

THE CRISIS OF THIS WORLD.

A Sermon

INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, DECEMBER 10TH, 1893,

DELIVERED BY

C. H. SPURGEON,

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,

On Lord's-day Evening, October 6th, 1889.

“Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.”—John xii. 31–33.

OUR Lord passed through his passion in a kind of rehearsal before it came. He saw those Greeks, who came to Philip, and whom Andrew and Philip brought to him, and his heart was flushed with joy. This was to be the result of his death, that the Gentiles would be gathered to him. That thought reminded him of his approaching decease. It was very near; only a few days would elapse, and then he would die upon the cross. In anticipation of Calvary, his soul was full of trouble; not that he feared death, but his death was to be a very peculiar one. He was to die the Just for the unjust; he was to bear our sins in his own body on the tree; and his pure and holy soul shrank from contact with sin. To stand in the sinner's place, to bear his Father's wrath, this bewildered him. He was very faint of heart, and he cried, “What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name.” Without any wicked weakness, he proved how truly human he was; without any sinful repining at his Father's will, he saw how terrible that will was, and he shuddered at what it included. This was a kind of rehearsal for Gethsemane; it was a sipping of that cup whereof he was to drink until his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground, while his whole soul poured out the agonized petition, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

When our Lord Jesus was in this great distress of mind, in anticipation of the terrible sufferings he was about to endure, his Father spoke to him; and when you are in your direst distress, God will speak to you. If you are his child, when the weakness of your flesh seems ready to prevail over your spirit, you, too, shall have a reassuring voice out of the excellent glory even

as your Master had. He seemed to recover himself at once, and bracing himself up, he indulged his heart again with a vision of the glorious result of his death. Then he uttered the happy words on which we are to meditate tonight, in which he summed up the consequences of his death in these three points: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

Let us, first, tonight, *consider the threefold result of Christ's death*; and when we have done that, let us *think about Christ's death as it is described in our text*.

I. First, let us CONSIDER THE THREEFOLD RESULT OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

There is, first, *the judgment of the world*: "Now is the judgment of this world." If you like, you may read it "crisis", for that is the Greek word used here: "Now is the crisis of this world." The world is sick, it grows worse; and the physician says that its malady has come to a climax, it is a case of kill or cure. There was a crisis in the world's disease, and that crisis was when Christ died. His death was the turning-point, the hinge of the world's history. There have been many hinges in history; every nation has a hinge in its history: the cross of Christ was the hinge of the world's history, it had reached the turning-point. I thank God that the death of Christ was the future death of sin. When he died, the arch-enemy received his death-stroke. That death was the bruising of Christ's heel; but in that death he bruised the old serpent's head. Now there is hope for the world; its crisis is passed. Now will the gods of the heathen fall; now will the dark ignorance of men yield to the Light of the world. After this crisis, there shall come a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness; for Christ's first coming is a pledge of his second coming, wherein he will exterminate sin, and make the wilderness and the solitary place to blossom as the rose. Thus we may render our Saviour's words, "Now is the crisis of this world," the turning-point, the hinge on which all its history hangs. Still, I greatly prefer to keep to our old version, which is a translation, whereas mine is only a borrowing of the original word "crisis."

"Now is the judgment of this world." This means that, when Christ died, the world that lieth in the wicked one, the ungodly world, was judged in this sense; first, it was convicted of being guiltiest of the guilty. I daresay you have heard people use pretty phrases about the dignity of human nature, and so on. They are lying phrases; for human nature is as bad as it can be. If you want the proof of that assertion, behold how God himself came here among men, incarnate virtue robed in love! Did men love him? Did they fall down before him, and do him homage? The homage of the world was, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" The world hates virtue; it cannot bear perfection; it might endure benevolence, but absolute purity and righteousness it cannot, away with. Its native instincts are wrong. It is not towards the light that men

are going, their backs are to the sun, they are journeying into the thick darkness.

And, next, the world was convicted of the stupendous crime of murdering the Son of God. I will not call it regicide, but deicide; and this is the crime of crimes. Truly was the world guilty of all that prophets ever charged it with, and much more. When wicked men slew the Prince of life, the Holy One and the Just, then was it proven that the world is at heart atheistic, that it hates God, and would put God himself to death if he were within its grasp. Thus did men put the Incarnate God to death when he submitted himself to their power. You need not talk about the virtues of the world; it slew the Christ, and that is enough to condemn it. We want no other proof of its guilt; you cannot bring evidence more complete and overwhelming than this, they slew the Lord of life and glory, they said, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours."

