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THE HOLY SPIRIT  
GLORIFYING  
CHRIST

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CHARLES H. SPURGEON (1834-1892)

# THE HOLY SPIRIT GLORIFYING CHRIST

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# THE HOLY SPIRIT GLORIFYING CHRIST

*“He shall glorify me: for he shall receive  
of mine, and shall shew it unto you.”*

—John 16:14

We always need the Spirit of God in our preaching; but I think we more especially require His divine direction and instruction when the subject is *Himself*: for the Holy Spirit is so mysterious in His varied attributes and operations, that unless He Himself shall reveal Himself to us, and give us the words in which to speak of Him, we shall surely fail either to understand for ourselves, or to enlighten others. In *His* light we see light, but without Him we grope like blind men in the dark.

Certain sins against the Holy Ghost continually exist in a degree in the Christian church. *Unholiness of life* grieves the Holy Spirit. When Christian men walk not according to the gospel, when their conversation is not ordered according to the pattern of Christ, then the Holy Spirit Who hath no fellowship with unholiness, withdraweth Himself in a measure from the church. *Discord* too—strife among brethren, forgetfulness of the new commandment, that we love one another, grieveth the sacred Dove; for as His nature is peaceable, as His office is to be the peace-giver, so He tarrieth not where there is the din and noise of contending parties. So, also, when He perceiveth His saints to be diseased with *worldliness*—when we prefer the treasures of Egypt to the reproach of Christ; and seek rather the things which are seen, which are temporal, than the things which are not seen, which are eternal—then again is the Holy Ghost quenched, and departeth from our midst. Above all, *pride*, and that murmuring, rebellion, unbelief, obstinacy, and self-seeking which pride leads to—all this grieveth the Holy Ghost, for He dwelleth with those who are humble “and of a contrite spirit” (Isa 66:2). And where there is the voice of murmuring, where one man seeketh to lift himself above another, and all to exalt themselves above their despised Lord, the Holy Ghost hideth Himself and suffereth barrenness to take the place of plenty, and death to reign where once life triumphed. These are a few of the common and the constant infirmities of the church, by which the Holy Ghost is much hindered in those marvelous manifestations which otherwise would be common and usual in the midst of our Israel.

But there are two faults of the church which appear to me periodically to manifest themselves. The one is when men ascribe wrong things to the Holy Ghost, and make Him the author of human novelties and delusions. In seasons when the minds of good

men were anxiously alive to spiritual operations, certain weak-headed or designing persons have grown fanatical, and being bewildered by their own confused feelings, and puffed up by their fleshly mind, have forsaken the true light which is in the Word, to follow after the will-o'-the-wisps<sup>1</sup> of their own fancies, the *ignis-fatuu*<sup>2</sup> of their own brains. Such vain-glorious fools aspiring to be leaders, masters of sects, will boldly tell to men of itching ears that fresh doctrines have been specially revealed to them. They prate<sup>3</sup> much of what they call the inner light (which is often an inner darkness), which dim candle they exalt above the light of the Word of God, and tell you that marvelous things have been taught to them in dreams and visions. Ah, this is a high and crying crime! What, will you lay at the door of the Holy Ghost a deed which God hath solemnly cursed? Do you not start back at such a thought? Is it not almost blasphemy to imagine it? And yet remember, he that adds a single word to the canon of inspiration is cursed. Give ear to the very words of the Lord our God: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev 22:18-19). And do you think the Holy Ghost would do that which involves a curse upon man? If I venture to add to God's Word, or to take from it, I do it with this as my penalty, that God shall blot my name out of the Book of Life and out of the holy city. And yet these base pretenders, who would lay their foolish notions at the door of God the Holy Ghost, will have it that He has taught them more than is in the Book; that He has removed that which God laid down as the grand landmark, and added to the finished testimony of God. Let none of you have any sort of patience with men who talk thus. Deny their very first principle; tell them—whether it be the deceiver of Western America, or the false prophet of Arabia—tell them that they are all imposters. For they ascribe to the Holy Ghost that which is impossible for Him to commit, a violation of the revealed will of God in which it is declared that the canon of inspiration is shut up once for all. A little of this evil I detect among godly people. I find that sometimes even gracious men think they have had revelations. Texts of Scripture are no doubt laid home by the Holy Ghost to the souls of men as much today as in Paul's time. And there can be no doubt whatever that the Spirit bringeth all things to our remembrance whatsoever Christ hath taught, and that He leadeth us into all truth (Joh 14:26; Joh 16:13). But when a man tells me that the Holy Ghost has revealed to him something that is not in the Bible, he lies! Is that a hard word? It doth but express the truth. The man may have dreamed his revelation; he may have fancied it; but the Holy Spirit goeth never beyond the written word. "He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (Joh 16:15). And beyond what Christ hath spoken and what Christ hath taught, the Holy Spirit goeth in no sense and in no respect. You understand what

