

CHRIST'S MOTIVE AND OURS

NO. 2232

A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1891,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“For your sakes.”
2 Corinthians 8:9.

“For His sake.”
Philippians 1:29.

The true test of any action lies in its motive. Many a deed which seems to be glorious is really mean and ignoble because it is done with a base intention. While other actions which appear to be poor and paltry, if we truly understood them, would be seen to be full of the glory and beauty of a noble purpose. The mainspring of a watch is the most important part of it. The spring of an action is everything. My sermon from these two texts will be on the motive which inspired Christ's redeeming work and the motive which should inspire our service for Him. He *did all* for our sakes—we should *do all* for His sake. Fix your attention, then, chiefly, not on the deed, but on the *motive* which is its root.

The less of self in any effort, the nobler it is. A great work, undertaken and completed from selfish motives, is much less praiseworthy than the feeble endeavor put forth to help other people. Selfishness is, perhaps, the worst of all meanness, but *spiritual* selfishness is the form of the evil most to be dreaded. With Christ there was no self-seeking. Not for Himself did He come to earth—not for Himself did He suffer. He lived for others and died for others. “For you know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you, through His poverty, might be rich.” In this glorious unselfishness Christ is not only our Savior, He is also our Example. As He did not live for self, we, too, must learn to deny ourselves and live like He. It is in living and acting, “for His sake,” that we shall most truly “follow His steps.”

We are often told, in these days, that we should live for the good of others, and we ought to heed the call. But there is so little in our fellow men to call forth the spirit of self-sacrifice that if we have no higher motive, we shall soon become tired of our efforts on their behalf. The true way is to live for *Christ* and then, “for His sake,” seek to save our fellow men. With such a constraining power we shall not be weary in well-doing, for though men may fail us, and frequent discouragement meet us in our toil, our impelling force will always be the same. As we whisper it to ourselves again and again, “for His sake,” we shall be made strong to do or to suffer.

If you thus go forth to the service of each day, “for His sake,” realizing that He, “for your sakes,” gave Himself to toil and agony, and even to death, itself, you will daily grow into sympathy with Christ. His Divine compassion for men will take hold upon you—you will be lifted up above the life of the world and, as you go about doing good, you will be able to touch the sorrow of the earth with a tender hand. You will grow like He you serve.

I have heard of a man who lived in a certain town and while he lived, was greatly misunderstood. It was known that he had a large income, yet he lived a miserly life, and loud were the murmurs at the scanty help he gave to those around him. He stinted himself in many ways and hoarded his money. But when he died, the popular verdict was reversed, for *then* the motive of all his economy was manifested. He left his fortune to build a reservoir and an aqueduct, to bring a constant supply of pure water to the town where he had been despised and misunderstood! This was the chief need of the people and for a long time they had suffered much from drought and disease because of the scanty water supply. All the years that they had misjudged him, he was silently and unselfishly living for their sakes. When they discovered his motive, it was too late to do anything for him further than to hand down to future generations the memory of his noble and generous deed. But *we* can do much, “for His sake,” who has brought to us the *living water* and who, though He died for us,

is now alive, again, and will live forevermore. If He thus loved me, and lived for me, nothing that I can do is too much for Him—

*“When often, like a wayward child,
I murmur at His will,
Then this sweet word, ‘For Jesus’ sake,
My restless heart can still.
I bow my head and gently led,
His easy yoke I take—
And all the day, and all the way,
An echo in my heart shall say—
‘For Jesus sake!’”*

Without dwelling on the immediate connection of the words which I have chosen from two familiar and beautiful verses, I would, with these two texts, weave a fabric of love. See what Jesus did for us and then think what we can do for Jesus. “For your sakes” Christ did His deeds of love. “For His sake” we are called upon to live and labor among the sons of men. May His love enkindle ours!

I. First, let us consider THE MOTIVE OF CHRIST'S WORK. “For your sakes.” As many of you as have believed in Christ Jesus may know that, “for your sakes,” the Lord of Glory stooped to be a suffering, dying Man.

