

## THE BEST OF MASTERS

### NO. 247

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 AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

*“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you:  
 not as the world gives, give I unto you.”*  
*John 14:27.*

THE Gospel of John is peculiarly the history of Jesus, the Son of God. Matthew deals with Jesus as the Prince of the house of David. Mark treats of Him as the Servant of servants. And Luke views Him as the Son of Man. But John, with eagle eyes, looks beyond all the clouds of His Humanity, and seeing the clear shining of His Divinity, writes of Him especially as the Son of God, the Word, that in the beginning was with God and was God. It seems but right, then, that since Jesus came from Heaven, He should sometimes put both Himself and His cause in contrast with that which is of the earth. You will find through several Chapters wherein our Savior is addressing His disciples, He continually contrasts Himself, His gifts and His love, with those of the world. He came from Heaven that He might fight and wrestle with an evil and a wicked world; that He might rescue His people from it; that He might cleanse the world and, at last, might present the earth, itself, to Himself—to be the new Heaven and the new earth wherein righteousness should dwell. I say it seems but right that in a Gospel which particularly views Christ as of heavenly origin and as very God of very God, that there should frequently be a contrast between Christ and the world—between the Kingdom which is from Heaven and the kingdoms of this earth. Our text presents us with one contrast between Christ and the world—“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you.” He gives in a more Divine fashion than the world can ever give—even when its hands are most laden with its gifts.

Now, I shall take my text this morning and endeavor to talk of it thusly—first, viewing it with regard *to the peace which Christ gives*—He does not give peace as the world gives it. Secondly, I shall take a larger view of the subject and look upon *all the gifts of Christ* and say that, “not as the world gives, does He bestow His mercies on us.” And then I will close with a *practical inference* from the whole subject.

**I.** First of all, IN THE MATTER OF PEACE, Christ gives us peace, but not as the world gives it. For, in the first place, the world gives peace *in a complimentary style*. It was usual among the Orientals for the wayfarer to say to the person whom he met, “Peace be to you.” And generally, when a house was entered, the benediction of peace was bestowed by every person who stepped across the threshold. These were often but vain and empty expressions of compliment. Those very utterances might proceed from the lips of an enemy! “The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.” It is the same with the world today. Everyone salutes us in writing with a, “Dear Sir,” or a, “My dear Sir,” and concludes, “Yours very truly,” and, “Yours sincerely.” We call all, “friends,” and if we meet but casually, we express the utmost anxiety with regard to one another’s health—and we carefully enquire after each other’s families. Perhaps we shall no sooner have passed by the person than we shall forget his existence and certainly shall entertain no anxious thoughts with regard to his welfare, nor any loving remembrance of him! The world gives very largely when it gives compliments.

Oh, what blessings would descend upon all our heads if the blessings uttered could be blessings bestowed! Even when the, “good-bye,” is given, which translated means, “God be with you”—if that could be but true and if God could be with us in answer to that prayer, so little understood, how rich might we be! But alas, the way of the world is, “Be you warmed and be you filled.” But it has not that which should warm, nor that which should fill! It is a world of words—high-sounding, empty, all-deceiving words! Now, not so does Christ give. If He says, “Peace be with you,” His benediction is most true and full of sweet sincerity. He left His own peace in Heaven that He might give the peace which He enjoyed with His Father to us in this world of sorrow, for thus He puts it, “My peace I give unto you.” Christ, when He

blesse, blesse not in word, only, but in deed. The lips of Truth cannot promise more than the hands of Love will surely give! He gives not in compliment.

Furthermore, even when the world's wishes of peace are sincere, what are they but *mere wishes*? If I am met by my most sincere friend and he wishes to give a benediction, he cannot bestow one. 'Tis God's to bless His people with peace. We may bless with the wish but not with the deed. It may be our desire that every mercy should cluster round the head of our friend—that his pillow should be smooth; that his path should be easy; that his heart should be happy, that his end may be peace—but we must leave it with God to fulfill our prayers. If our power were equal to our will, how richly would we bless our friends with the priceless jewel of peace! But Christ says, "Not as the world gives, give I unto you." His wishes for us shall be accomplished and He, Himself, shall work them out. Does He wish for us that we may be sanctified? Lo, He will sanctify us and present us without spot, or wrinkle, or any such things! Is it His will that we should be with Him where He is? It shall be done and we shall behold His Glory and we shall share in it! There was never a wish in Christ's heart with regard to His people that merely ended in a wish. The wish is but the bow string—the blessing is the arrow shot from it. Christ has not an empty bow—His quiver is filled with arrows and every time He wishes, He fits a blessing on the string and sends it to us! Oh, rest assured that not as the world gives, with the empty wish, the deceitful brook, the empty well, does Christ give to us! He gives a fullness and a reality in all that He bestows!

