips, he is doing it as much; for then was fulfilled the prophecy, "he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb." Does he work a miracle? Do the obedient winds hush their tumult at his voice? It is to establish the gospel, by teaching us that he is divine. Does he weep? It is to establish the gospel, by teaching us that he is human. Does he gather the apostles? It is that they may go abroad in every land, preaching the Word of God. Does he sit upon a well? It is that he may teach a woman, and that she may teach the whole city of Samaria the way of salvation. He was always engaged in this work of example, and this work of establishment.

3. And ah, beloved, when he came to the climax of his labor, when he came to the greatest toil of all, that which a thousand men could never have done; when he came to do the great work of expiation, how thoroughly he did it

"View him prostrate in the garden;

On the ground your Maker lies.

On the bloody tree behold him:

Hear him cry before he dies—

'IT IS FINISHED!'"

And there you have a proof that he was about his Father's business. It was his Father's business made him sweat great drops of blood; his Father's business ploughed his back with many gory furrows; his Father's business pricked his temple with the thorn crown; his Father's business made him mocked and spit upon; his Father's business made him go about bearing his cross; his Father's business made him despise the shame when, naked, he hung upon the tree; his Father's business made him yield himself to death, though he needed not to die if so he had not pleased; his Father's business made him tread the gloomy shades of Gehenna, and descend into the abodes of death; his Father's business made him preach to the spirits in prison; and his Father's business took him up to heaven, where he sitteth on the right hand of God, doing his Father's business still! His Father's business makes him plead day and night for Sion; the same business shall make him come as the Judge of quick and dead, to divide the sheep from the goats; the same business shall make him gather together in one, all people who dwell on the face of the earth! Oh, glory to thee, Jesus; thou hast done it! Thou hast done thy Father's business well.

II. Thus, I have given you the example. Now, let me exhort you to IMITATE IT.

Tell me, if you can why the religion of Christ is so very slow in spreading. Mohomet, an imposter stood up in the streets to preach. He was hooted, stones were thrown at him. Within a month after, he had disciples. A few more years, and he had a host behind him. Not a century had rolled away before a thousand scimitars flashed from their scabbards at the bidding of the caliphs. His religion overran nations like wildfire, and devoured kingdoms. But why? The followers of the prophet were entirely devoted to his cause. When that Moslem of old spurred his horse into the sea, to ride across the straits of Gibraltar, and then reined him up, and said, "I would cross if God willed it! "there was something in it that told us why his religion was so strong. Ah! those warriors of that time were ready to die for their religion, and therefore it spread. Can you tell me why Christianity spread so much in primitive times? It was because holy men "counted not their lives dear unto them," but were willing to "suffer the loss of all things" for Christ's sake.

Paul traverses many countries, Peter ranges through many nations, Philip and the other evangelists go through various countries, testifying the word of God. Sirs, I will tell you why our faith in these days spreads so little. Pardon me—it is because the professors of it do not believe it! Believe it! Yes; they believe it in the head, not in the heart. We have not enough of true devotedness to the cause, or else God would bless Zion with a far greater increase, I am fully persuaded. How few there are that have given themselves fully up to their religion! They take their religion, like my friend over there has taken that little farm of his. He has a farm of a thousand acres, but he thinks he could increase his means, perhaps, by taking a little farm of a hundred acres or so a little way off; and he gives that to a bailiff and does not take much trouble about it himself. It is not very likely he will have very fine farming there, because he leaves it to somebody else. Just so with religion. Your great farm is your shop, your great aim is your worldly business. You like to keep religion as a snug investment at very small interest indeed, which you intend to draw out when you get near death; but you do not want to live on it just now. You have enough profit from your own daily business, and you do not want religion for every day life. Sirs, the reason why your religion does not spread is because it has not got root enough in your hearts. How few there are of us who are ready to devote ourselves wholly, bodily, and spiritually to the cause of the gospel of Christ! And if you should attempt to do so, how many opponents you would meet with! Go into the church meeting, and be a little earnest; what will they say? Why, they will serve you just as David's brother did, when David spoke about fighting Goliath. "Oh," he said, "because of the pride and the naughtiness of thine heart, to see the battle thou art come." "Now, stand aside, do not think you can do anything; away with you!" And if you are in earnest, especially in the ministry, it is just the same. Your brethren pray every Sabbath—"Lord, send more laborers into the vineyard!" And if God should send them, they wish them safe out of their corner of it, at any rate. They may go anywhere else, but they must not come anywhere near them, for it might affect their congregation, it might stir them up a little; and people might think they did not labor quite earnestly enough. "Stand aside!" they say. But brethren, do not mind about that. If you cannot bear to be huffed and snuffed, there is little good in you. If you cannot bear snuffing, depend upon it you cannot be well lit yet. Dare to go on against all the prudence of men, and you will find them pat you on the shoulder by-and-by and call you "dear brother." Every man is helped to get up, when he is as high as he can be. If you are down, "keep him down," is the cry; but if you are getting up, you will never get help till you have done it yourself; and then men will give you their help when you do not require it. However, your war-cry must be, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Again, even the best of your friends, if you are truly zealous of God, will come to you and say—and very kindly too—"Now, you must take a little more care of your constitution. Now, don't be doing so much; don't, I beseech you! "Or if you are giving money away—"Now you must be a little more prudent; take more care of your family. Really, you must not do so." Or if you are earnest in prayer, they will say—"There is no need of such enthusiasm as this: you know you can be religious, and not too religious; you can be moderately so." And so you find both friends and enemies striving to hinder your consecration to Christ. Now, I like what old Rowland Hill said, when some one told him that he was "moderately religious." "Well then, you are irreligious, for a man that is moderately honest is a rogue for certain; and so the man that is moderately religious is irreligious." If religion be worth anything it is worth everything; if it be anything it is everything. Religion cannot go halves with anything else, it must be all. We must, if we be thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Christ, imitate Christ in this—the giving up of all to God; so that we can sincerely say,

