

## THE GLORIOUS MASTER AND THE SWOONING DISCIPLE NO. 1028

A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, JANUARY 7, 1872,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not. I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hell and of death.”  
Revelation 1:17, 18.*

LOW thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ are exceedingly mischievous to Believers; if you sink your estimate of Him, you shift everything else in the same proportion; he who thinks lightly of the Savior thinks so much the less of the evil of *sin*; and, consequently, he becomes callous as to the past, careless as to the present, and venturesome as to the future. He thinks little of the punishment due to sin because he has small notions of the Atonement made for sin. Christian activity for right is also abated, as well as holy horror of wrong. He who thinks lightly of the Lord Jesus renders to Him but small *service*; he does not estimate the Redeemer's Love at a rate high enough to stir his soul to ardor; if he does not count the blood wherewith he was redeemed an unholy thing, yet he thinks it a small matter, not at all sufficient to claim from him life-long service. Gratitude is weak when favors are undervalued. He serves little who loves little, and he loves little who has no sense of having been greatly beloved. The man who thinks lightly of Christ also has but poor comfort as to his own *security*. With a little Savior I am still in danger, but if He is the Mighty God, able to save unto the uttermost, then am I safe in His protecting hands, and my consolations are rich and abounding. In these, and a thousand other ways, an unworthy estimate of our Lord will prove most solemnly injurious. The Lord deliver us from this evil!

If our conceptions of the Lord Jesus are very enlarged, they will only be His due; we cannot exaggerate here; He deserves higher praise than we can ever render to Him; as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high is He above our loftiest conceptions. Even when the angels strike their loudest notes, and chant His praises most exultingly on their highest festal days, the music falls far short of His excellence; He is higher than a seraph's most soaring thought! Rise, then, my Brothers and Sisters, as on eagle's wings, and let your adoring souls magnify and extol the Lord your Savior!

When our thoughts of Jesus are expanded and elevated, we obtain right ideas upon other matters. In the light of His Love and Atoning Sacrifice, we see the depth of the degradation from which such a Redeemer has lifted us, and we hate, with all our hearts, the sins which pierced such an altogether Lovely One, and made it necessary for the Lord of Life to die. Forming an adequate estimate of what Jesus has done for us, our gratitude grows, and with our gratitude our love—which love compels us to consecration, and consecration suggests heroic self-denying actions. Then are we bold to speak for Him and ready, if necessary, to suffer for Him while we feel we could give up all we have to increase His Glory without so much as dreaming that we had made a sacrifice

Let your thoughts of Christ be high, and your delight in Him will be high, too; your sense of security will be strong, and with that sense of security will come the sacred joy and peace which always keep the heart which confidently reposes in the Mediator's hands. If you would be raised, let your thoughts of Christ be raised; if you would rise above these earthly joys, you must have higher and more elevated thoughts of Him who is high above all things. Earth sinks as Jesus rises; honor the Son even as you would honor the Father, and in so doing your soul shall be Sanctified and brought into closer fellowship with the great Father of Spirits whose delight it is to glorify His Son!

My objective, this morning, is to suggest some few Truths of God to your recollection which may help to set the Lord Jesus on a glorious high throne within your hearts. My motto, this morning, will be—

*“Bring forth the royal diadem*

*And crown him Lord of all."*

My anxiety is that He may be crowned with many crowns in all these many hearts, and that you may now perform those exercises of Faith, those delightful acts of adoring love, which shall bring to Him great Glory.

**I.** Coming to the Text, the first thing we notice in it is THE DISCIPLE OVERPOWERED. We will meditate a little while upon that. John writes, "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead."