In meditating on the motive that moved the Lord Jesus to come to your rescue, consider, first, *the august Person* who undertook your salvation and died, “for your sakes.” He was God. “He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” He made the heavens. “Without Him was not anything made that was made.” The angels delighted to do Him homage! Every seraph's wing would fly at His bidding—all the host of Heaven worshipped at His feet. All the powers of Nature were under His control. He needed *nothing* to make Him glorious—all things were His and the power to make more than all! He might truly say, “If I were hungry, I would not tell you: for the world is Mine and the fullness thereof.”

Hymned day without night by all the sacred choristers, He did not lack for praise. Nor did He lack for servants—legions of angels were always ready to do His commands, hearkening unto the voice of His word. It was this God, this Ever-Blessed One who was, from eternity with the Father, and in whom the Father had infinite delight, who looked upon men with the eye of love! He that was born in Bethlehem's manger was the Infinite as well as the Infant. And He that lived, here, the life of a peasant, toiling and suffering, was that same God who made the heavens and the earth, but who digned to be Incarnate for our sakes. Well might Isaiah, in his prophetic vision, proclaim the royal titles of the “Child” who was to be born and the “Son” who, in the fullness of time, would be given to us and for us—“The government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Let this Truth of God sink into your souls, that it was *God* who came from Heaven, “for your sakes.” It was no inferior being, no one like yourselves, but it was very God of very God who loved you with an everlasting and infinite affection! I have often turned that thought over in my mind, but I have never been able to express it as I have wished. If I were told that all the sons of men cared for me, that would be but as a drop in a bucket compared with Jehovah, Himself, regarding me! If it were said that all the princes of the earth had fallen at some poor man's feet and laid aside their dignities that they might relieve his necessities, it would be counted condescending kindness—but such an act would not be worthy to be spoken of in comparison with that infinite condescension and unparalleled love which brought the Savior from the skies to rescue and redeem such worthless rebels as we were! It is not possible that all the condescension of all the kind and compassionate men who have ever lived should be more than as a small grain that could not turn the scale compared with the everlasting hills of the Savior's wondrous love!

Think, too, of *the insignificant clients* on whom all this wealth of affection was poured. As you remember the Person who came here, “for your sakes,” and then, wonderful stoop! consider who you are—who *we* are—for whose sakes He died, do not our hearts melt at the thought? Brothers and Sisters, if we truly know ourselves, we have a very poor opinion of ourselves when compared with Christ! Humility has been rightly said to be a correct estimate of ourselves. What were we but the most insignificant creatures? If our whole race had been blotted out, there need have been no gap in the creation of God, or if there had seemed to be a void for a moment, He had but to speak the word and myriads of crea-

tures, prompt to obey His will, would have filled up the space! How was it that Jesus, the Son of God, should suffer for such insignificant worms—such insects of an hour as we are?

But we are not only insignificant, we are also wicked. “We have sinned with our fathers. We have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.” Even the Lord’s children have to confess, “All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned, everyone, to his own way.” But, oh, wonder of love, they can add, “and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all!” As sinners, we deserve nothing but God’s thunderbolts, yet, trusting in His dear Son, we receive nothing but His mercy! Having desperately sinned and broken all His Commandments, if He had said, “Perish forever, you guilty rebels,” He would have spoken only the sentence that strict justice required. Instead of that, He said to His Only-Begotten, “You shall die that they may not die. I will take You, My Son, My Isaac, and offer You upon the altar of sacrifice that through Your death men may live.” This is, indeed, a marvel of Grace! This must be one of the things the angels desire to look into! Our thoughts cannot compass this wondrous work, nor can our words describe it!

Many of us, also, were not only sinful, as the whole race is, but we were peculiarly sinful. Some of us feel inclined to dispute with Saul of Tarsus for the title, “chief of sinners.” It will always remain a wonder to me that the Son of God should have condescended to die *for me*. Were you a drunk and has the Holy Spirit shown you that Jesus died for you? And are you now rejoicing that you are washed in His precious blood? Were you one of the women who, like Mary Magdalene, were rightly called sinners? And have you, like she, washed your robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb? Then you are constrained to exclaim with wonder and gratitude—

*“Depth of mercy, can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?
Can my God His wrath forbear?
Me, the chief of sinners, spare?”*