Yet, furthermore, I may remark that with regard to peace, the world gives only peace in prospect. There is not a man alive who is not hoping for better times. Even boys and girls believe that better times are coming—times of rest and peace. The man who is just beginning in business expects that he shall take his rest and be much at ease when he shall have succeeded in establishing a connection. Or if he finds that as business increases, cares multiply, he hopes that in a little time the whole matter will become more steady, and that by the employment of honest persons, much of the care may be taken from him. And that time comes. But he finds that, even then, there are fresh cares which have arisen as the others have died out. He then looks forward to the time when, in his green old age, he shall retire to some country retreat and there spend the rest of his days in peace. For the most part that is but a vision and gray age, in its retirement, still has its troubles! Still, when men grow old, trouble is as young as ever and man finds just as much to prick and wound in the thorns of earth as when for the first time he trod its soil! We are all *intending and beginning* to be peaceful. We are all *going* to be happy, by-and-by! We have all made up our minds that soon we will have done with desiring more and then we will make our rest. This is the miraculous mistake of man—that he is always *beginning* to live—but he never does! He always *intends* to be satisfied, but he never is! He always *means* to sit down in content, but that period never arrives! He has always something to vex him, but still hopes the day shall come when he shall be vexed no more!

Now, not as the world gives, does Christ give to us. The world puts before us a mirage in the desert. We see before us what we fancy to be springs of water and spreading palm trees—and we rush forward, but it is not there. It is only a few rods ahead and on we go, full wearily and foot-sore and now it is a little further on. Still we hurry on; but as we progress, the vision flies before us and we never reach it. Not thus does Christ bless. He gives and gives now! He gives in present foretaste and will give assuredly in the world which is to come. Yes, even now, the true Christian can say he has peace in Christ! Oh, there are some of us who know what it is to be so content and happy when our thoughts are exercised upon our standing in Christ, that we could say we have not a wish beyond—we could sit still forever and rest in Him! Verily, we can testify that they who have believed do enter into rest. We have seen the billows roar; we have marked the storm gathering; we have seen the black clouds big with tempest gathering overhead. And we have been enabled to defy all these things and to find rest in Christ, notwithstanding! No, and when the clouds have emptied out their horrors; when the lightning has scathed the brow of darkness and the thunder has rolled tremendous through the sky—we have known what it is, even then—to rest in the bosom of Christ as a baby upon the breast of its mother! We have had a quiet and a perfect rest while the world has been in arms abroad. Christ gives a real peace, not a something that we have to hunt for tomorrow, but a thing that we have now! And the true Believer can say that when he is enabled to see himself in Christ, he has all he needs. He can rest on beds of spices, feed among the lilies of satisfaction and neither ask nor wish for anything beyond! "Peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives, I give unto you."

Yet again—I remark once more that all the peace which the world ever did give to any man was a delusion! I know some who possess the world's peace—I would to God that peace were broken! Some of you are content with yourselves. You are good enough, you say, or, if not good enough, 'tis easy to amend. You fold your arms and you say, "Why make

myself miserable about religion? Why trouble myself about the interests of another world?" Ah, Man, I would to God you could be made *wretched*—that you could be made miserable—for mark, your sleep is the sleep of death! It is one of the devil's great devices for destroying souls, to satisfy men—to give them the drug of indifference, the tincture of procrastination and so to stultify and stupefy them so that they go on from day-to-day careless and reckless, till they lift up their eyes in Hell! Why, if you are concerned about your souls, there is hope for you. The way to peace lies through distress—you must first be agitated before you can be pacified. But, if you now say, "peace, peace," I tell you there is no peace! And if you now say, "be quiet, be still, hush!" I warn you, that all the quiet of which you boast is nothing but the hush before the hurricane—when the world seems as if it stands still in terror! When the birds droop their wings upon the trees and cease their notes—when the very lion hides himself in the thicket and when he roars no more, but is still waiting for the rushing wings of tempest—here is a picture of your vaunted peace! Your calm is but a prelude of an eternal storm! The sunshine of today is but the index of the awful shower of tomorrow—a shower of red rain of vengeance and of hail mingled with fire! Oh, the peace the world gives is delusive! They who rest there, rest upon a bed of death!