Christ's death was the judgment of this world, next, by sentencing the world; for if Christ, who was perfectly innocent, must die when he stood in the sinner's place, what think you, O guilty men, will not you also die? If the Well-beloved of heaven, bearing nothing but imputed guilt, sins not his own, must nevertheless be smitten of God and afflicted, and a voice must be heard, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts;" if he must die on yonder cruel tree, if he must cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" then, be sure of this, there is wrath treasured up against the day of wrath, and no soul of man that doeth evil shall go unpunished. Is there not a God who is the Judge of all the earth, and who must do right? If it be right to smite the Innocent, who assumed the place of the guilty, it must surely be right that the truly guilty should die the death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." So there was not only the conviction, but also the sentence of the world, when Jesus died.

And more than that, there is the final ending of the trial when the world rejects Christ. As long as you are here, my hearers, and Christ is preached to you, there is hope for you; but in that day when you reject Christ finally, and will have none of him, when you cry, "Away with him, away with him! We will not be washed in his blood, we will not be clothed in his righteousness;" in that day you seal your doom, and there remains no hope for you. There is one window in heaven, and through it streams the light of life; but if that be closed, no other will ever be opened. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." If you have for the last time put Christ away, if you have altogether done with him, you have ended your probation, you have finished your trial, you have put out your last candle, you are for ever doomed. When Christ is so rejected as

actually to be made away with as he was upon the cross, then is the judgment of this world.

I wish that I had time to pause here to press these points upon you who belong to the world. There are but two parties, the world and the Church of God. If you are not of the Church of God, you belong to the world; and the world is judged by the death of Christ. If you are not a Christian, you are a member of that great corporation called the world. Men sometimes speak of a Christian world and an un-Christian world, a religious world and an irreligious world, a sporting world, a laughing world, a thieving world, a trading world; but all that is really of the world is outside the bounds of the Church of God. He that believeth in Christ has escaped from the world. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world," said Christ concerning his disciples; but to the unbelieving Jews he said, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world."

Thus, you see that, as the first result of the death of Christ, the world is judged, the world is convicted, the world is sentenced for its rejection of Christ. A Christ-rejecting world is a doomed world; may none of you belong to that world!

The second result of Christ's death is *the casting out of Satan*: "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." He who holds sway over it shall now lose his throne. The prince of this world is Satan, the arch-enemy of God and of man; but he is not always to reign as the prince of the power of the air, the chief of the rulers of the darkness of this world. He is to be cast out of his present dominions.

By the death of Christ, Satan's accusations against believers are answered. One of the practices in which he most delights is that of accusing the people of God; and, alas! he has plenty of cause for his charges; but whenever he accuses us, our one answer is, "Jesus died." He says, "These people have sinned;" and we reply, "True; but Jesus died for them;" and the cross of Christ stops the mouth of the accuser. Even a feeble saint, looking up to his crucified and risen Saviour, can boldly sing,—

"I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him thou hast died."

Next, Christ's cross spoils Satan of his universal monarchy. He could once lord it over the whole world, and he does very much of that even now; but there is a people over whom he cannot sway his evil sceptre, there is a race which has broken loose from him. They are free, and they defy him to enslave them again. They care not for his threats, they are not to be won by his blandishments; and though he worries and tempts them, yet he cannot destroy them. He can boast no longer of universal dominion. There is a seed

of the woman that has revolted from him, for Jesus, by his death, hath redeemed them out of the hand of the enemy, and they are free. I heard a story of an old black woman, who was waiting upon a lady visiting friends in the South, some time after the last great war in America. The lady said to the black servant, "You may very well wait upon a Northerner with great attention, for it is through us that you are free." "Free, missy, free?" exclaimed the negress; "I's a slave. I was born a slave." "Oh, but you are free! Do you not know that there has been an Act passed by which you are all free?" "Yes, I did hear somet'ing about dat; and I said to old massa, 'I hear dat we is all free.' He says, 'Stuff and nonsense,' so I's bin stoppin' here workin' for him. Is it true, missy, that we is all free?" "Oh, yes!" she answered, "you are all free, every slave is free now." "Then," said the woman, "I don't bin serve old massa any longer; I bid him Good-bye." "And so it is when Christ sets us free; we do not serve the old massa Satan any longer, we bid him "Good-bye."