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<sup>1</sup> **will-o'-the-wisps** – unexplained flickering lights seen over marshlands.

<sup>2</sup> **ignis-fatuu** – *Latin*: will-o'-the wisps; things that delude; illusions.

<sup>3</sup> **prate** – speak much to little purpose; chatter.

Christ has taught through the Spirit's teaching; but anything beyond the teaching of Christ and His apostles must be not of God but of man. This is a most important principle to be held fast by all godly people, for the day may come when false prophets shall arise and delude the people. And by this shall we be able to discover them: if they claim aught beyond what Christ hath revealed, put them aside, for they be false prophets, wolves in sheep's clothing. The Spirit only teacheth us that which Christ hath taught beforehand either by Himself or by the inspired apostles. "He shall take of mine and shall shew it unto you." Just now we are in little danger from the excesses of fevered brains, for, as a rule our sin is in being far too cold and dead to spiritual influences. I fear we are liable to another evil, and are apt to forget the Person and work of the Comforter altogether. We fear some congregations might say, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost" (Act 19:2). From many modern sermons would you know that there was a Holy Spirit? If it were not for the benediction or the doxology you might go in and out many churches and meetinghouses by the year together, and scarcely know that there was such a Person as that blessed, blessed Giver of all good, the Holy Ghost. Sometimes we hear a little about His influences, as if the Holy Spirit were not as truly a Person as even Jesus Christ Himself, Who in flesh and blood trod this earth. Oh, dear friends, I fear the first danger, that of running wild with whimsies and fancies about inner lights and new revelations. But I equally dread this last, this putting the revelation above the Revealer; this taking the book without the Author; this preaching of the truth without the great Truth-applier; this going forth to work with the sword—forgetting that it is the sword of the Spirit, and only mighty as the Holy Ghost maketh it "mighty...to the pulling down of strong holds" (2Co 10:4). May this church ever continue to reverence the Holy Spirit without exaggerating His work! May we prize Him, love Him, and adore Him, because He so wondrously glorifies our blessed Lord.

With this, by way of preface, I shall now come at once to our text, using it three ways—first, *as a test to try various things by*; secondly, *as a direction how to honor Jesus*, and thirdly, *as a stimulus, stirring us up to glorify Christ*.

## 1. A Test

First, then, we shall use our text *as a test*. There are a thousand things that claim to be of the Holy Ghost; how can we know whether they are or not? Here is a simple mode of discovering: "He shall glorify me."

Let us, first of all, apply this test to *ministries*. There are crowds of preachers and reverend divines nowadays in the world; but all are not ministers of God who are so called. A true minister is a creation of the God of heaven. It is no more in the power of the church than it is in the power of the bishops to make ministers. Independency is as weak as Episcopacy on this point. God alone ordains ministers; all that the church can do is to recognize them. We cannot make them at our colleges. We cannot make them by the laying on of hands, nor even by the choice of the church. God must make them;

God must ordain them. It is only for the church to perceive God's work and cheerfully to submit to His choice. Now, there are some ministries which clearly are not of the Holy Ghost because they glorify ceremonies. We could take you into certain places of worship where the general strain of the ministry is a glorification of baptism, the blessed Eucharist, confirmation, priesthood, and so on. There you hear much of the childish millinery<sup>4</sup> with which they deck the altar, and much is said of those grotesque garments in which their priests disguise themselves. We could point to many places where the main object of teaching seems to be to exalt a rubric,<sup>5</sup> to magnify a liturgy, to hold up a hierarchy, or to extol<sup>6</sup> a ritual. Now all such ministries we may at once sweepingly and unerringly condemn. They are not of the Holy Ghost, for the Holy Spirit teacheth us not to magnify outward rites, but Christ; and that teaching is not of the Holy Ghost which doth not glorify the Lord Jesus.

