

Circumcision and Uncircumcision

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon teaches that outward religious rites like circumcision or baptism have no spiritual value apart from genuine faith that works through love.

Scripture: Galatians 5:6, 1 Timothy 4:8, 1 Corinthians 3:16, John 4:24, Romans 3:28, Romans 4:11

Topics: "Faith and Works"

Description

In this powerful sermon, C.H. Spurgeon expounds on Galatians 5:6 to reveal the futility of relying on outward religious rites such as circumcision or baptism without true faith. He contrasts the external forms of religion with the essential inward spiritual transformation that faith working through love brings. Spurgeon challenges believers to seek genuine faith that changes the heart and conscience, warning against the danger of empty ritualism. This message calls listeners to a deeper, heartfelt relationship with Christ beyond mere ceremonies.

Transcript

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but faith which works by love." Galatians 5:6.

MAN appears to the most superficial observer to have, at any rate, two parts—his outward bodily form and constitution—and his inward, invisible, but essential self. There are some persons who care nothing for the inner man, who think that to educate the body and to have it in the finest state for athletic exercises is sufficient, but these persons are very few and very foolish, for the commonsense of mankind now holds that the mind must be trained, that the mental faculties must be put into healthy order and that the inner man must be cared for as well as the outer man. Who shall venture to say that the flesh is more important than the soul? He would be foolish who would attach no importance to the body. "Verily, bodily exercise profits a little," says the Apostle, though it may be but a little. We are not to despise the body, nor to neglect it. We are not to consider it as a thing utterly unworthy of our regard in any respect. "Know you not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit" and, therefore, are neither to be despised, nor to be defiled? But, still, wisdom tells us that the inner man is more important than the outer and that we must care for that at all hazards, and see to its interests, come what may of the interests of the body.

Now true religion I may compare, in this respect, to man. It, too, has its two parts—the outward and the inward. I suppose every religion must have some outward way of displaying itself. Even our Quaker friends, who give up both Baptism and the Lord's Supper, yet show their religiousness, even more

conspicuously than most of us do, by a certain form of dress. And if there were nothing else, the mere sitting still in the meeting house for an hour would be an outward form—and I believe it is one which has a tendency to become as formal as any other method of worship. All religion, whether true or false, must have an outward part to it, that is, its body, and this outward part of religion, the body, is not to be despised, but is to be cared for and thoughtfully observed. But the tendency with most men is to put the outward form of religion into the highest place and to think the most of it, just as I have said some think more of the body than they do of the mind.

Now this is all idle and foolish, for the outward form of religion, after all, is nothing without the inward spirit. No, it is worse than nothing—it is hypocrisy! It is an insult to Heaven and is more likely to bring a curse upon those who practice it, than it is to obtain for them a blessing! Inward worship, when it does not show itself outwardly, is acceptable to God, for, "God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth"—and spiritual worship, when it does show itself outwardly, is equally acceptable to Him, for He receives it for the sake of the Spirit which gives it life. But outward religion without the inward spirit is always to be classed under the list of offenses rather than of excellencies, for we believe an outward worship which does not carry the heart with it, to be abhorrent to God—

"For God abhors the sacrifice Where not the heart is found." Yet, understand, the outward is to be observed, but without the inward it is nothing!

And now for our text. The Apostle first speaks about the outward part of religion, and then he tells us what the inward part of it is. In the first place we will have a few words on—

I. THE OUTWARD PART OF RELIGION.

Paul here speaks of it after that fashion. He says, "In Jesus Christ, neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision." Before our Savior came into the world, circumcision was a thing of meaning. It was the seal of the Covenant.