When we are set free from the dominion of the devil, by the emancipating redemption of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Satan's tyrannical power is crippled. He still has great influence, and he does his worst to injure the kingdom of Christ by persecution, by false doctrine, and by a thousand other methods; but Christ has broken his right arm, he cannot work as once he did; and more and more, as the fruit of the Redeemer's passion, will Satan's power be curtailed until, at last, he shall be utterly cast out, and the triumphant shout shall be heard, "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!" Let us never imagine that the devil is going to conquer in the great battle between right and wrong. God's Word tells us plainly enough what his end is to be: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

Now, if any of you suffer through Satan tempting you to despair, if he comes to some of you, and entices you to commit a sin which you hate, and against which you strive with all the might God gives you, if, by a mysterious force that you cannot comprehend, he seems to make you do otherwise than you would, take courage, and stand up against him, for when Jesus died, he said that, by his death, the prince of darkness was cast out, and so he is. Sin shall not have dominion over you, nor shall Satan either. Only be you bold in resisting him, claim your liberty as a child of God, and fight under the command of Christ, for the cross is the conquering banner for all who would overthrow the power of Satan.

"By all hell's host withstood;
We all hell's host o'erthrow;
And conquering them, through Jesu's blood

We still to conquer go.”

The third result of Christ’s death is *the central attraction of his cross*. “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” Christ on the cross has become the great magnet attracting men to himself. What did he mean by this saying? Did he not mean that his sphere of influence would be widened? “While I am here,” said he, “I draw a few men to me; these fishermen have become my disciples, these Greeks have come to see me; but when I am lifted up upon the cross, I shall draw all men unto me, men of all sorts, men out of all nations, multitudes of men, not only of this one age, but of all ages, till the world shall end. I shall become the centre of a wider circle, a circle wide as the world. I shall draw all men unto me.”

But why is it that Christ does draw men to himself? I answer that it is because, by dying on the cross, he gave a new and brighter display of his love. Men came to Christ because of his love while he walked the earth alive; little children especially did so; but after he had died that shameful death, how could they help coming to him? “Scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” “Herein is love.” And to all the ages the masterpiece of love is the dying Christ praying for his enemies, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Christ on the cross draws sinners to himself, Christ crucified attracts through the infinite love to men which is displayed in that death.

A part of the attraction lies in the wonderful blessings which come to us through Christ’s death. We were drawn to him because we received pardon through his wounds, we came to him because we found eternal life through his death upon the tree. Jesus bore the sin of his people, he died in our stead; and by so doing he put away all our iniquities, blotted them out, cast them into the depths of the sea. Only as he was lifted up upon the cross could that be said to be the case; but when he was crucified, he finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. Beloved, this is a great attraction to perishing sinners; it is a drawing of love to which they must yield. When Jesus thus attracts us, we run to him, because pardon and eternal life are to be found through his uplifting on the cross. I would that some here might be drawn to Christ at this moment by the mighty magnet of his death. Remember how the poet sings of the attraction of the cross,--

“So great, so vast a sacrifice
May well my hope revive:
If God’s own Son thus bleeds and dies

The sinner sure may live.

“Oh, that these cords of love divine
Might draw me, Lord, to thee!
Thou hast my heart, it shall be thine,
Thine it shall ever be!”

The death of Christ attracted to him multitudes of the sons of men because it expanded the hearts of his people. While he was alive and with them, they never burned with such enthusiasm as after he had died. One of the first effects of his death was the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon them, infusing them with new life, a holy fervour, and a sacred enthusiasm, which made them go unto the utmost ends of the earth, publishing among the Gentiles full redemption through his precious blood. Christ, when he was lifted up, made his followers disseminate themselves throughout all populations of the globe till their line went forth to the ends of the earth; and, like the sun o'er every clime, so did the gospel of Jesus Christ enlighten every nation under heaven. “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” Christ is the centre of mankind. He is the Shiloh, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. They shall come away from the abominations of Rome; they shall come away from the crescent of the false prophet; they shall come away from the idols of the dark places of the earth; they shall come away from infidelity and philosophy; and shall come crowding to his dear feet as they feel the marvellous magnetism of his atoning death.