"And if I might make some reserve,

And duty did not call,

I love my God with zeal so great,

That I could give him all."

I shall never forget the circumstance, when after I thought I had made a full consecration to Christ, a slanderous report against my character came to my ears, and my heart was broken in agony because I should have to lose that, in preaching Christ's gospel I fell on my knees, and said, "Master, I will not keep back even my character for thee. If I must lose that too, then let it go, it is the dearest thing I have, but it shall go, if, like my Master, they shall say I have a devil and am mad; or, like him I am a drunken man and a wine-bibber. It is gone, if I may but say—"I have suffered the loss of all things; and I do count them but dross that I may win Christ!" And you, Christian, will never get on well in serving God, till you have given all to him. That which you keep back will canker, If you reserve the least portion of your time, your property, or your talents, and do not give all to Christ, you will find there will be a sore, a gangrene in it; for Christ will bless you in all when you give all to him; but what you keep from him, he will curse, and blight, and ruin. He will have all of us, the whole of us, all we possess, or else he never will be satisfied.

And now let me answer one or two objections, and I shall still stir you up, who make a profession of religion, to give up all you have to Christ. You say, "Sir, I cannot do it; I am not in the right profession." Well, sir, you spoke truly when you said that; for if there be a profession that will not allow us to give all to Christ, it is not a right profession, and we ought not to follow it at all." "But," you say "how can I do it?" Well what are you? I do not care what you are; I assert it is possible for you to do all things in the name of God, and so to give glory to Christ. Do not think you need be a minister to dedicate yourself to Christ. Many a man has disgraced the pulpit, and many a man has sanctified an anvil; many a man has dishonored the cushion upon which he preached, and many a man has consccrated the plough with which he has turned the soil. We ought in all our business, as well as in our sacred acts, to do all for Christ. Let me illustrate this. A merchant in America had devoted a large part of his money for the maintenance of the cause of Christ; and one said to him, "What a sacrifice you make every year." Said he "Not so. I have a clerk: suppose I give that clerk fifty pounds to pay a schoolmaster, and when he goes to the schoolmaster, he should say, "Here is your salary; what a sacrifice it is to me to give you that! 'Why,' the schoolmaster would say, 'Sir, it is not yours, it is no sacrifice at all to you.'" So said this good man, "I gave up all when I came to God, I became his steward, and no longer head of the firm. I made God the head of the firm, and I became the steward. And now when I distribute of my wealth, I only distribute it as his allmoner; and it is no sacrifice at all." If we talk of sacrifices we make a mistake. Ought not that to be the spirit of our religion? It should be made a sacrifice at first, ant then afterwards there should be a voluntary offering of all. "I keep my shop open," said one, "and earn money for God. I and my family live out of it—God allows us to do it; for as a minister lives by the gospel, he allows me to live by my business, and he permits me to provide a competence for old age, but that is not my object." "I sell these goods," said another one, but the profit I get, God has; that which I require for my own food and raiment, and for my household, that God giveth back to me, for he has said, bread shall be given me, and water shall be sure; but the rest is God's not mine; I do it all for God." Now you do not understand that theory, do you? It is not business. No, sirs, but if your hearts were right you would understand it, for it is God's gospel—the giving up all to Christ; the giving up of everything to his cause. When we do that, then shall we understand this passage—"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" For your business, though it is carried on in your name, will, unknown to men, be carried on in God's name too. Let me beg of you, however, not to tell everybody, if you do it I have known some that hang the gospel in the window, more attractively, sometimes, than

ribbons. I do hate the cant of a man, who, when you go to buy ribbons or pay a bill, asks you to have a tract, or invites you into the beck parlour to pray; you will see at once what he is after. He wants to sanctify his counter, so that as people catch flies with honey, he may catch you with religion. Put your religion where it will come out, but do not cant about it. If a stranger should call upon you, and in a moment exclaim "Let us pray;" your best policy is to let him have the street to do it in, and you should say, "Thank you, I do my praying alone mostly. I see what it is. If I thought you had the spirit of prayer, and it had been the proper season, I would have joined with you with all my heart." But the religion of a man who will just step into your house, to let you see what an extraordinary pious man he is, is either very sick, or else it is a galvanized thing that has got no life in it at all. I regard prayer as a very sacred thing. "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and when thou givest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." For verily if you do it to be seen of men you have your reward: and a poor one it is, a little praise for a minute, and it is all gone. But, nevertheless, do not run into one extreme by running from another. Consecrate your business by your religion. Do not paint your religion on your side-board; but keep it ready whenever you want it, and I am sure you will want it always.