God had ordained it to be the outward token of the inward possession of certain remarkable privileges with which He had endowed the seed of Abraham. But after Christ came, circumcision lost its force and availed nothing—for this reason only—namely, that it had lost all spiritual meaning and was no longer the type of spiritual blessings and benefits. The Savior had been pleased to institute other ordinances which better set forth the spiritual Truth which He came to reveal, and circumcision, therefore, having no more any spiritual teaching in it, became a dead thing and the Apostle says that it avails nothing. Of course, it was, in Paul's day, the outward mark of a firm believer in Judaism. The man who still held to the old faith was not to be led away by the innovations, as he supposed them to be, of Jesus of Nazareth, but still held that it was essential, first and foremost, that the seed of Israel should bear in the flesh the ordained mark. But the Apostle said that "circumcision avails nothing." He put it on to the side. But what is remarkable, as showing the force of the Apostle's meaning, is that he should have added, "Nor uncircumcision," for while there were some who said, "I have received the seal of the Covenant—I am circumcised"—the Apostle said to them, "It avails nothing." "Oh," says another, but I, being a Jew, refuse to be circumcised. I, as a Jew, have come out and said that my children shall no longer be initiated into the Jewish faith according to the Jewish custom. I have repudiated it—shall not I be saved? I have no faith in the customs of my fathers—surely it is well with me, for by this I have declared myself to be a follower of the Savior." "No," says the Apostle, "it makes no difference! You who are circumcised get no good by it and you who are uncircumcised get no good—neither the one nor the other is of any good to you!" He sweeps away the

whole of the Jewish ceremony, both in its observance and in its non-observance! And so he gives it a twofold blow and lays it dead!

Now I do not think that the Apostle meant here to speak merely of circumcision, but of all other rites and ceremonies! I believe he would have us understand that while there is any spiritual meaning connected with them, they are valuable just as circumcision might have been valuable while there was any spiritual meaning connected with it—but that when we are not Believers, when we merely receive them outwardly, without knowing their spiritual meaning, or comprehending and receiving the spiritual Grace which they typify, they avail nothing—they are of no service, and that, indeed, in and of themselves, they are of no use whatever apart from that "faith which works by love." Whether you were sprinkled in your infancy, or have been immersed as Believers, supposing you not to have been Believers, that immersion is as much a mistake as your previous sprinkling! You have not received any benefit from either, for there is nothing in either. The true essence of the thing lies in the faith which works by love, and if you have received it without faith, you have received nothing at all! You have received only the mere outward ceremony and there has no good come to your soul. You may have come to the Lord's Supper. You may have received it kneeling, or received it standing, or received it sitting—if you have received it by faith, you have been enabled by faith to feed upon Christ to eat His flesh and to drink His blood. But if you have received it without faith, you have received nothing! No, you have done worse than that, for you have eaten and you have drank condemnation unto yourselves—you have taken the bread of the children, not being a child, and so you have stolen from the Father's Table! You have entered into the court of the priests without being a priest and so you have committed the sin of Uzza—you have ventured to perform a sacrifice for which you were not fit— and it is a marvel of God's long-suffering mercy that you have not received a curse for having intruded where you were never called! If you have come to Baptism and to the Lord's Supper with the faith which works by love, you have doubtless received benefits by the ordinances—but if you have come without that faith—Baptism or no Baptism avails nothing whatever! There is nothing in any of those outward forms and ceremonies in themselves! They are only a dead and killing letter, a mystifying ceremony which drags men down to the things which are apparent. But when faith comes, it quickens them and makes them live—it transforms them into blessed means of Grace and then God, in them, communes with the soul. I think it would be difficult to say too broadly or too strongly that outward ceremonies profit nothing in themselves. I know we are likely to be misunderstood, and that there would be some who would say that they would neglect these things altogether. If you wish to misunderstand us, you will. We wish to speak very plainly, but if we were misunderstood in that point, we would not regret it so much as we would if we were misunderstood upon the other, namely, that the outward form of religion is nothing but death, the mere letter, and not the spirit, and that only true vital faith in the Lord Jesus Christ can really bless the soul!