But the peace which Christ gives is no delusion. When the Christian can sit down and say "I have nothing to fear. I have nothing to trouble me—nothing to tremble at, neither for this world, nor for the next," he is not saying one word more than he has good ground for saying! No, he is not going as far as he might go. He may say—

*"Now let earth's old pillars shake  
And all the wheels of Nature break;  
My steadfast soul shall fear no more  
Than solid rocks when billows roar."*

That peace has no pretense in it. It is not pompous. It is a reality! Profound though it is, it is not one whit more profound than it is warranted to be! The Believer rests upon a solid rock and all the waves of trouble can never make that rock give way, or shake the foundation of his peace. "Not as the world gives, give I unto you."

II. Now having touched upon the first point, I come to the second IN THE MATTER OF GIVING. Take a broad view of it. In whatever the world gives, Christ does not give after the same fashion.

In the first place, the world gives scantily. Even the world's best friends have had cause to complain of its contemptible treatment. In reading the biographies of mighty men whom the world honors, you will be soon convinced that the world is a most ungrateful friend. If you should devote your whole life to serve the world and make it happy, think not the world would ever return you so much as a dolt! Robert Burns is an instance of the world's fine gratitude. There was the world's poet—he sung the roaring tankards foaming; he sang the loves of women and the joys of lust—the world admired him, but what did the world do for him? He might drag along his whole life in almost poverty! When the time comes for Robert Burns to be honored, (which was all too late for a buried man), how did they honor him? He had poor relatives. Look to the subscription list and see how magnificent the donations they received! They honored him with libations of whiskey which they drunk themselves! That was all they would give him. The devotion of the Scotch drunkards to their poet is a devotion to their drunkenness, not to him! Doubtless there are many true-hearted men who bewail the sinner as much as they admire the genius, but the mass like him none the worse for his faults. However, if it had been ordained and decreed that every drunkard who honored Burns should go without his whiskey for a week—there was not a dozen of them would have done it—not half a dozen! Their honor to him was an honor to themselves—it was an opportunity for drunkenness—at least in thousands of instances!

As I stood by his monument some little time ago, I saw around it a most dismal, dingy set out of withered flowers and I thought, "Ah, this is his honor! O, Burns, how have you spent your life to have a withered wreath for the world's payment of a life of mighty genius and a flood of marvelous song?" Yes, when the world pays best, she pays nothing! And when she pays least, she pays her flatterers with scorn! She rewards their services with neglect and poverty. Many a statesman might I quote who has spent his life in the world's service and at first the world said "Go on, go on," and he was applauded everywhere. He was doing something to serve his time! But he made a little mistake—a mistake, perhaps, which will prove not to have been a mistake at all when the books of history shall be read with a clearer eye, but—"Down with him," says the world, "we will have nothing more to do with him!" All he may have done before went for nothing! One mistake, one flaw in his political career—"Down with him, cast him to the dogs! We will have nothing to do with him!" Ah, the world pays scantily indeed! What will it do for those it loves the best? When it has done all it can, the last resource of the world is to give a man a title (and what is that)? And then to give him a tall pillar and set him up

there to bear all weathers, to be pitilessly exposed to every storm. And there he stands for fools to gaze at, one of the world's great ones paid in stone! It is true the world has paid that out of its own heart, for that is what the world's heart is made of—the world pays scantily. But did you ever hear a Christian who complained thus of his Master? “No,” he will say, “when I serve Christ, I feel that my *work* is my wages! That labor for Christ is its own reward. He gives me joy on earth, with a fullness of bliss hereafter.” Oh, Christ is a good Paymaster! “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.” He who serves Christ may get but little gold and silver such as this world calls precious; but he gets a gold and a silver that shall never be melted in the last refining fire; that shall glitter among the precious things of immortality throughout eternity! The world pays niggardly and scantily, but not so Christ!