I fancy that I hear one and another of you adoring God’s matchless mercy and saying, with wonder and surprise, “Is it really true that mercy is brought *to me* by God’s own Son? Could nothing less than the death of the Only-Begotten save my sinful soul? Did He condescend to *die for me*? Well may I admire the Grace thus manifested and raise my glad song of thanksgiving to Him who has done such great things for me!” Each of us can see some peculiarity in his own case. Some of us have not offended so grievously in outward conduct as others have done, but, then, we had better instruction in our childhood and, consequently, our sins were *doubly* heinous, for we sinned against light and knowledge! Some of us have had to violate our conscience terribly in order to sin as we have done. It may be that some of you lived 40 or 50 years as unbelievers and yet, at last, you were brought to bow at the dear feet that were pierced for you. Oh, I am sure you bless His name that ever He shed His blood for you—and I dare say you feel as I do, sometimes, that none in the Glory Land will be able to raise such a song of adoring gratitude as you will when all Heaven shall ring with the grand chorus of those who have been redeemed from among men!

Thus have we considered, first, the august Person who accomplished the great work of our redemption. And, secondly, the poor sinful creatures for whose sake He suffered.

Now let me invite you to consider *the wondrous work* which this master motive inspired. “For your sakes” God became Incarnate—the Son of God took into union with Himself *our nature*—without which He could not have suffered and died. We read concerning Him, “Being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself.” If we had never heard of that fact, before, our ears and heart would be astonished at the words! At the end of each clause I feel inclined to pause, and say, “Look! Look! Was there ever such a wonder as this—the Infinite became Incarnate! He ate and He hungered! He drank and He thirsted! He needed to be housed from the wintry storm, but He “had not where to lay His head.” He wanted human sympathy, but, “all His disciples forsook Him and fled.” He was the “Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief,” and all, “for your sakes.”

The words that follow our text tell us that, “He became poor.” You know that, in this world, the poverty of a man is usually reckoned in proportion to the position of affluence from which he has come down. One who was born a pauper is not relatively so poor as the man who was once a king, but has been reduced to beggary, for in the one case there is no experience of the luxury which riches can command, and in the other no adaptability to the shifts and privations of those who have always been in poverty. When the Christ of God, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, was forsaken by His Father, deserted by His friends, and left alone to suffer, “for your sakes,” that was the direst poverty that was ever known!

See your Lord beneath the olives of Gethsemane! Bloody sweat falls to the ground as, being in an agony, He prays more earnestly—"If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me"—but it must not pass from Him. "For your sakes" He must drink it! "For your sakes" every bitter drop must be drained! Then see Him as He stands, without an advocate, before Herod, Pilate and Caiaphas—"taken from prison and from judgment." Mark His sufferings as they hound Him through the streets of Jerusalem, along the Sorrowful Way! Behold Him as, at last, they fasten His hands and His feet to the cruel wood and lift Him up 'twixt earth and Heaven, to suffer the death of the Cross! Let those who will, depreciate the sufferings of Christ—I believe there was in the God-Man, Christ Jesus, an infinite capacity for suffering and that His body, so wondrously formed, was able to endure and did endure, infinitely more than human thought can imagine—while, at the same time, the sufferings of His soul were the very soul of His sufferings! Well did the Spirit-taught poet, Joseph Hart, write—

*"Much we talk of Jesus' blood,
But how little's understood!
Of His sufferings, so intense,
Angels have no perfect sense.
Who can rightly comprehend
Their beginning or their end?
'Tis to God and God alone
That their weight is fully known."*

All this Christ suffered, "*for your sakes.*" What love and gratitude ought to fill your heart as you think of all that Jesus bore on your behalf! If you had a wife who, when you lay sick, watched you with such anxious care that she undermined her own health and brought herself down to the grave through her devotion to you, oh, with what love you think of her, that she should suffer even unto death for your sake! If you were ever delivered from a watery grave, and the brave fellow who rescued you, himself, sank back into the water and was drowned, you can never forget his noble self-sacrifice, but you will always cherish his memory, for he died for your sake!