Now let us try to bring out this thought still more fully, that "neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumci-sion"—that is to say, that outward forms do not avail to change the life.

The change of the outward life is a very great part of salvation. A man cannot be saved from a sin in which he still indulges. It is clear that if a man is saved in the Scriptural sense, he is saved from his sins. The drunk becomes sober, the harlot becomes chaste, the unrighteous become religious. Now it is a matter of commonsense which I will put to any-body—whether there is any tendency in an outward ceremony to make a thief honest, or to make a drunk sober? Whether, in fact, sprinkling, or immersion, or receiving bread, or drinking of wine have any tendency, in themselves, to produce any sort of moral effect upon the man? When St. Francis Xavier went to India, he converted thousands of people, and made them

Christians—and how do you think he did it? Why, by having on his belt a little pot of water and a large brush—as he went along, he sprinkled the people with the water and they were christened! They were Christianized, baptized and he put them all down as converts. Very well, legitimately so they were, I have no doubt, as much benefited by that as people are by infant baptism, and as much as people are by immersion, if they are immersed without faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! We laugh at the thing when it is done on a large scale, and wonder that people can receive it—but we may equally laugh at it with scorn in any one individual instance! My dear Hearer, if you could really prove that an outward ceremony changed men, oh, how diligently would we practice it! If the consecrated wafer really does make men holy, oh, turn your houses into ovens and let there be bakers in every street! Happy bakers who can convert the minds of men! Happy wheat that can be ground so as to change sinners into saints! But where is the connection? Where is the connection between bread and the conscience? Where is the connection between water, either in drops or in floods, and the heart, the affections and the reason of man? Oh, Beloved, we know better than this! How is it, then, that men's minds can cling to such superstitions? "You must be born-again" in order that an effect may be produced upon your minds and hearts! You must know another influence than that which is outward! There must come upon you an unseen and invisible power which shall enlighten your understandings, control your souls, change your affections and so make your lives to be different from what they were! But oh, these outward things are but clumsy appliances! You might as well turn gas upon a fire to put it out, as try to save a soul by these outward forms! Circumcision and uncircumcision—neither of them avail anything in the moral life of man—and everybody knows that!

But, then, it is equally true that they do not do anything to comfort a real awakened and quickened conscience. I have no doubt that a great many people do derive a degree of comfort from going to church and chapel. You come here and sit in your pews and are very comfortable. Perhaps some of you go to sleep, but that does not lessen your comfort, but rather increases it. If the sermon were never so dull, perhaps it would be all the better for you, but it prevents your being quite as comfortable because it happens to be personal, and to be plainly and boldly spoken. I know there are hundreds and thousands of people in this country who would be greatly troubled in their minds if they did not go to church or chapel twice on Sundays—and they get comfort in this because their conscience is dead! If their conscience were really awakened, they would understand that there is no connection between conscience and outward forms. A conscious sinner, an awakened sinner, never can be lulled to sleep, again, except by that same voice which first awakened it! Conscience finds peace concerning sin when it finds sin laid upon the Savior. It gets peace concerning guilt when it sees Him smarting and bleeding unto death. When faith comes, conscience has peace with God through Jesus Christ, but I am certain that no conscience which God ever awakened from the dead found peace through Baptism, or through the Lord's Supper, or through any outward form! The conscience which is once awakened cries, "These things are good enough for saints. They may minister comfort to them, but I need salvation itself! I need Christ Himself—not things about Christ, but Christ—not merely to worship with His people, but to be one of them! "Putting aside the crucifix as it was held up to his eyes in his dying moments, and refusing the last unction, a dying monk cried out, "Tua vulnera Jesu! Tua vulnera Jesu!"—"Your wounds, O Jesus! Your wounds, O Jesus!" And this is what every awakened conscience will have to cry! It must be the blood of Jesus, not the sacramental wine! The washing of the bath that was filled with His Atonement—not any outward washing for the cleansing of the flesh! The reception of God the Holy Spirit into our souls, as a priest coming into a temple! The receiving of the love of Jesus into our hearts as an altar fire into a censor! The receiving of the love of God, Himself, our Father, so that we can say—

"Abba Father! Cry

With an unfaltering tongue."