The beloved disciple was favored with an unusual vision of His Glorified Lord; in the blaze of that Revelation, even his eagle eye was dimmed, and his holy soul was overwhelmed; he was overpowered, but not with ecstasy. At first sight it would have seemed certain that the excess of delight would have been John's most prominent feeling; it would appear certain that to see his long lost Master, whom he had so dearly loved, would have caused a rush of joy to John's soul, and that if overpowered at all, it would have been with ecstatic bliss. That it was *not* so is clear from the fact that our Lord said to him, "Fear not." Fear was far more in John than holy joy; I will not say that John was *unhappy*, but, certainly, it was not delight which prostrated him at the Savior's feet! And I gather from this that if we, in our present embodied state, were favored with an unveiled Vision of Christ, it would not make a Heaven for us; we may think it would, but we know not of what spirit we are; such new wine, if put into these old bottles, would cause them to burst! Not Heaven but deadly faintness would be the result of the Beatific Vision if granted to these earthly eyes! We would not say, if we could behold the King in His beauty as we now are, "I gazed upon Him, and my heart leaped for joy," but like John we would have to confess, "When I saw Him I fell at His feet as dead." There is a time for everything, and this period of our sojourn in flesh and blood is not the season for seeing the Redeemer face to face! That Vision will be ours when we are fully prepared for it; but we are as yet too feeble to bear the far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. I do not say that we are so prepared, by His Grace, that if He now took us away from this body, we should be able to bear the splendor of His face; but I do say that *flesh and blood* cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, and that when, as an exception to the rule, a mortal man is permitted to behold his Lord, his flesh and blood are made to feel the sentence of death within themselves, and to fall as if slain by the Revelation of the Lord. We ought, therefore, to thank God that, "He holds back the face of His Throne, and spreads His cloud upon it." That face which shines as the sun in its strength manifests its Love by wearing, as yet, a concealing veil. Be grateful that while you are to be here to serve Him, and to do His Will in suffering for Him, He does not deprive you of your power to serve or suffer by overwhelming you with excessive Revelations! It is an instance of the Glory of God's Grace that He conceals His Majesty from His people, and wraps clouds and darkness round about Him. He does this not to deny His saints a bliss which they might covet, but to preserve them from an unseasonable joy which, as yet, they are not capable of bearing! We shall see Him as He is, when we shall be like He is, but not till then. So that for a while we may be able to perform the duties of this mortal life, and not lie perpetually stretched like dead men at his feet, He does not manifest Himself to us in the clear light which shone upon the Seer of Patmos.

I beg you to notice with care this beloved disciple in his fainting fit, and note first the *occasion* of it. He says, "I saw Him." This it was that made him faint with fear. "I saw Him." He had seen Him on earth, but not in His full Glory as the First-Begotten from the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. When our Savior dwelt among men, in order to their Redemption, He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a Servant; for this reason He restrained the flashings of His Deity, and the Godhead shone through the Manhood only with occasional and softened rays. But now Jesus was resplendent as the Ancient of Days! He was girt with a golden belt; with a Countenance outshining the sun in its strength; and this, even the best beloved Apostle, could not endure! He could gaze with dauntless eyes upon the Throne of jasper, and the rainbow of emerald; he could view with rapture the sea of glass like crystal, and the seven lamps of fire burning before the Throne; but the Vision of the Lord Himself was too much for him! He who quailed not when the doors of both Heaven and Hell were opened to him in vision, yet fell lifeless when he saw the Lord! None either in earth or Heaven can compare with Jesus in Glory! Oh for the day when we shall gaze upon His Glory, and partake in it! Such is His Sacred Will concerning us: "Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My Glory." To bear that sight we shall need to be purified and

strengthened. God Himself must enlarge and strengthen our faculties, for as yet, like the disciples upon Tabor, we would be bewildered by the brightness! Here, then, was the occasion of his faintness.