There is a story I have often read, of an American gentleman who was accustomed to go frequently to a tomb and plant fresh flowers. When someone asked why he did so, he said that when the time came for him to go to the war, he was detained by some business and the man who lay beneath the sod became his substitute, performed his duty and died in the battle. Over that carefully-kept grave, he had the words inscribed, "He died for me!" There is something melting in the thought of another dying for you—how much more melting is it when that One is the Christ of Calvary! Why, you feel, "Here is One of whom I never deserved anything, taking my place! Here is One whom I have badly treated and against whom I have offended—yet *He* suffered for me—He took my place, He bore my sins, He *died* for me! Therefore I will live for Him. I will love Him. I will give myself wholly and unreservedly to Him and to His blessed service." "For your sakes" Christ died. If you believe that, you cannot help loving and serving Him! It is an old theme which I am bringing before your minds, but it is the grandest theme that ever inspired a mortal tongue, or stirred a human heart!

I want you that love the Lord to consider, next, *the comprehensive motive* for which He worked the wondrous work which I have so imperfectly described—"For your sakes." I would have you remember that everything He was and everything He did was, "for your sakes." "For your sakes" the midnight prayer upon the bleak mountain's side. "For your sakes" the scoffing and the jeering that followed Him wherever He went. "For your sakes" the agony in the garden. "For your sakes" the flagellation of the Roman lash. "For your sakes" He gave His back to the smiters and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. "For your sakes" the shame and the spitting. "For your sakes," He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." Say it, my Brothers and Sisters! Let your hearts say it now and wet the words with tears—"For our sakes He suffered all this."

Think of Him for a moment as He is taken down from the Cross. In fair white linen they wrap that blessed body, covered with its own blood. I think I see Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, and Joseph of Arimathea, looking on that poor mangled frame. Those dear eyes, once so bright with love, now closed in death. Those wonder-working hands that multiplied the loaves and fishes, now stiff and cold. And those blessed feet that trod the sea, now all lifeless. O Joseph, and you, Mary, this was for you—"for your sakes"! But also for mine and for the sake of all my Brothers and Sisters who are resting by faith on that finished Sacrifice! They laid the dear body in Joseph's new tomb, the virgin sepulcher wherein

never man had lain, and there they left our great Champion sleeping a while in the darkness of death. As He lay there, it was “for your sakes.”

Yes, and blessed be His name, when the appointed morning came, He lived again, the stone was rolled away from the sepulcher and He came forth from the tomb! It was, “for your sakes,” He rose. The 40 days He lived on earth were “for your sakes.” And when from off the brow of Olivet He ascended to His Father’s right hand, it was, “for your sakes.” He said to His disciples, “I go to prepare a place for you.” There, seated on His Throne of Glory, He holds the scepter and rules all worlds, “for your sakes.” There as an Intercessor, He pleads with God, “for your sakes.” There is not a gem in His crown but it is there, “for your sakes.” There is not a jewel on His breastplate but it is there, “for your sakes.” From head to foot He is what He is, “for your sakes.” And when He shall come a second time—as soon He will—to judge the world in righteousness, and to “gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other” to usher in the reign of truth and establish His Throne forever, it will be all, “for your sakes,” who have believed on His name! “For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant Grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.”

We might thus continue, but we will not. May God make this thought burn in your heart—All that Christ has done for us is for our sakes! I suppose it is because we are such fallen creatures that these considerations do not move us as they should. Granite is wax compared with our hearts! Oh, that we did but feel the fire of Jesus’ love! Like coals of juniper which have a most vehement flame, our hearts should burn within us while we talked of that dear love which brought Him to the grave and took Him from the grave to the heavens—and shall bring Him back from the heavens to take His people up to be with Him where He is and to live with Him forever!

II. Having meditated on the motive which moved Christ in the work He accomplished for us, let us consider THE MOTIVE WHICH SHOULD INSPIRE ALL OUR SERVICE FOR HIM—“*For His sake.*”

This second text is in the Epistle to the Philippians, first chapter, and 29th verse. “Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” What are we that we should be allowed the high honor of suffering, “for His sake”? It is a great privilege to do, or to be, or to bear *anything* for Him. Our suffering can never be worth a thought when compared with His—and any sacrifice that we could offer, “for His sake,” would be small, indeed, when contrasted with the infinite Sacrifice that He has already made for our sakes. If you are rejoicing in the fact that Christ died for you, it will be very easy to prompt in your hearts the desire to do something, “for His sake.”