Says one, "How can I do God's business? I have no talent, I have no money; all I earn in the week I have to spend, and I have scarce money enough to pay my rent. I have no talent; I could not teach in a Sunday-school." Brother, have you a child? Well, there is one door of usefulness for you. Sister, you are very poor; no one knows you, you have a husband, and however drunken he may be, there is a door of usefulness for you. Bear up under all his insults, be patient under all his taunts and jeers, and you can serve God, and do God's business so." "But, sir I am sick, it is only to-day I am able to get out at all; I am always on my bed." You can do your Master's business, by lying on a bed of suffering, for him, if you do it patiently. The soldier who is ordered to lie in the trenches, is just as obedient as the man who is ordered to storm the breach. In everything you do you can serve your God. Oh, when the heart is rightly tuned in this matter we shall never make excuses, and say, "I cannot be about my Father's business." We shall always find some business of his to do. In the heroic wars of the Swiss, we read that the mothers would bring cannon-balls for the fathers to fire upon the enemy, and the children would run about and gather up the shot that sometimes fell, when ammunition ran short. So that all did something. We hate war, but we will use the figure in the war of Christ. There is something for you all to do. Oh I let us who love our Master, let us who are bound to serve him by the ties of gratitude let us say, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

And now I close up by addressing all the Lord's people here, and urging them to serve God with all their hearts, by giving them two or three very brief and very earnest reasons.

Be about your Father's business with all earnestness, because that is the way of usefulness. You cannot do your own business and God's too. You cannot serve God and self any more than you can serve God and mammon. If you make your own business God's business, you will do your business well; and you will be useful in your day and generation. Never shall we see any great revival in the church, or any great triumphs of religion until the Christian world is more touched with the spirit of entire consecration to Christ. When the world shall see as in earnest then God will bring men in; not before. We go to our pulpits in half heartedness: we go to our place of worship mere shells without the kernel. We give the outward ceremony and take away the heart. We shall never see Christ's cause triumphant so. Would you be useful? Would you extend your Master's empire? Then be about your Father's business.

Again, would you be happy? Be about your Father's business. Oh! it is sweet employment to serve your Father. You need not turn aside from the way of business to do that. If your heart be right, you can serve

God in weighing a pound of tea as much as in preaching a sermon. You can serve God as much in driving a horse and cart as in singing a hymn—serve God in standing behind your counter. At the right time and the right season, as much as sitting in your pews. And oh, how sweet to think, “I am doing this for God. My shop is opened on God’s behalf; I am seeking to win profit for God; I am seeking to get business for God’s cause, that I may be able to devote more to it, and prosper it more by what I am able voluntarily to consecrate to him.” You will have a happiness when you rise, such as you never knew before, if you can think, “I am going to serve God to-day;” and when you end at night, instead of saying, “I have lost so much,” you will be able to say, “Not I, my God has lost it. But the silver and the gold are his and if he does not care to have either of them—very well; let them go; he shall have it one way or another. I do not want it; if he chooses to take it from me in bad debts, well and good. Let me give to him in another way, it will be the same; I will revere him continually, even in my daily avocations.”

And this dear friends, will be the way—and I trust you can be moved by this—this will be the way to have eternal glory at the last, not for the sake of what you do, but as the gracious reward of God for what you have done. “They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.” Would you like to go to heaven alone? I do not think you would. My happiest thought is this, that when I die, if it shall be my privilege to enter into rest in the bosom of Christ I know I shall not enter heaven alone. Thousands have been there, whose hearts have been pricked and have been drawn to Christ under the labors of my ministry. Oh! what a pleasant thing to flap one’s wings to heaven and have a multitude behind, and when you enter heaven to say, “Here am I and the children thou hast given me! “You cannot preach, perhaps, but you can travail in birth with children for God, in a spiritual sense, in another way; for if you help the cause you shall share the honour too. You do that, perhaps, which is not known among men yet you are the instrument, and God shall crown your head with glory amongst those that “shine as the stars for ever and ever.” I think, dear Christian friends, I need say no more, except to bid you remember that you owe so much to Christ for having saved you from hell; you owe so much to that blood which redeemed you—that you are in duty bound to say—

“Here, Lord, I give myself away;

’Tis all that I can do.”

Go out now, and if you are tempted by the world, may the Spirit enable you to reply, “I must be about my Father’s business.” Go out, and if they call you fanatical, let them laugh at you as much as you like, tell them you must be about your Father’s business. Go on, and conquer. God be with you. And now farewell, with this last word, “He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not, shall be damned.” Faith in Christ is the only way of salvation. Ye who know your guilt cast yourselves on Christ, and then dedicate yourselves to him. So shall you have joy here, and glory everlasting in the kind of the blessed, where bliss is without alloy, and joy without end.

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