But what was the reason why a sight of Christ so overcame him? I take it we have the reason in the Text. It was partly fear, but, why fear? Was not John beloved of the Lord Jesus? Did he not also know the Savior's Love to him? Yes, but for all that, he was afraid, or else the Master would not have said to him, "Fear not." That fear originated partly in a sense of his own weakness and insignificance in the Presence of the Divine Strength and Greatness. How shall an *insect* live in the furnace of the sun? How can mortal eyes behold unquenched the Light of Deity, or mortal ears hear that Voice which is as many waters? We are such infirmity, folly and nothingness, that, if we have but a glimpse of Omnipotence, awe and reverence prostrate us to the earth! Daniel tells us that when he saw the great vision by the river Hiddekel, there remained no strength in him, for his comeliness was turned in on him into corruption, and he fell upon his face into a deep sleep. John, also, at that time, perhaps, perceived more impressively than ever the Purity and Immaculate Holiness of Christ: and, being conscious of his own imperfection, he felt like Isaiah when he cried, "Woe is me; I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the Lord of Hosts." Even his Faith, though fixed upon the Lord, our Righteousness, was not able to bear him up under the first surprising view of uncreated Holiness! I think his feelings were like those of the Patriarch of Uz when he said, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eyes see You, therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The most spiritual and sanctified minds, when they fully perceive the Majesty and Holiness of God, are so greatly conscious of the great disproportion between themselves and the Lord, that they are humbled and filled with holy awe, and even with dread and alarm. The reverence which is commendable is pushed by the infirmity of our nature into a fear which is excessive, and that which is good in itself is made deadly unto us; so prone are we to err on the one side or the other.

There is no doubt, too, that a part of the fear which caused John to swoon arose from a partial ignorance or forgetfulness of his Lord. Shall we charge this to one who wrote one of the Gospels, and three choice Epistles? Yes, it was doubtless so, because the Master went on to instruct and teach him in order to remove his fear; he needed fresh knowledge or old Truths brought home with renewed power in order to cure his dread. As soon as he knew his Lord, he recovered his strength. The wonderful Person who then stood before him bade him know that He was the First and the Last, the Ever Living and Almighty Lord. The knowledge of Jesus is the best remedy for fears! When we are better acquainted with our Lord, we part company with half our doubts—these bats and owls cannot bear the sun! Jesus, in His Person, work, offices and relations, is a mine of consolation; every Truth of God which is connected with Him is an argument against fear; when our heart shall be filled with perfect love to Him, fear will be cast out as Satan was cast down from Heaven; study, then, your Lord! Make it your life's objective to know Him; seek the Holy Spirit's illumination, and the choice privilege of fellowship, and your despondency and distress will vanish as night birds fly to hide themselves when the day breaks! It is folly to walk in sorrow when we might constantly rejoice! We do not read that John was afraid after the Lord had discoursed lovingly upon His own glorious Person and Character. That Divine enlightenment which was given to his mind purged from it any secret mistake and misjudgment which had created excessive fear.

But, while we thus notice the occasion and the reasons, we must not forget the extent to which John was overpowered. He says, "I fell at His feet as dead." He does not say in a *partial* swoon, or overcome with amazement; he uses a very strong description, "I fell at His feet as dead." He was not dead, but he was "as dead." That is to say he could no more see the blaze of Jesus' face had blinded him; he could no more hear the Voice like the sound of many waters had stunned his ears; no bodily faculty retained its power. His soul, too, had lost consciousness under the pressure put upon it. He was unable to think, much less to act. He was stripped not only of self-glory and strength, but almost of life itself! This is by no means a desirable *natural* condition, but it is much to be coveted *spiritually*. It is an Infinite Blessing to us to be utterly emptied, stripped, spoiled, and slain before the Lord; our strength is our weakness; our life is our death, and when both are entirely gone, we begin to be strong, and in very deed to live! To lie at Jesus' feet is a wonderful experience; to lie there as sick and wounded is better, but to lie there as *dead* is best of all! A man who comes to that is taught in the mysteries of the Kingdom. Moses with dim legal light needs to be told to take off his shoes in the Presence of the Lord of Hosts, but John is mani-