These three things, then, resulted from the death of Christ, the wicked world was judged, the power of Satan was broken, and Christ was made the central attraction of sinners to himself; and that attracting power is working now. Oh, that these three wonders might be wrought in our midst tonight, according to our measure!

II. Now, in the second place, I want you, for a few minutes, quietly to THINK ABOUT THE DEATH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST AS DESCRIBED IN OUR TEXT.

How much the Holy Spirit desires that we should read the Scriptures intelligently! He had recorded these words of the Lord Jesus, “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” If that had been all, we might have asked,—Does that lifting up from the earth mean Christ’s death? Does it mean his ascension, his going up from the earth till the cloud received him? Or does it mean our preaching of Christ, when we lift him up before men, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness? So, to avoid all question, the Holy Spirit added the thirty-third verse, “This he said, *signifying what death he should die.*” If there is anything that the Spirit wishes us to be specially clear about, it is all expressions that have to do with our Lord’s

death. Let us thank him for that comment inserted here, lest we should make any mistake upon so vital a subject.

Now looking at the words, I want you to notice that *Christ went to his death with a clear view of what it was to be*. There is many a man who has rushed into the battle, and died without any idea of what a gunshot wound would be, or what the piercing of a lance would be; but our Lord, as it were, took stock of his death, and looked it calmly in the face. He does not speak of it as barely death, but he describes the manner of it: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth." In his own mind, he had gone through the nailing to the wood, and he had come to the uplifting of that wood into the air, and the fixing of its socket in the ground, and in spirit he felt himself already hanging there, lifted up from the earth. Just think of this wondrous fact, as Dr. Watts puts it,—

"This was compassion like a God,
That when the Saviour knew
The price of pardon was his blood,
His pity *ne'er* withdrew."

Knowing that his death was to be by crucifixion, he did not turn from it. He set his face like a flint to endure all that "the cross" meant. He fully knew what it meant; but you and I do not. There are depths in his sufferings that must be unknown to us, but he knew them all; yet, with love that was strong as death, he went through it all for your redemption, O believer! Then, love him in return, with a resolute, determined consecration of thy whole being, yield thyself up to him, not spasmodically, but of love aforethought, to be wholly his. Somebody said to me the other day, that all religion nowadays either suffered from paralysis or convulsions. I do not want you to have either of those complaints, though I like the convulsions better than the paralysis. Let us not have convulsed religion, but let us have strongly fixed principles, knowing what we have to do, and why we do it, and then, like the Saviour, let us go forward, expecting difficulty, expecting loss, expecting ridicule, but willingly and wilfully facing it all for his dear sake, as he, on his part, endured even the cross for our sake.

Notice, next, that though our Saviour knew the bitterness of his death, *he read its issues in another light*. "I, if I be lifted up,"—do you catch the thought? He does not merely mean lifted up on the cross, he means another kind of uplifting, he means being exalted. When he was lifted up upon the cross, men thought it degradation; but he looked into his death as one looks into an opal, till he sees wondrous rainbows and flames of fire in the precious stone. So Jesus looked into his passion till he saw his glory. Down in the ruddy depths of that blood-cup, he saw that he was really being lifted up when men thought that he was being cast down. That crown of thorns was a more wondrous diadem than monarch ever wore. His cross was his

throne. With his outspread hands, he ruled the nations; and with his feet fixed there, he trampled on the enemies of men. O glorious Christ, when I have had a vision of thy cross, I have seen it at first like a common gibbet, and thou wast hanging on it like a felon; but, as I have looked, I have seen it begin to rise, and tower aloft till it has reached the highest heaven, and by its mighty power lifted up myriads to the throne of God. I have seen its arms extend and expand until they have embraced all the earth. I have seen the foot of it go down deep as our helpless miseries are; and what a vision I have had of thy magnificence, O thou crucified One! As Jesus looked forward to his death, he saw more than we can even now see in it, and he perceived that it was his glory to be lifted up on the cross of Calvary.