It is all this which the conscience needs and it will not be satisfied with anything short of this. "Faith which works by love" will quiet the conscience, but all else that you can do is but as singing a song to one that is of a sad heart—it yields no comfort to the soul.

If a man were very hungry, very hungry, indeed, I can imagine that if a person should say to him, "Sit down. I am going to play you a tune," he would answer, "Oh, but give me something solid! Give me something substantial!" What would the other say? "Not pleased with music? Come, then, I will give you some painting. Look at that window, there, is not that finely done?" "Give me something solid! Oh, give me something solid!" "Well, but here comes a procession— are not these gentlemen very prettily arrayed? Is it not a gaudy show, worthy of any baby?" "Yes," replies the man, "but I need something solid! I can eat neither processions, nor painted windows, nor music! I need something solid." "Oh," says the man, "but I must give you a rule to live by—here is one which was settled long ago by bishops—will not that satisfy you?" "No. Your rules and regulations may be all very good, but I need something solid, something to receive now." Now the guilty conscience has an awful hunger within itself that cannot be satisfied with ritualism of the best and finest sort, but the conscience cries, "I need something to satisfy me! Tell me, how can God be Just, and yet be the justifier of the ungodly? That is the question. Tell me, how can God punish sin and yet forgive it? Tell me, what is to become of me while I am covered with all these iniquities? Tell me how I can get free from them." Well, the Gospel comes and says, "The Lord Jesus Christ suffered in the place of all who believe on Him, and the moment you believe in Him you are completely saved! Your sin is gone, you are a child of God, your feet are on the Rock of Ages and you can never perish." "Oh," says the conscience, "that is what I need! That is the very thing I have been longing for! Here is the gracious God turning to me and saying, 'I have blotted out your sins like a cloud, and like a thick cloud your iniquities.'" Ah, may God give us such a spiritual hunger as that, and there will be no fear that we shall ever be mystified about circumcision or uncircumcision, for we shall feel that neither of them avail anything! If we once get the faith that works by love, we shall be satisfied with favor and filled with the goodness of the Lord!

But now it remains for us to say that, as outward religion neither changes the morals of men, nor gives peace to an awakened conscience, so neither can these outward things avail to take us to Heaven. You will be deceived at the last, rest assured of that, if you rest on anything which only concerns these eyes of ours, these hands and these feet. If you are depending upon the things which are seen, they are, every one of them, temporal—they cannot be of any use to you when you come into the land of the things that are not seen—which are eternal! Oh, Soul, if you rest upon a mortal hope, or a mortal thing, or an outward ceremony, or an outward form, you are resting on that which cannot have any efficacy in the unseen world! And when your soul comes to the grave and you look across the narrow stream of death into the dim eternity, you will then have no hope! It is very strange how God makes liars tell the truth. The priests do not pretend to offer you any hope, for what do they tell you? Do they ever say that these ceremonies will take you to Heaven? Not they! It seems as if God would not let Satan fabricate the lie, perfectly, for he has left a weak part in it. Where does the best believer in outward ceremonies go? Ask the priest, and he will tell you that he goes to "purgatory!" Did not Cardinal Wiseman go there? Did they not put upon the lid of his coffin, "Pray for the repose of his soul," and was not that a proof that they believed he went where he needed to be prayed for and where he had no repose for his soul? Do not all the mightiest and greatest men of that church go there? Do not even the Popes go there? It is a poor consequence—that is all you can get, if you get anything! They cannot offer you anything better than this! But oh, if you get the "faith

which works by love," I will tell you what you will have—you shall have a good hope through Divine Grace, not of "purgatory," not of the "limbos patrum," but of being with Christ in Heaven as soon as your eyes are closed in death and, confident of this, you shall come to your dying bed, you shall lie there as long as God is pleased to spare you in your sickness, without doubt or fear! And when the last hour comes you shall have Grace to die, if not triumphantly, at least hopefully! You shall have preludes of the everlasting song, foretastes of the coming Glory and you shall die with some such song as this on your lips—

"Jerusalem, my happy home, Name ever dear to me! Now shall my labors have an end In joy, and peace, and thee!"