festly far in advance of him because he lies lower, and is like a dead man before the Infinite Majesty! How blessed a death is death in Christ! How Divine a thing is life in Him! If I might see Christ at this moment upon the terms of instant death, I would joyfully accept the offer, for the bliss would far exceed the penalty! But as for the death of all within us, that is of the flesh and of fallen nature, that is desirable beyond measure, and if for nothing else my soul would pant more and more to see Jesus! May that two-edged sword which comes out of His mouth strike all my besetting sins! May the brightness of His Countenance scorch and burn up in me the very roots of evil! May He mount His white horse, and ride through my soul conquering, and to conquer, casting out of me all that is of the old dragon and his inventions, and bringing every thought into subjection to Him! There I would gladly lie at His dear conquering feet, slain by His mighty Grace.

Only one other reflection while we look at this fainting Apostle. Observe well *the place* where he was overpowered. Oh, lovely thought. "I fell as dead"; but where? "I fell *at His feet* as dead." It matters not what ails us if we lie at Jesus' feet. Better be dead, there, than alive anywhere else. He is always gentle and tender, never breaking the bruised reed or quenching the smoking flax. In proportion as He perceives that our weakness is manifest to us, in that degree will He display His Tenderness. He carries the lambs in His bosom, and does gently lead those who are with young; feebleness wins on Him. When He sees a dear disciple prostrate at His feet, He is ready at once to touch him with the hand of His familiar Love, and to revive him by His own strength. "He restores my soul." "He gives power unto the faint." He says unto our pitiful weakness, "Fear not, I am the First and the Last." To be as dead is not desirable, but to be as dead at Jesus' feet is safe and profitable! Well does our poet say, when expressing his desire to escape from all worldly bonds—

*"But oh, for this, no strength have I,  
My strength is at His feet to lie."*

**II.** And now, having seen the disciple overpowered, I shall ask your consideration of THAT SAME DISCIPLE RESTORED. He was not long in the condition of death, for the Master laid His right hand upon him, and said to him, "Fear not." Here then, we shall notice that when the children of God become exceedingly faint and feeble, and their own sense of impurity and nothingness becomes painful, and even killing to them, the Lord has ways of restoring and reviving their spirits.

And first He does it by a *condescending approach*. "He laid His hand upon me." It is noticeable that in the great cures which our Savior worked, He almost always *touched* the patient. He could, with a Word, have healed, but to prove His *fellowship* with the sick, He put His hand upon the leper, and upon the blind eyes, and touched the deaf ears. He thus manifested His condescending contact with the infirmities of our nature. The Master could have spoken a word to John, and have revived him; but He did not stand at a distance or guard Himself with a, "Touch Me not"; but, instead of that, He commenced His care with a touch. No other hand could have revived the Apostle, but the hand which was pierced for him had matchless power. There is mighty healing in the royal hands of our Immanuel! When the Holy Spirit Inspires us with a sense of the relationship which Christ bears to us, of the sympathy which Christ feels with us, of the kinship and fellow-feeling which reign in Jesus' breast, then we are comforted. To know that He is not ashamed to call us Brothers and Sisters is a wellspring of comfort to a tried child of God. To feel His Presence; to perceive the touch of His hand, and to hear Him say, "I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God," this is new life to our waning spirits! Oh what bliss is this. "In all their afflictions He was afflicted." He is a Brother born for adversity, a sympathetic and tender Friend touched with a feeling of our infirmities. "He laid His hand upon me." O child of God, pray for a Manifestation of the kinsman Christ to your soul; ask that He would instruct you as to the fact that He enters into your grief, having Himself endured the same. You are one with Him, and He is one with you, and as surely as the head feels the pain of the members, so does Jesus share in all the sorrows of His people. Let this be a comfort to you, you who are now lying as dead before the risen Lord; He comes near to you, not to kill you, but to revive you by most intimate communion, talking with you as a man speaks with his friend. O Brothers and Sisters, greatly Beloved, be not so overwhelmed with the greatness of your Lord as to forget His Love, His great Love, His familiar Love which at this moment lays its hand upon you!