I find in Scripture that the thought expressed in the words, “for His sake,” may be enlarged and assume six or seven phases. For instance, in the Gospel of Matthew, fifth chapter, and 10th verse, our Lord puts it, “*for righteousness’ sake*”—“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake.” I understand, then, that if a man suffers as a Christian for doing that which is right, he is suffering for Christ’s sake. If he cannot and will not act disreputably and contrary to the commands of God, as others do, the suffering which he willingly bears, the loss which he cheerfully incurs because of his uprightness, is so much borne for Christ’s sake.

If a man is out-and-out righteous in this world, he will be sure to be pointed at by certain persons as an oddity. He cannot lie, as others lie, nor practice tricks in trade as others do—nor frequent their places of amusement, nor indulge in their lusts and, therefore, straightway they say—“He is a hypocrite! He is a cant!” And as they cannot understand the principle which inspires him, they impute to him motives which he abhors. This is how they talk—“He is doing it for the sake of being thought a saint,” “He is paid for it.” “He has some sinister motive or other.” Or else they sum up the whole matter by declaring, “He is a downright impostor.”

Now, if in any of these ways you are made to suffer for that which is right—for speaking the truth and acting the truth—never mind, Brothers and Sisters, but rather rejoice that you are permitted to suffer for Christ’s sake! Say within yourself, “If my dear Lord lost all things for me, I may well lose some things for Him. If He was stripped to the last rag for me, I may well be content to be poor, ‘for His sake.’” Set your face like a flint and say, “We can be poor, but we cannot be dishonest. We can suffer, but we cannot sin.” Many men say, when we talk to them thus, “But, you know, we must live.” I do not see that there is any necessity for your living if you cannot live honestly. It would be better to die than to do wrong—any amount of suffering would be better than that we should deny our Lord and Master! Remember Peter’s words, “If you suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are you: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but

sanctify the Lord God in your hearts," or, as the Revised Version has the last clause, "Sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord."

In the Word of God, yet another form is given to this suffering or doing for Christ's sake, and it assumes this shape—"for the Gospel's sake." In His first Epistle to the Corinthians, ninth chapter, and 23rd verse, Paul writes of what he did, "for the Gospel's sake," and our Lord speaks of some who, when there was persecution, "for the Word's sake," were offended. Now, if you are put to any shame for the sake of the Gospel, you suffer, "for His sake." And if you labor to spread the Gospel and publish the Word of God—if it is your daily endeavor to tell to others God's way of salvation, you are doing something, "for His sake," for the Gospel and Christ are so wrapped up together that what is done for the Gospel's sake, is done, "for His sake."

Yet another view of the subject is given to us when the Apostle, in his letter to the Colossians, first chapter, and 24th verse, speaks of certain saints honoring Christ by suffering, "for His body's sake, which is the Church." That is another form of rendering homage to Christ and doing what we do, "for His sake." O Brothers and Sisters, we ought to do much more than we do for God's people! They are the body of Christ. We should, everyone of us, feel it an honor to be allowed to unloose the laces of His shoes and to wash His feet—well, poor saints are Christ's feet! When you are feeding them, you are feeding Him, for certainly, if Paul, in persecuting them, persecuted Christ, it is clear that you, when you are helping them for Christ's sake, are doing it for Him! Oh, lay out your lives for His Church's sake! His dear people deserve it at your hands and their Lord deserves it, too.

Then, again, Paul, in His second Epistle to Timothy, second chapter, and 10th verse, uses the phrase, "for the elect's sakes," by which I think he comprehends, not only those who are in the Church as yet, but those who are to be. Happy is that man who spends all his time in seeking out poor wanderers, that he may bring in God's elect! Happy is he who lays all his talents and all his strength upon the altar of God, consecrated to this aim—that he may find out the chosen of the Father, the redeemed by the blood of Jesus and, in the hand of the Spirit, be the instrument of bringing them back to their Father's house from which they have wandered. When you serve Christ's people, always do it, "for His sake."

Further, we have the expression, "the Kingdom of God's sake," when our Master tells Peter, as recorded in the 18th chapter of Luke, 29th verse, that no one who has left anything for Him and for it, shall fail of present and eternal reward. This is another way in which we can serve Christ our King, by being willing to sacrifice "house, or parents, or brothers and sisters, or wife, or children, for the Kingdom of God's sake."