Into other places we might take you where very clearly the object is the extolling of doctrine. From the first of January to the last of December the brother bitterly contends for the favorite corners of his faith. Doctrine, with certain friends, is everything, and their rigid orthodoxy<sup>7</sup> is the one care of their life. Now, against a sound creed and the doctrines of grace we have not a word to say. God be thanked that we love these things as much as those who exalt them above measure, and are not a whit behind the chiefest of these champions in our zeal for orthodoxy. But still our Lord is, and must be, the leading theme of our ministry; and we must continue to exalt Him rather than Calvinism, or any other system of theology. We are bold to say it, much as we love the Master's throne, we love the Master better still; and dearly as we love battling for the walls of His vineyard, yet the clusters of His Eshcol are sweeter to our taste. We love Christ better than creed, and we think we would rather magnify our Master than any set of truths, however important they may be.

There are certain doctrinal brethren, good enough in their way, but still you can evidently see that the doctrine of election is a thing that they contend more for than the doctrine of the redemption of Christ; or if it be redemption, it is rather the *speciality*<sup>8</sup> of redemption than the divine sacrifice itself. I love to preach the distinguishing grace of God, but I am far from thinking that some four or five points comprise all the truths which God has revealed. Be it ours to preach the doctrines as Dr. Hawker (1753–1827)<sup>9</sup> preached them, with Christ as their sum and substance; “a full Christ for empty sin-

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<sup>4</sup> **millinery** – women's hats, bonnets, laces, ribbons, and similar items.

<sup>5</sup> **rubric** – directions printed in prayer books.

<sup>6</sup> **extol** – praise; magnify; exalt in commendation.

<sup>7</sup> **orthodoxy** – literally, “right belief”; orthodoxy generally means the body of doctrines that are essential to the Christian faith; this implies consistency in belief and worship with the revelation of Holy Scripture.

<sup>8</sup> **speciality** – particularity; distinction.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Hawker (1753-1827) – evangelical Anglican clergyman; author of *Thirty-one Meditations on Christ*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

ners”—be this our theme. To a great extent it is true of a ministry that seeketh only to exalt doctrines that it hath not the fullness of the Holy Ghost in it; for of the Holy Spirit it is written: “He shall glorify *me*.”

Another class of brethren are well known to those of us who have looked upon the church of God at large, whose ministry tends mainly to magnify a certain experience. If you have felt thus and thus, and so and so, no words of praise can be too strong for you; but if you have been led in another way, in a different path, then depend on it, according to the judgment of these divines, you never knew vital godliness at all. They are as intimate with the secrets of heaven as the Pope himself, and are quite as infallible as he, in their small dominions. Some of these brethren have no doubt gone through a very deep and awful experience; they have lived so much in sin, and have been so untrue to their Lord, that it is little marvel if they have to walk in darkness and see no light. But these brethren hold up that experience as a model, and tell us that unless we know all they have learned, we are not Christ’s. Now, I say not a word against experimental<sup>10</sup> preaching; I believe it to be the most soul-fattening preaching in the world, but it must be experience about Christ. It must be an experience that leads me out of self to Jesus. And if any ministry be experimental, yet if it does not exalt Christ, I have cause to suspect whether the Holy Ghost is with it, for this standeth as an unchanging rule—“He shall glorify *me*.”

And, dear brethren, once again, we are cursed with some few men—would God they were fewer—whose teaching constantly is “morality.” If we will do this, and that, and the other, we shall be saved—the old Law of Moses is toned down, and then held up as the road to heaven. Now, at once, ye may forsake the synagogues where such men are in the chief places; for if any man exalt the works of flesh, and not the finished work of Christ; if the doings, the willings, the prayings, the feelings of man, be put in the place of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, his ministry is not of the Holy Ghost. And what might I say of many who produce on the Sabbath day their pretty little essays, their elaborate disquisitions,<sup>11</sup> their high-sounding periods? What shall I say of all these but that they are as “sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal” (1Co 13:1), inasmuch as they forget Christ, the Person of Christ—God and man; the work of Christ—His atonement and righteousness; the resurrection of Christ—the life and joy of the saints. They forget the intercession of Christ—our hope and our strength; and the second advent of Christ, which is as the bright morning-star to every weary watcher in this world’s darkness. That ministry, and that ministry only, is of the Holy Ghost which magnifies Christ Jesus.