The same action implies the communication of *Divine Strength*. “He laid His *right* hand upon me.” It is the hand of favor; it is also the hand of power. God gives strength to those who have none. He puts power into the faint. When the child of God is brought very low, it is not a mere subject for consideration or theme for reflection that can lift him up; sick men need more than instruction, they require cordials and supports. There must be actual strength and energy imparted to a swooning soul, and, Glory be to God, by His own Holy Spirit, Jesus can and does communicate energy to His people in the time of weakness! He has come that we may have Life, and that we may have it more abundantly. The Omnipotence of God is made to rest upon us so that we even rejoice in infirmities. “My Grace is sufficient for you, My strength is made perfect in weakness,” is a blessed Promise which has been fulfilled to the letter for many of us. Our own strength has departed, and then the Power of God has flowed in to fill up the vacuum. I cannot explain the process: these are secrets and mysteries to be experienced rather than expounded; but as the coming of the Spirit of God into us first of all makes us live in Regeneration, so the renewed coming of the Power of God into our soul raises us up from our weakness and our faintness into fresh energy. Be encouraged, then, you fainting ones; they who trust upon the Lord shall renew their strength. All Power belongs to the Lord, and He will give it plenteously to those who have none of their own. Be of good courage and wait upon Him for none shall be ashamed who make Him their confidence.

Then there followed *a Word from the Master’s own mouth*. He spoke and said, “Fear not.” Here He applied the remedy to the disease. Christ Himself is our Medicine, as well as our Physician. His Voice which stilled the sea, also casts out all our fears. The Word of God, as we find it in this Book, is very consoling; the Word of God as we hear it from Christ’s ministers, has great Power in it; but the real and true Power of the Word lies in Jesus THE WORD. When the Truth of God falls fresh from His own lips, then is it Power! Right truly did the Master say, “The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.” With what Power did those syllables fall on the fluttered heart of John—“Fear not.” Oh that we might hear the same Voice by the Spirit in our inmost souls!—

*“Oh might I hear Your heavenly tongue!  
But whisper, ‘You are Mine.’  
Those gentle Words would raise my song  
To notes almost Divine!”*

Truly there are many voices and each has its significance, but the Voice of Jesus has a Heaven of bliss in its every accent. Let but my Beloved speak to me, and I will forego the angelic symphonies. Though He should only say, “Fear not,” and not a Word more, it would be worth worlds to hear Him speak to us! But you say, can we still hear Jesus speak to us? Yes, by His Spirit. His Spirit still has fellowship with the hearts of men, and He can bring any Word of Scripture right home into the soul, until it becomes no more the letter, but the Living, Quickening word of Christ. Do you know what I mean by this? If you do not, it is not possible to tell you; and if you do, you will need no explanation. Jesus speaks to the heart; the Truth of God comes not in word only, but in demonstration of the Spirit and with His Power. O you troubled Believer, you who are abashed by the very Glory you have been made to see, be assured that Jesus will draw near to your soul, and touch you, and speak with you, so that you shall be strengthened with Might by His Spirit in your inner man! Had John not fallen as dead, he might never have heard the Voice, and felt the touch of His Lord; sweet is the fall which leads to such a rise!

In order to complete the cure of His servant, our Lord went on to give him fuller instruction in that very matter which had overpowered him. Sometimes like cures like. If in a certain sense it is true of Divine Revelations, that, “shallow drafts intoxicate the brain,” it is assuredly true that, “drinking largely sobers us again.” If a glimpse of Christ makes holy men faint, a clearer sight of Him will set them on their feet again! Our Lord went on to instruct John in the Glory of His Person and Power that his fears might be removed. And truly, Beloved, John was in a right state for such celestial instruction; he who is lowly is ready to learn mysteries. He was like wax ready for the seal, or as paper cleansed of all other writing. Because we think we know, we know not; but the death of the pride of knowledge is the birth of true understanding. The Lord loves best for pupils to lie low before Him. “The meek will He guide in judgment, the meek will He teach His way.” “With the lowly is wisdom.” Where Jesus is the Teacher, and instructs the heart in the things concerning Him, the soul is made to inherit substance, and its treas-

ures are filled. Blessed are the men who are taught by Him who is the Wisdom of God, even though while they watch at the posts of His doors they lie as dead men: they are blessed, for they shall find life, and obtain favor of the Lord!