Again—if you will serve the world and you wish to have gifts from it, the world will pay you half-heartedly. Now, by the world I mean the religious world quite as much as any other part of it! I mean the *whole* world—religious, political, good, bad and indifferent—the whole lot of them! If you serve the world, it will pay you half-heartedly. Let a man spend himself for his fellow creatures' interests, what will he get for it? Some will praise him, some will abuse him. The men who escape without abuse in this world are the men who do nothing at all! He who is most valiant and useful must expect to be most reprobated and abhorred! Those men who are borne upon the waves of popular applause are not the men whose worth is true—real philanthropists must swim against the stream! The whole list of the world's benefactors is an army of martyrs. All along the path of the good is marked with blood and fire. The world does not pay the men who really serve it, except with ingratitude. I say, to come back, even when the world does pay, it pays half-heartedly. Did you ever know a man, yet, concerning whom the world's mind was one? I never heard of any. “Oh,” says one, “So-and-So is one of the best men of his times.” Go down the next street and you will hear it said, “He is the biggest vagabond living.” Go to one and you will hear him say, “I never heard a man of such genius as that is.” “Oh,” says another, “mere twaddle.” “There is such a newspaper,” says one, “how ably it defends the rights of the people.” “Oh,” says another, “mere democracy—seeking to pull down everything that is constitutional and proper.” The world never made up its mind about any man yet! There is not a soul living concerning whom the world is unanimous!

But when Christ gives anything, He always gives with all His heart! He does not say to His people, “There, I give you this, but still I have half-a-mind to keep it back.” No, Christ gives His heart to all His people. There is no double-mindedness in Jesus! If we are enabled by Free Grace to serve Him and to love Him, we may rest quite sure that in the rich reward which His Grace shall give us, His whole heart shall go with every blessing. When Christ blesses the poor, needy soul, He does not give with one hand and smite with the other—He gives him mercies with both His hands—both full! He asks the sinner simply to receive all that He is willing to give.

Then again, whenever the world gives anything, it gives mostly to those who do not need it. I remember once, when a lad, having a dog which I very much prized and some man in the street asked me to give him the dog. I thought it was pretty impudent and I said as much. A gentlemen, however, to whom I told it, said, “Now suppose the Duke of So-and-So”—who was a great man in the neighborhood—“asked you for the dog—would you give it him?” I said, “I think I would.” He said, “Then you are just like all the world—you would give to those who do not need.” Who in the whole of this congregation would object to give anything to the Queen? Not a soul of us and yet, perhaps, there is no person in the world who so little needs our gifts! We can always give to those who do not require anything, for we feel that there is some little honor conferred upon us—an honor bestowed by the reception. Now, look at Jesus. When He gives to His friends, He gets no honor from them—the honor is in His own free heart that should lead Him to give to such poor worms! Great men have gone to Christ with mere professions and they have asked Him to be good to them, but then they have at the same time declared that they had a righteousness of their own and did not need much of Him. And He has sent them about their business and given them nothing! He said, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” But whenever poor, lost sinners have gone to Christ, He has never turned one of them away—never! He has given all they could possibly want and infinitely more than they thought they could ever expect! Might not Jesus say to us, when we ask Him for the blessings of His Grace, “You are impudent in daring to ask.” But instead of that, He loves to be asked and He freely and richly gives—“Not as the world gives”—for He gives to those who need it most!

Again, there is another view of the world's gifts. The world gives to *its friends*. Any man will help his own friends. If we help not our own relatives and friends, then we are worse than heathens and publicans! But the world generally confines its good wishes and blessings to its class and kin. It cannot think of giving blessings to its enemies. Did you ever

hear yet of the world's blessing an enemy? Never! It gives its benefactions to its friends and but very scantily even to them. But Christ gives His benefactions to His enemies. "Not as the world gives," He may truly say. The world says, "I must see whether you deserve it. I must see that your case is a good one." It enquires and enquires and enquires again. But Christ only *sees* that our case is a bad one and then He gives. He wants not a *good* case but a *bad* case! He knows our necessity and, once discovering our necessity, not all our sin can stop the hand of His bounty! Oh, if Jesus should call to mind some of the hard speeches we have uttered about Him, surely He would never bless us if it were not that His ways are far above our ways! Why, remember, my Hearers, it is not long ago since you cursed Him—since you laughed at His people—despised His ministers and could spit upon His Bible! Jesus has cast all that behind His back and loved you in spite of yourself! Would the world have done that? Let a man get up and rail at his fellows—will they forgive and, after forgiving—will they begin to bless? Will they die for their enemies? Oh, no! Such a thing never entered into the heart of manhood! But Christ blesses rebels, traitors, enemies to His Cross! He brings them to know His love and taste of His eternal mercies.