There is one other remarkable expression used by John in his second Epistle, at the second verse. He there speaks of something done, "for the Truth's sake, which dwells in us." Ah, it is not merely the Gospel we are to defend, but we are to defend that living Seed which the Holy Spirit has put into us, that Truth of God which we have tasted, handled and felt—that theology which is not that of the Book, only, but that which is written on the fleshy tablets of our hearts. I hope there are many of you who keep back your hand from sin because the Truth that is in you will not let you touch it—and who put forth *both* your hands to serve the Lord because the Truth that is in you compels you to it! The new nature, that living, incorruptible Seed, constrains you and you judge that if Christ died for you, you must live and, if necessary, you will die for Him. I would ask great things from those for whom Christ has done great things. When you make sin little, and Hell little, you also make Christ little—and then, in consequence, you think you owe Him but little and you will render Him but little. But when you feel the weight of sin and see the preciousness of your Redeemer and feel, in some measure, the obligations under which you are to Him, then you say—

"Oh! what shall I do, my Savior to praise."

There have been, in the Christian Church, at different times, men and women of highly consecrated spirit who seem to have realized what their Lord expected of them. I dare say that they were very dissatisfied with themselves, but as we read their biographies, we are charmed with their consecration of spirit. The Truth of God and especially the Christ, who *is* the Truth, had such influence over their lives, that they truly lived, "for His sake." May we have many such in our ranks! I do not know whether it may be the duty of any of you to go to foreign lands, "for His sake." I only hope there are some young men here who will offer themselves for missionary service, for blessed are they that bear the Gospel into "the regions beyond," carrying their lives in their hands! They shall stand very near to the eternal Throne of God in the day when the King rewards His faithful servants.

I do not know whether there may be any of our Sisters here who are bound to consecrate their lives to the nursing of the sick where fevers are rife, or where pestilence abounds, but they who can do such service to humanity, for Christ's sake, shall receive no light word of approbation at the Last Great Day. But, probably, the mass of us will have to abide in our calling and, therefore, I would say, if we must do so, let our life be all, "for His sake." I would desire never to come to this platform but, "for His sake." Never to say even a word about the Gospel but, "for His sake." And you, in your home, dear mother, go and bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, "for His sake." Take those dear little ones and present them to Him. Say, "Jesus, I give them to You—accept and save them. I devote them to Your service, as Hannah gave Samuel to the Lord." Then, "for His sake," teach them holiness. "For His sake" be patient with them and, "for His sake," bring them up, always, in the fear of the Lord.

You men of business, go out and labor, "for His sake." I could almost envy some of you who have acquired an adequate income. Keep the warehouse or shop open, "for His sake," and give more largely to His cause. And you who are not in a position of competence, but are struggling for your daily bread, "for His sake," never do a wrong thing. Sometimes, when you are half inclined to yield to the tempter, imagine that your Savior is standing by your side and that He puts His pierced hand upon your shoulder and says, "If you are, indeed, bought with My blood, let there be justice in all your dealings with your fellows. No, more, be generous as well as just, for My sake, for I would have you so act that all men shall know that you are My disciple."

Perhaps some of you, who profess to be Christians, are living altogether for yourselves, instead of living unto God. When you are at home tonight, sitting quietly in your room, alone, I could half wish that the Lord Jesus would enter and say to you, "I have loved you with an everlasting love, and laid down My life for you. What are you doing for Me in return?" Suppose He looked at you with those gentle, yet heart-searching eyes of His, and you looked into that face which was marred more than any man's, what would you say? Oh, I think I should have to cover my face for very shame! And yet I am not living in forgetfulness of Him and I am trying to do Him some humble service. But as for those who do nothing, with the exception of sitting to hear sermons, or sometimes dropping in at a Prayer Meeting, or, now and then, giving a little to the cause of God—perhaps as little as they dare—oh, what would they say in His Presence? You will all be in His Presence, soon! Perhaps sooner than you expect—and among the sorrows that will trouble you on your death-bed, if you are unfaithful to your Lord, will be this—that you have done so little for Him while you had the opportunity.