**III.** We will now advance to the third point of our discourse which contains the essence of it. We have observed the beloved disciple overpowered, and we have seen him afterwards revived. Now we shall consider for a while THE SAME DISCIPLE STILL FURTHER INSTRUCTED. Let me have your attention, dear Friends, to the glorious Truth of God which is now opening up before us in the Text. John was first of all instructed as to *the Lord's Person*. "Fear not, I am the First and the Last; I am He that lives and was dead." As to the Lord's Person, Jesus revealed to His disciple that He was most truly Divine. "I am the First and the Last." This language can be used of none but God Himself; none but He is the First; none but He is the Last; none but God can be both First and Last. Now, our Lord Jesus Christ was evidently First. He existed before He was born into the world. We read, "A body have You prepared Me." Then Christ was a previously existing One for whom that body was prepared, and He it is who said, "Lo, I come, to do Your will O God." He came into the world, but He had, from old eternity, dwelt in the bosom of the Father. John the Baptist was born into the world before the Savior, of whom he was the forerunner, but what does he say? His testimony is, "He, coming after me, is preferred before me, for He was before me." He is first in order of honor because first in order of existence. John was the elder as man, but as God the Lord Jesus is from everlasting. Go back in history as far as you will—with one leap ascend to the days of Moses, and there is Christ before you, for we read—"Let us not tempt Christ as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." There was Christ, then, in the wilderness vexed by the people; He it was whose Voice then shook the earth, but who will yet shake not the earth, only, but also Heaven! Go further back to Abraham, and we find the Angel of the Covenant there. Our Lord expressly says, "Before Abraham was I Am." Mark you, not, "I was," but, "I Am"—He speaks in a God-like manner. Ascend even to the age of Noah, the second parent of our race, and there we discover Jesus Christ preaching to those spirits who are now in prison, who sometime were disobedient when the Long-Suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the Ark was being prepared. It was Christ in Noah, who, by the Spirit, preached to the antediluvian sinners.

We go further back to the Creation of the world, and we find, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God." And if we fly back to old eternity, before the creating hand commenced its work, we find in Proverbs, the 8<sup>th</sup> Chapter, the witness of the Incarnate Wisdom Himself. "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; when there were no depths I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet He had not made the earth, or the fields, or the highest part of the dust of the world," our Lord is thus the First, and so, assuredly, will He be the Last; for all things consist and subsist through the perpetual emanations of His Infinite Power; and when the kings of the earth shall sleep in the dust, and the powers thereof shall have passed away, when the treasures of time shall have melted, and its most enduring memorials shall have gone like the mists of the morning, He shall be the same, and of His years there shall be no end. Christ is the true Melchisedec, without beginning of days or end of years, "made a priest not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." This was revealed to John for his comfort, and it stands true to us today, and is equally fraught with consolation.

Moreover, by the words, "The First and the Last" are signified, in most languages, the sum and substance of all things. We say sometimes the top and the bottom of it is so and so; we mean that it is the whole of it. And the Greeks were apt to say, "This is the prow and stern of the business," meaning that it is the whole. And so Jesus Christ, in being First and Last, is All in All. And, truly, it is so in the working of Redemption and Salvation; He begins, carries on, completes; He asks no creature help and will have none. To us He is the Author and the Finisher of our Faith, the Alpha of our first comfort, and the Omega of our final bliss. We worship Christ as the sum and substance of all good. Here is a wealth of comfort, and therefore did the Lord instruct His servant, John. He did as much say, "John, you need not fear, for I am no enemy, no stranger, no avenging spirit, but God Himself, in whom you have learned to put your trust. You believe in God, believe also in Me." To every trembling Believer we would ask, "Why do you fear? Jesus is All. Are you afraid of Him, your Brother, your Savior, and your Friend?" Then