Further, *he beheld in it the supply of our great need.* “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw.” He saw that we were far away, and could not of ourselves come nigh; so he said, “If I am lifted up, I will draw them.” He saw that we would not wish to come, that we should be so hard-hearted and stiff-necked that we would not come if we were called. “But,” said he, “I from the cross will draw them. As a magnet draws the steel, I will attract them.” Oh, think of the cross of Christ in that light! Some have thought that, if we preach the gospel, we shall always have a congregation. I am not sure of that; but if the gospel does not attract a congregation, I do not know what will. But Christ does not say, “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to little Bethel, or to Salem.” He says, “I will draw all men unto me,” that is, to himself; and we only come to Christ because Christ comes to us. No man ever comes to Christ unless Christ draws him, and the only magnet that Christ ever uses is himself. I do believe that we slander Christ when we think that we are to draw the people by something else but the preaching of Christ crucified. We know that the greatest crowd in London has been held together these thirty years by nothing but the preaching of Christ crucified. Where is our music? Where is our oratory? Where is anything of attractive architecture, or beauty of ritual? “A bare service,” they call it. Yes, but Christ makes up for all deficiencies. Preach Christ, and men will be drawn to him, for so the text says, “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” They are held back by Satan; but the cross will draw them. They are held back by despair; but the cross will attract them. They are held back by want of desire; but the cross will breed desire. They are held back by love of sin; but the cross will make them hate the sin that crucified the Saviour. “I will draw them. All sorts of men I will draw unto myself,” says the crucified Christ. Thus he supplies our great need.

Observe, too, that *Jesus knew that he would live to exercise that attraction.* He says, “I, if I be lifted up from the earth,”—what then? “Shall I be dead? No; I will draw all men unto me.” He lives. Going to death, he expects to live, he glories in his life, he tells of what he means to do after he is risen

from the dead. O glorious Christ, to look beyond thy death, and find comfort in thy risen life! Cannot you, my brothers, my sisters, sometimes look beyond the grave, and find comfort in what you will do in heaven? Oh, will we not in heaven glorify our Lord? In the anticipation of what we will then do in honour of our precious Saviour, let us now take up arms against our present trouble, borrowing our weapons from the armoury of the future after our earthly life is over.

Jesus saw, too (and here I must finish), that *the day would come when, he would be surrounded by a mighty company*. Can you not see him? He is lifted up upon the cross, and he begins to draw; and men come to him, a few at Jerusalem—nay, did I say “a few”? Three thousand in one day! The Crucified has pierced their hearts, the Crucified has begotten faith in them, the Crucified has drawn thousands to himself. He is preached in Damascus, he is preached at Antioch, he is preached at Corinth, he is preached at Rome, and everywhere he draws sinners to himself, and great companies come to him. By-and-by, he is preached in far-off Britain; some pioneer evangelist finds a place in these islands where he can preach to the uncivilized the gospel of Christ, and Jesus draws them to himself. He draws men till, all over Rome’s vast empire, Christ crucified is drawing them, from Cæsar’s palace and from Cæsar’s prison; from the slave at the mill to the senator who rules the city, Christ is drawing them. The kings who wear their crowns by permission of the Roman power, some of them bow before King Jesus, he is drawing them. The people on the isles of the sea, and on every coast, he is drawing them. And today he is still drawing them. From the sunny islands of the southern sea, from the far north of Greenland, from Africa, from China, from everywhere, he draws them more and more; and here, in this our favoured island, he has drawn myriads to himself; but the day shall come when that drawing power will begin to operate yet more freely. They shall run to him; they shall fly to him with swift wings, as doves fly to their cots; they shall come to him as on a sudden, till the Church shall cry in astonishment, “Who hath begotten me these? These, where had they been?” As the drops of the morning dew are seen, glittering like diamonds on every hedge, and on every blade of grass, when once the sun is up, so shall Christ’s converts be, like Abraham’s promised seed, “so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.” Christ’s people shall be willing in the day of his power; and the great attraction by which they will be drawn to him will be his death on the cross. Oh, that he would draw many to himself tonight! Let this be our prayer to him,—

“ Dear Saviour, draw reluctant hearts,
To thee let sinners fly,

And take the bliss thy love imparts,
And drink, and never die.”

Amen.

Exposition by C. H. Spurgeon.

JOHN XII. 19–43.

Our Lord raised Lazarus from the dead; and this miracle made a great sensation among the people. They came to meet Jesus, waving palm branches before him, and all Jerusalem was on a stir.