It is singular, and strangely indicative of a trembling conscience, that those who preach up circumcision and uncircumci-sion dare not offer Heaven—but those who declare that salvation is by faith in Jesus can boldly say to every trembling

sinner, "Fear not! If you believe in Jesus when you die, yet shall you be with Him in Paradise, 'for there is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus' for they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of His hand! Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like He, for we shall see Him as He is." We shall not be in "purgatory," but we shall be with Him, for His prayer to His Father for us was, "Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My Glory."

Thus have we said enough to show you that the outward form of religion avails nothing. Now we come to speak, in the next place, concerning—

II. THE INWARD PART OF RELIGION.

The text tells us that the inward part of religion is "faith which works by love." Now what is faith? In one word, it is trust—the trusting of the soul in God's promise made in Christ Jesus. My faith is that which enables me to believe that God is true, to believe that He sent His Son in the flesh to suffer for my sins, to believe that through the merit of His blood and the virtue of His holy life, I am saved. To trust in Him to save me—this is faith. It is not the faith of God's elect to merely believe dogmas and truths, to believe them to be true, but to rest upon them, to trust in them, to repose one's soul thereon! The very essence of Christianity is trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. But mark, we are told that this is faith of a certain kind—it is "faith which works by love." It is not a faith that merely talks, much less a faith that goes to sleep, or a faith that bolsters men up in presumption and makes them live in sin, but a faith which works by love, a practical faith. It is a faith which has arms and hands—not a crippled faith—but a living thing which cannot help working! It is not a frozen river that is like stone in its bed, but rolling on, increasing and swelling until it comes to the sea. It is a living thing, a working thing! My faith is no faith at all if it does not operate upon my daily life. If I believe that Jesus Christ has saved me and I trust in Him, there are a great many things I cannot do which other people can do—and many things that I love to do which other people would not do and do not wish to do! If my religion never comes across me when I am in the shop, and stops me, and never comes to me when I am in the market place, then it is a religion which is not worth a button—and the sooner I am rid of it the better! It must be a working religion, practically operating upon the entire man. And this is the way in which it operates—it operates by love. It works by making us love Christ for what He has done for us. It works by making us love God, so that we say, "Lord, what is Your will, for we wish to submit to it"? And this makes us cheerful, happy and resigned. It works, in fact, by making us love the Lord

Jesus Christ. If you do not love Jesus, then your faith is no faith, for the very sound of His name is precious to those who have true faith! It works by love to Him who Himself loved us and gave Himself for us! It works by love to God, who gave His Son—

"Loved of my God, for Him again

With love intense I burn.

Chosen of Him before time began,

I choose Him in return."

Then faith also works by love to the Brothers and Sisters. A man has no faith if he does not love faithful men. It is a mark of the child of God that he loves the rest of the family. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren"—not only the brethren who happen to be called by our denominational name—that is very easy! A hypocrite can do that—but all the saints! Whenever, as St. Basil used to say, we can see anything of Christ, there we ought to give something of Christian love, so that genuine faith loves all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and desire the good and prosperity of all the branches of the vine. And, mark you, this faith will work by love, even to your enemies! If you are a genuine Christian, you will love those who do not love you. It is very little to love our own relatives, though there are some who do not do even that. But to love our enemies is the mark of a true Christian—to be prepared to bear and to forbear, to endure, but never to inflict, to be reviled, but not to answer, not to rebuke, but to heap coals of fire upon the head of our foes by endeavoring to do all that we can for the good of those who do us ill. It was said of Thomas Cranmer, "Do my lord of Canterbury an ill turn and he will be your friend and give you help." And it was said of another, that if you wanted to get a favor from him, the best thing you could do was to do him an injury, because then, when you asked him for anything, he was quite certain to say, "I will do it for you because you have been my enemy." Let us seek for something of the same spirit! Let us love even those who are unlovable and who love us not.