what do you fear? Anything old? He is the First. Anything to come? He is the Last. Anything in the entire world? He is All in All, from First to Last. What do you need? If you have Him you have all. Do you need more than all? Have you discovered a need within your spirit, a grievous lack which troubles you? How can that be when your Lord Jesus fills all things, and all things are yours in Him? If you have, indeed, placed your confidence in Him, and made Him all your Salvation, to what end, and for what cause should you be troubled with any sort of fear? Having a Divine Person to be your Protector and your Savior, why should you be afraid?

In addition, however, to rendering John the comfort derived from His Person, our blessed Master went on to comfort him with the truth of *His Existence*. “I am He that lives,” He says, or, “I am the Living One.” Creatures are not living in themselves, they borrow leave to be; to God alone it belongs to exist necessarily; He is the I AM, and such is Christ. Why, then, do you fear? If the Existence of your Lord, your Savior, were precarious and dependent upon some extraneous circumstances, you would have cause for fear, for you would be in constant jeopardy; if He had to get permission to be, derived strength from creatures, and needed to look here and there for strength to sustain His own Existence, you would always be in danger, and consequently in distress; but, since Jesus cannot possibly cease to be, or be other than He is, or less than He is, what occasion can you have for alarm? A self-existent Savior, and yet a troubled Christian? Oh, let it not be so! “Fear not, I am He that lives.”

And, if these two sources of consolation should not suffice, the Lord in the Glory of His Tenderness mentions a third—*His Atoning death*. He says, “I was dead.” The original more correctly rendered is, “was made dead.” Here we come upon the Human Nature of our Redeemer. As God and as Man He had two Natures, but He was not two Persons. As one Person He always lives, and yet He was made to die; He came into this world in Human form that He might be capable of death; the pure *Spirit* of God could not die, it was not possible that He, the I AM, could be subject to death; but He allied Himself with Humanity, and in that Human form Jesus could die, and did die. In very deed, and truth, and not in semblance; Jesus bowed His head, and gave up the ghost, and they laid His corpse in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. Here to the child of God is a fruitful source of consolation. He died. Then the Atonement is complete! Without the shedding of blood there is no remission—but the death of the Son of God brings plenteous Pardon; there must be, in the death of such a One, sufficient merit to remove guilt, and cleanse transgression. Is it not written, “He has washed us from our sins in His own blood?” Do you not hear that song in Heaven? Will not its music make you glad? His own blood has washed you; if you believe in Him you are clean! Look to Calvary, and as you look there, and perceive that He was dead, “fear not.”

And then the Master declared His *endless life*, “I am alive forevermore.” He who offered up the Atonement lives again to claim the effect of His Sacrifice; He has presented the meritorious Sacrifice, and now He has gone to Heaven to plead the Sacrifice before the Throne of God, and to lay claim to the place which He has prepared for them who love Him. You have no dead Savior to trust; you rely in Him who once died! This is comfort to you; He lives, the Great Redeemer lives; He has risen from the tomb; He has climbed the hills of Heaven; He sits at the right hand of the Father, prepared to defend His people. If you had a Christ in the sepulcher; that were sorrow upon sorrow, but you have a Christ in Heaven, who can die no more. Be of good cheer!