Verses 19–22. *The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him. And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.*

These were probably Gentiles, who were staying at Jerusalem; perhaps, proselytes who had come up to the feast. They were touched by the common feeling; they desired to see this wonderful Man who had raised to life one who had been dead four days. They proceeded courteously; they went to one of Christ’s disciples who, coming from Galilee of the Gentiles, would be likely to sympathize with them, and they sought an introduction to Jesus. This Philip obtained for them with the help of Andrew.

23. *And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.*

He knew that the hour was come when he must die. Looking through the dark glass of death, he saw what its result would be, and he called it glory. These few Greeks were the advance guard of the great Gentile army of the Lord; he regarded their coming in that sense.

24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*

Telling them that the source of his glory would be his death. The reason why the people would hear of him, and come to him, was that he would be hanged on the cross. The grain of wheat, when put into the ground, if it remains as it is, will never increase; it must die if it is to bring forth fruit. What is death? The end of existence? None but thoughtless persons imagine that. Death is the resolution of any living substance into its primary elements. It is the division of the soul from the body; originally, it was the division of the soul from God. In a grain of wheat, death is the separation of the particles of which it is composed, that the life-germ may feed upon that which was provided for it. “If it die,” in the true sense of the word, in being separated into its constituent elements, then “it bringeth forth much fruit.” Christ’s way to glory was through the grave; he must go down that he might mount to the throne.

25. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

Live for this world, and you shall lose this world and the next, too; live for the world to come, and you shall in the highest sense gain both worlds.

26. If any man serve me, let him follow me;

That is the best kind of service; to do what Christ did, and to do what Christ bids you do: "If any man serve me, let him follow me."

26. And where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

Follow Christ, then, to the cross; follow him to the grave; follow him in his humiliation; and then the Father will honour you even as he honoured his Son.

27. Now is my soul troubled;

Or, puzzled. This hour of his glory was the hour of his passion, too.

27. And what shall I say?

Such sorrow was in his heart that he asked, "What shall I say?" Great trouble brings astonishment, amazement, bewilderment with it; and the human soul of Christ felt as ours feels when in great agony.

27. Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

Nature suggests the cry, "Father, save me from this hour." Grace comes behind the flesh, being a little slower to speak; but it corrects the errors of the flesh, and says, "For this cause came I unto this hour."

28. Father, glorify thy name.

What a prayer! Jesus swallows up his temptation to escape the cup by this all-absorbing petition, "Father, glorify thy name."

28, 29. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered:

They only heard the sound, and it was like thunder in their ears.

29. Others said, An angel spake to him.

They distinguished the sound of some one speaking; but they did not recognize the voice of God.

30. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

"To make you believe that God is with me, and that I am his Son."

31–34. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

As if it could not be true that Christ, in his divine nature, abides for ever, and yet, as Man, could be lifted up to die. It was a sneering question, "Who is this Son

of man?" Our Lord did not answer it, thus teaching us that some people are not worth answering. Instead of replying to their question, Jesus gave them a practical admonition.

35, 36. *Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.*

When people determine to reject Christ, he leaves them; why should he tarry where he is rejected? He "departed, and did hide himself."

37–41. *But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him; that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearty that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.*

Christ is in the Old Testament in many places where, as yet, even we have never seen him. I doubt not that he lies hidden away in many a Psalm, and many a prophetic utterance that has not yet been fully expounded, or even comprehended by our finite minds. Oh, for eyes to see him where he sits in his ancient state!

What a solemn fact this is, though, that God does allow men to be given over to blindness of eyes, and hardness of heart! I sometimes fear that it is so with this age. Men will not see; they will not believe; they are desperately set on scepticism, it has become a fashion with them. Like a torrent, it sweeps through the very churches that bear the name of Christ; my fear is God in his wrath may give up our land to this curse, and then where will our hope be?

42, 43. *Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*

I wonder whether in this throng there are any of this kind, who do believe in Christ, and yet never come out and confess him because they love the praise of men more than the praise of God. If so, I venture to say that they are found among what are called the more respectable people, the men of light and leading, the chief rulers. Among the common people there is very little of this evil. They will generally confess what they believe, and bravely come forward to declare that they belong to Christ. It is the chief rulers, the gentlemen of the Sanhedrim, who, if they believe in Christ in their hearts, do not confess him, lest they should be put out of society, for they love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—302, 313.