Then I may say that one mark of this faith is that it loves sinners. God deliver you, as a Church and congregation, from that unloving spirit which never cares for the souls of men! I believe that to be an accursed theology which makes a preacher say, "I have preached to the living people of God. As for the dead, I have nothing to say to them." A theology which dries up the milk of human kindness makes a man a cynic towards his own kind. And to have no care for his own flesh and blood is a theology that never came from Heaven, but from a very different quarter! I have seen the dupes of this theology callous about the conversion of even their own children! And I have heard them boast that they never speak to their children about religion—boasting of it as though it were not the most disgraceful thing that could be said! The Christian that cares not for his own household is worse than a heathen and a publican! We have heard some of these say that God will do His own work and, therefore, they never speak about Christ, and though this were not degrading themselves below the very basest idolaters, for even an idolater will speak well of his god and endeavor to bring others to bow before his blocks of wood and stone! But these persons, stupefied by a fatalism which is far more Muslim than Christian, leaves undone the work which God would have them do and which, if they had genuine faith in their souls, they would do! May God give us not a frozen faith like that, but a faith which works by love to the souls of sinners! You do not love Christ if you do not love sinners! He came into the world to seek and to save them, and if you do not try to bring them to Him, you do not know Christ! How dwells the love of God in you if you have never cared for poor dying men?

So, then, it seems that the very soul and essence of true religion is this—the possession of a trust in Christ which, through the passion called, "love," affects my whole being, moves me to the greatest activity, and restrains me from sin. Now, dear Friends, have you got this faith that works by love? "Oh, I am not baptized," says one. Now I never asked you that question! I did not indeed. I only asked you, Have you got the faith which works by love? "Oh, Sir, I have been baptized." I did not ask you that! I asked if you have got the faith which works by love? "Well, Sir, I am a member of the church." What does that matter? That is not the point—the point is, have you the faith which works by love? If you have got that, you are going to Heaven! If you have not, you are on the high-road to Hell! If you have the faith which works by love, you may have a great many errors, you may make a great many mistakes, but your face is towards Jerusalem and you will get there! But if you have not the faith which works by love, you may be as orthodox as the Bible, itself, and you may be sound in theology as the Holy Spirit—and yet, even if all this were possible—you could never enter Heaven if you have not the faith which works by love. That is the essential thing, the one thing necessary.

I was struck, when thinking over this text, to find that in the next Chapter (Galatians 6:15) you get this truth in another shape. By comparing one text with another, you often get fresh light, and here you have it—"For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but"—but what? The faith which works by love? No, "but a new creature." Well, then, these two things must be the same! My having the faith which works by love implies that I am a new creature! Now some of you have been puzzling yourselves about whether you have been born-again, whether you are new creatures. Have you got the faith that works by love? If so, you are a new creature, for you never saw a man in a natural state who had faith that works by love! He may have faith, a faith which makes him tremble like the devil, but the faith that works by love to Jesus Christ, no hypocrite ever did have or ever could have! What are you to apprehend, my dear Friends, if you love the Lord Jesus Christ and are trusting in Him? Do not let the devil perplex you by saying that perhaps you have not experienced regeneration, perhaps you have not felt this and have not felt that! You are right, and must be right, if you have the faith which works by love, for, according to the Scriptures, that is so evident a proof of being a new creature that it is tantamount to it! Hear how our Savior puts it. There were some who wanted to do the work of God and who said, "What shall we do that we may work the works of God?" What do you think Christ said to them? Did He say, "You must feel this, or feel that," and so on? No! He said, "This is the work of God, that you believe on Jesus Christ, whom He has sent." This is the greatest work that God ever does—to make a man believe in His Son! Wherever a man is made to believe in Jesus Christ and to trust Him, you may see the finger of God. You may imitate 20 things in religion, but you cannot give a man true faith—it must be an act of Grace. No dead sinner ever did trust Christ! No unregenerate soul ever possessed the faith which works by love! And it may stand to you as a certain evidence of the new birth, if you have got the faith which works by love.