And then, to close the whole, the Master said, “Amen, and I have the keys of Hell and of death.” *The mediatorial office* which Christ now occupies is one of great power. He is “God over all, blessed forever.” His dominion is over land and seas, and over Heaven and the regions of the dead. There is nothing hid from the Energy of His Power; He is Lord of All. “He has the keys of Hell and of death.” By the word, “*Hell*” may be meant here the entire invisible land, the whole realm of spirits: Christ is Lord there, adored in Heaven and feared in Hell. But, if we restrict the sense to the common meaning of the word in our language, He is Lord of Hell. The devil in spite of his malignity can do nothing but what Christ permits him. He is a chained enemy; he may rave and rage, but he cannot injure the child of God. Christ has him ever in check, and when He permits him to wander abroad, He makes the wrath of man and the wrath of devils to praise Him, and the remainder He does restrain. Why do you fear? You say, “I am a sinner; Satan will prevail against me.” But Christ says, “I am Master of Satan, I am Lord of Hell, He cannot prevail against you.” He cannot leave Hell unless Christ permits him, for Christ can turn the key and lock him in! Satan could not take you there, for Christ has locked you out, and keeps the key.

You are eternally and perpetually safe from all the machinations of the powers of darkness! And do you tremble *at death*? Is it *that* which alarms you? Have the pains and groans and dying strifes sounded in your ears till you are timid and afraid? Then remember Christ has the keys of death. You cannot die until He permits. If men of blood should seek your life, they could not strike you till your Lord allows it; and if plagues and death should fly about you, and thousands die at your right hand, and ten thousands at your left, you cannot die till the Lord Wills it! You are immortal till He says, "Return." The iron gate of Death opens not of its own accord to you, a thousand angels could not drag you to the tomb; you go there only at His call. Fear not, therefore, but remember that death is no longer death to the saints of God, they fall asleep in Jesus. Since your Lord will be with you, it will not be death to die; you shall find death to you an enemy muzzled and chained; the wasp shall have lost its sting, it shall be a bee that shall bring you honey; out of the lion, as Samson did, shall you get sweetness to yourself. Death is conquered, and when it arrives, Jesus will come with it, and make your dying bed most soft to you.

Remember one thought more. He who has the key of death will annihilate death; for your body shall not become the prey of the worm forever. At the trumpet of the archangel your body shall rise again! There shall not a bone or a piece of a bone of one of His people perish, their very dust is precious in His sight. They sleep awhile and rest from their labors: but, from beds of dust and silent clay the Lord of Life shall call them all. O Death, where is your sting! O Grave, where is your victory! Since Jesus who died and always lives has the keys of death and Hell at his waist, we will not fear to die, let the appointed time be when it may. So that you see there was abundance of comfort for the sinking spirit of the Apostle John.

Let me close by saying in the Glory and Exaltation of Christ is *the saint's cordial*. Some of us have tried it when our mouths were full of bitterness, and we have rejoiced and been exceedingly glad at the thought. A reigning Savior makes a joyful people. Run there for comfort, you sons of sorrow; rejoice in your King, all you His saints! But this same glorious Savior will be the sinner's *terror*. They shall hide their faces at the last from the brightness of His Glory! They shall ask the hills and mountains to conceal them from His face who sits upon the Throne. A glorious monarch is the rebel's horror! By so much as He whom you have rejected is great and glorious; by so much shall the punishment from His right hand be intolerable! Oh that you were wise enough to cease from fighting with the Almighty Lord!

But, lastly, He is also *the penitent's hope*; for now, today, if you would be forgiven, the exalted Savior presents Himself to you most freely. He is exalted on high, but what for? It is to give "repentance and remission of sins." The greater He is, the better for those who need great mercy! The more royal and kingly He is, the better for humble, broken, bleeding hearts! "Oh, kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish from the Way while His Wrath is kindled but a little." From the highest Heaven He stretches down the silver scepter—touch it by a simple Faith! May He enable you to do it, and though as yet you fall at His feet as dead, you shall hear Him say this morning, "Fear not, I am He that lives, and was dead, and am alive forevermore, Amen." "I am, therefore, able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Me, seeing I ever live to make intercession for you."

God bless you, dear Friends, by His Spirit. Amen.

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

**PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON  
TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST!**

**By the Grace of God, for all 63 volumes of  
C. H. Spurgeon sermons in Modern English, and  
more than 525 Spanish translations, visit:**

**[www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org)**