A thousand remarks seem to start up and I scarcely know which to choose. "Not as the world gives give I unto you." The world always gives with a *stingy motive*. The most of us are compelled to economy. If we give anything away to a poor man, we generally hope that he will not come back. If we give him half a-crown, it is very often, as we say, to get rid of him. If we bestow a little charity, it is in the hope that we shall not see his face again, for we really do not like the same men continually begging at our door when the world is so full of beggars! Did you ever hear of a man who gave a beggar something to encourage him to keep on begging from him? I must confess I never did such a thing and am not likely to begin. But that is just what Christ does—when He gives us a little Grace, His motive is to make us ask for more! And when He gives us more Grace, it is given with the very motive to make us come and ask again! He gives us silver blessings to induce us to ask for golden mercies—and when we have golden favors—those same mercies are given on purpose to lead us to pray more earnestly and open our mouth wider that we may receive more! What a strange giver Christ is! What a strange Friend, that He gives on purpose to make us beg for more! The more you ask of Christ, the more you can ask. The more you receive, the more you will want! The more you know Him, the more you will desire to know Him. The more Grace you receive, the more Grace you will pant after. And when you are full of Grace, you will never be content till you get full of glory! Christ's way of giving is, "Of His fullness have we received and Grace for Grace"—Grace to make us pant for more Grace—Grace to make us long after something higher, something still fuller and richer. "Not as the world gives, give I unto you."

Again—when the world gives anything it is almost always with a *selfish motive*. The Christian gives, not hoping to receive again, but the world lends that it may borrow. It gives that it may receive. There are many men whose whole lives are a looking after self. They would not like to be told so, but even their benefactions to a hospital, or to a charity, are merely given because their name should be on the list. We know that too many persons would not think of relieving private need unless they thought there was a merit in it and so thought it would stand good for them at last! They would infinitely prefer to do their good in the lumps. I know, at this day, a man that I believe would give 20 pounds, 50 pounds, or a 100 pounds to a charity, but who would let his own relatives starve rather than give them anything because it would never be *known*—no one would talk about it! The world's motive for bestowing a blessing is in order that some rich fruit may flow from it! If the world rewards a warrior, its ostensible reason is that other soldiers may fight bravely. If it rewards some great artist, it is to encourage the profession, that is, to help themselves by getting others to amuse them as well as this man has done! There is always an ulterior motive in the world's generosity. Not so in Christ's! When He gives us mercies, He has nothing whatever to get from us. It is our delight to live to Him, but our living to Him cannot increase *His* Glory—He is God over all, blessed forever! He gives us more than He can ever receive—and though we, with grateful hearts, desire to live to Him—that very gratitude is first His gift! The well of love is filled out of the spring of God—otherwise it had been the grave of mercies and not a fountain of praise!

Now, what more shall I say? I seem to have brought out the most prominent points of the world's giving, but let me add one more. "Not as the world gives, give I unto you." All that the world gives, it only bestows for a season—it must go back again. You have riches, Man, as the reward of your toils. What shall you be the better for them in a few short months? Your broad acres and your leagues of land shall dwindle into a short six feet of clay! Your mansion—what shall it shrivel into—but into a small coffin over which shall be thrown a little dirt to hide your putrid dust and save the

world a nuisance? The world will have all back of you. Naked you did come into it and it will take care you shall take nothing out of it, for naked shall you go out of it again! Oh, Man, you have accumulated knowledge until you have become a walking encyclopedia, but what shall you take with you? What difference shall there be between your hollow skull and that of the meanest peasant, when some wanton sexton in some future year, shall take it up or split it with his spade? What shall you be the better for all those big thoughts that have stretched your skull and all those marvelous conceptions that have made it ache so much that you could scarcely carry it upon your shoulders? You will go back again to your fellow earth and the worms shall eat you and the philosopher shall taste no sweeter to his tooth than did the peasant! And, then, whether you are prince or king, or whether you are a poor, ignorant man, the worms shall make no distinction. You shall still rot—still be consumed—noisome gases and a handful of dust shall be your whole residue! What, then, can the world give? If it tried, it could not give you anything that would last! It cannot give you anything better than air! It can give you nothing that can pass into eternity with you. What? Though it follows you with the trumpet of fame, that trumpet cannot be heard half-way across the Jordan! If all the men in the world clapped their hands in your praise, not one angel, even on the very borders of the celestial world would observe the tumult of applause! The world can give you nothing that you can carry with you—you are at best a packhorse that shall carry its burden till it ends its journey and then it must lie down and die! You do but carry a burden on your back and verily, death shall unload you before you are allowed to enter another world!

How different is Christ in His gifts! What He gives, He gives forever! When He bestows mercies, they are lasting things. No shadows does He give, but real substance—no fancies, but eternal realities does He bestow. Oh, men and women of this world, when your gold is melted—when your diamonds have dissolved in gas—when your estates have gone—when your hopes are lost and when your goods are destroyed, *then* shall the people of God begin to know their riches! Then shall they shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.