As I studied the subject farther, I was struck to find that in another text (Colossians 3:11) you get the same sentiment—"Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." Now there are some who say, "I hope I am a new creature, but I am sometimes afraid wheth-

er Christ is mine." Well, but it is the same thing! Christ is all and in all to you, and you are the very same people who are new creatures, and who have the faith that works by love! Then, dear Heart, if you are trusting in Christ, Christ is your All-in-All, and you need not say—

"'Tis a point I long to know, Oft it causes anxious doubt. Do I love the Lord or no, Am I His or am I not?"

You are His, if you are trusting in Him with the faith that works by love! Oh, I think there are some of you who can say, "Well, I do trust Him. I have nowhere else to trust. I cannot trust in myself. I dare not rely on my prayers. I cannot depend upon any mortal thing, but the Lord knows that I do rest upon the blood of Jesus Christ. I am not deceived about that and, what is more, I do love Him, not as I want to love Him, not as I ought to love Him, but I do love Him. The sound of His name is sweet to me. I could not live without it and when I am at a distance from Him I cannot be happy. There was a time when I could be very happy and very contented without the Savior—when I could enjoy the theater, the ballroom and all the pleasures of the world, but I cannot now. It is all emptiness and vanity—vanity of vanity! I must have Christ! If others can do without Him, I cannot. I must have Him."

Well, then, dear Soul, He is yours! He is your All-in-All. I spoke last Sunday of the limpets at the seaside, sitting on the rocks. It does not prove that the rocks belong to the limpets because the limpets sit there, but in your case you are just like a poor little thing flying to Christ—and that proves that Christ belongs to you, that He is yours in this world, and will be yours in the world to come! Then if I take hold of Christ, I know that He is mine! There was never a sinner who took Christ and then found that he had made a mistake. The woman who came to the Savior and touched the hem of His garment, and asked to receive a cure of the Savior, did not take the cure away, but He said, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." If you can get Christ, Christ is yours. Trust Him with your soul, now, Sinner! You have no qualification. You have no goodness. You have no merits. Perhaps you have no good feelings, nor anything that is commendable. Well now, trust Him! Do you believe that He can save such a sinner as you are? Can you do Him the credit, Sinner, that such a lost and almost condemned sinner as you are can be saved by Him? If you have the power thus to believe in Him, it proves that you are saved, for you could not thus have believed unless He had visited you and given you Grace to do it! Can you do it now? The greater you feel your sin to be, the blacker you persuade yourself that you are tonight, the more can you honor Christ by casting yourself wholly on Him!

He who has no disease cannot honor the physician by saying he believes he can cure him, but he who has a disease through and through him, so that he is given up—when he says to the physician, "Sir, I believe that you can exterminate this disease and make me a healthy man"—does honor to his physician by his faith. You great sinners, you black sinners, you lost, ruined and undone sinners, the Lord help you now to trust Christ, and then you will honor Him, and give Him glory, and that is the best proof that He is in you and that you shall be with Him in the day of His appearing! It is faith that works by love that is the grand thing, and that is the same thing as being a new creature, and the same thing as having Christ to be our All-in-All.

May God give this to those of you who are seeking it, so that, having begun in the spirit, you do not end in the flesh, but walk in the liberty wherewith Christ shall make you free. Amen.

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