When sitting by the side of one of our dying members, a poor weak girl, wasted by consumption, I was charmed as she whispered in my ear that when she was brought to Jesus, she had such joy that she had striven to do something for Him but mourned that she could accomplish so little. Poor child! She tried to teach a class of boys and half killed herself in the struggle to keep them quiet. She felt constrained, by love to her Lord, to try to do something for Him, and as there happened to be nothing else to do, she began to teach some rough children who were far too wild for her. But she did not regret it. Oh, no! I am sure, if she could be raised up, she would take to such work, again, "for His sake." And I am sure that any of you, if you have given of your substance, or given of your time, or given of your abilities, "for His sake," will never have to say, when you are lying as she was, and breathing out your life, "I did too much for my Savior." You will rather bless His name that He accepted the little that you could do! And like our young Sister, mourn that it is so little compared with what He deserves!

I therefore say to each one of you, Brothers and Sisters—If you have, indeed, been washed in the blood of Christ, spend yourself for Him—do not mock Him. If it was in play that you were redeemed and if the Crucifixion was but a sport, then go and trifle with the service of Christ. But if, indeed, the blood-mark of a real Savior is upon you and you have been washed in the fountain filled with His precious blood, go and live really useful, consecrated lives into which you shall throw your whole heart and soul and strength, "for His sake!"

Who shall pile a monument worthy of the Savior who did so much, "for your sakes?" Who shall compose a song sweet enough for the Christ of God who came for our redemption? Who shall sound the trumpets loudly enough for Immanuel, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor? Who shall bring offerings of gold and frankincense rich enough for Him who gave up all for His people? Crown Him, you angels! You seraphim, adore Him! O God, You alone can give Him the recompense of honor which He merits! Glory be to His name forever! Let us take as our motto, from now on, these words, "For His sake." "For His sake," let us put up with poverty, counting it to be richest to be

poor if He would have it so. "For His sake," let us cheerfully endure bodily sufferings, being glad if they make us more useful for Him. "For His sake," let us live in toil and die in obscurity, if so we can best glorify Him. Let our song be that of the gifted songstress, of whose hymn I have already quoted one verse—

*"In suffering sore, or toilsome task,
His burden light I'll bear;
'For Jesus' sake' shall sweeten all,
Till His bright home I share.
And then this song more sweet, more strong,
In Heaven my harp shall wake—
Led all the way, till that glad day
Eternally, my heart shall say,
'For Jesus sake.'"*

I will close when I have only added that if any of you have not at present any interest in this sacrifice and this service of which my two texts speak, I have just this word for you. It is, at least, a blessing that you are still permitted to listen to the Gospel. Let me very briefly tell once more, "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." Jesus Christ died in the place of sinners. We deserved to be punished for our sins. Under the Law of Moses there was no pardon for sin except through the blood of a sacrifice. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is *the one Sacrifice* for sins forever, of which the thousands of bullocks and lambs slain under the Law were but types. Every man who trusts to the death of the Lamb of God may know that Jesus Christ was punished in His place, so that God can be just and yet forgive the guilty. He can, without violating His justice, remit sin and pardon iniquity because a Substitute has been found whose death has an infinite value because of the Divine Nature of the Sufferer. He has borne the iniquities of all who trust Him. "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life." Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall go your way a saved soul, even though you came into this house steeped in sin, or through terrible conviction on the very verge of despair. God grant that many of you may trust in Jesus this very hour, "for His sake!" Amen.

***PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—2 Corinthians 8.
HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—282, 296, 709.***

TO THE READERS OF MY SERMONS:

MY DEAR FRIENDS—This morning I read in *The Times* that "Mr. Spurgeon is *rapidly* recovering." These words exactly describe what I am *not* doing. The symptoms are the same as when I was at home. I am tossed up and down upon the waves of my disease and what is thought progress, today, is gone tomorrow. I have seasons of utter prostration. Always weak, it seems at times that I have no strength whatever and must altogether collapse. *I shall recover*, for this is the tenor of the prayers which our God has so far answered, but there are no traces or signs of anything *rapid* about my condition. *Emphatically*, any advance I make is *the slowest of all slow things*. I write this at once to prevent disappointment to sanguine friends. I know not why I should be the object of so much tender sympathy, but as I am thus privileged I would have a sensitive regard for the feelings of such benefactors and warn them against statements for which there is no basis in truth. Their friend remains feeble and has no hasty recovery to expect. Please continue prayer. Have great patience. Relieve me of anxiety as to the institutions and praise God for what He has already done.

Your deeply-indebted servant, for Christ's sake,

Mentone, November 21, 1891,

C. H. SPURGEON.

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