*“Not as the world gives, give I unto you.”*

**III.** Now this brings me to one PRACTICAL REFLECTION, OR RATHER EXHORTATION TO GOD’S PEOPLE. If this is true, my Hearers, I beseech you to not serve the world—serve none but Christ, for He is the *best* Master! Serve Him with all your might because He so richly has given and so richly will give. I would not serve the world for the best empire in it! A king once said he wished all his subjects could be kings for a day, for “they would soon discover,” he said, “that the art of governing is not so easy as they think and that a crown is not so soft a thing to wear as they imagine.” No, the world may abuse us if it likes; if it abuses us we are not very sad, there, because the world is not our master—and as long as our own Master is satisfied, we care not for a stranger! If anyone should walk into your garden and say to your gardener, “I do not like the arrangement of these beds. I do not like those flowers. You are evidently a careless man,” he would say, “Well, my master has been round this morning. He did not say much, but I saw a smile of satisfaction on his face. Therefore, what is that to you? It is no business of yours. I am not *your* servant. I do not serve you.” Now, the world is a bad paymaster to those that obey and serve it. Let every Christian make up his mind that he will have nothing to do with serving the world. If the world scorns and frowns, let him say, “It is no business of yours. You are not my master. I do not serve you. If it amuses you to abuse me, go on, it will not hurt me.”

There is even in the mind of Christians, at times, too much of a tendency to time-serving. We are all so apt to think that we really must bow to public opinion, to this, that and the other. Oh, you will never be happy until the Holy Spirit has brought you to this—that you will fear God and that you will fear no one else—that you will serve God with undivided heart! I go further—I would not even serve the Church if I must have it for a master! I can serve God; I can serve Christ, for Christ is a blessed Master. But I would not advise any of you to make the Church your master! Wherever the Church is, we are all bound to serve the Brethren, to serve the Church of Christ as we are bound to assist in a common cause—but think not that even the dictum of the Church is to be your judge! Imagine not that even its praise is that which you are to seek! You are to seek the praise of Christ! His Church may do wrong; his ministers make mistakes, but Christ Himself can never be in error! Serve Christ—this is the practical exhortation from the whole subject. My dear Friends, you who love Christ and have been chosen by Him from before the foundation of the world; who have been bought with His blood; have been washed and pardoned and forgiven—if Christ gives to you, not as the world gives—then I beseech you serve Christ better than worldlings serve the world! Oh, it is astonishing what men have done to serve the world! They have rushed to the cannon’s mouth and given their life to be food for powder and they have thought they

were well rewarded with a little praise! Men, too, have sweated at the furnace. They have spent their livings; have starved their families to invent some luxuries for the tables of the rich! Men have undergone unheard of labors—toils that positively appall you to read of—merely to become eminent in their profession, to be first in the rank of artisans among which they were numbered!

When the world has a gulf to fill, it never lacks a Curtis to leap into it, but Christ often sees His cause left and deserted by reason of the coldness of His friends! There is many a battle wherein the warriors of Christ turn their backs, though armed and carrying bows. I was thinking yesterday and the thought struck me forcibly, that 1800 years ago, or a little more, there were a few men met in an upper chamber for worship—about 400 of them. They met and they prayed and they preached and there was a Divine Fire kindled in their bosoms! And in a few years they had preached the Gospel in every language under Heaven and the mass of the world became professedly Christians. Now here is a room, not with 400 persons, but oftentimes filled with thousands and yet does the religion of Christ progress as it should? No! If there were but a little, but a hundredth part of the zeal of Christ's disciples that there was in olden times, before another year rolls round, there would be missionaries in every town! The Gospel would be preached in every village of India and China and every other nation accessible to the feet of the missionary. As it is, we are an idle generation. A tribe of dwarfs has succeeded to a race of giants and now Christ's cause creeps where it once ran and only runs where once it was desirous to fly as with wings of lightning! Oh, that God would make bare His arm! And if ever He does, the first sign of it will be that the Church will begin to serve Christ more zealously. Some will give their blood to die in the preaching of the Word. Others will pour their wealth into coffers of the Church and every living soul numbered in the family of Christ will spend itself and be spent for its Master's honor!

“Not as the world gives, give I unto you.” O Jesus, not as the world's followers give, do we desire to give to You! They give their lives but once, we would “die daily.” They give much of their talent, we would give all. Take our heart and seal it, make it as Your own, that we may live to Your honor and die in Your arms and sit upon Your Throne with You forever and ever. Amen

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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