And here, dear brethren in the ministry—and there are some such present—how bitterly may you and I lament much of our ministry because it hath not glorified Christ! When we shall lie stretched upon our dying beds, we shall look back with satis-

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<sup>10</sup> **experimental** – experiential.

<sup>11</sup> **disquisitions** – formal inquiries into subjects by argumentation.



faction to that poor stammering sermon in which we magnified the Master. We shall look with intense regret to that well-delivered oration in which we glorified a sect, or lifted up an ordinance at the expense of our Lord. Oh, what joy it shall be to remember that we did lift *Him* up, that however feebly, yet we did extol *Him*. That though sometimes utterance would not come as our heart would have it, yet we did point to His flowing wounds and say, “Behold the way to God.” Oh, the sweet bliss of a Whitfield when he retires to his last couch, to feel that he did preach Jesus, whether it was at the market cross, or on the hill side, or in the church, or in the barn! What a consolation to feel that he did cry faithfully, “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid” (1Co 3:11)! Oh, the curse on the other hand that shall rest on a man who, in his last moments, shall have to reflect—“I preached other men’s sermons, and talked of anything but Christ; I lifted up anything but the Lord!” Oh! How shall the howlings of his eternal doom commence in his ear; how shall the judgments of God get hold upon him even before he passes to the dread tribunal of the Most High. We must, as preachers, come back more and more to this rule, to feel that if the Holy Ghost be in us He will make us glorify Christ.

Second, having thus tried ministries, let us now take the same test with regard to *doctrine*; and very briefly here lay it down as a self-evident truth that any teaching, whatever authority it may claim, which does not glorify Christ, is most assuredly false. And on the other hand, I think we shall seldom be wrong if we believe that when a teaching lifts Christ up and puts many crowns upon His head, it must be a doctrine according to godliness.

Dear friends, Socinianism<sup>12</sup> must be utterly abhorred of us, for it strikes at once at the Deity of our blessed Lord and Master. We cannot give to such persons even the name of Christians. Mahometans<sup>13</sup> they may be—it were well if they would join with those men—they may be good men, they may be moral men, they may be excellent citizens, but Christians they cannot be, if they deny our Lord to be very God of very God, and worthy to be worshipped even as is the Father. I marvel much that sundry dissenters<sup>14</sup> should have fraternized with Arians<sup>15</sup> and Socinians in attacking the Church of England, in the present sorrowfully mistaken onslaught called the Bicentenary, and I can only pray that the Lord may not visit them for this shameful confederacy with His enemies. In Arminianism,<sup>16</sup> which is a mixture of truth and error, there is the doctrine

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<sup>12</sup> **Socinianism** – the rejection of the deity of Christ, the Trinity, and original sin.

<sup>13</sup> **Mahometans** – Muslims; followers of Muhammad.

<sup>14</sup> **sundry dissenters** – various people who separated from, or did not unite with, the church of England.

<sup>15</sup> **Arians** – those who believe that Jesus Christ is a created being, thus inferior to God and not eternal.

<sup>16</sup> **Arminianism** – teaching that God’s predestination of individuals was based on His foreknowledge of their accepting or rejecting Christ by their own free will, making them the agents of their own justification and perseverance to the end.

of the saints falling from grace, a doctrine which is more dishonorable to Christ than I can tell you—which to my mind, seems to put its black and sooty finger right adown the escutcheon<sup>17</sup> of my Lord and Master, setting Him as a laughing-stock to the whole world, as One Who begins to build and is not able to finish. There is a blot upon His power; He loves and yet He loves not to the end. There is a blot upon His faithfulness; He says, “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” (Joh 10:28), and yet they do perish, according to that doctrine which is a stain upon His veracity. In fact, the doctrine of final falling impugns the whole character of Christ so much that it would render Him unworthy of our faith. When they shall prove that one who was once in Christ hath fallen away and hath been lost, I know not Christ, for He hath violated His Word. He can no more be “the truth” (Joh 14:6), when He hath thus put His own promises into the background, and suffered His darlings to fall into the power of the dog. If there be anything in Scripture as plain as noon-day, it is the doctrine that he that believeth in him *hath* everlasting life and shall never perish, neither shall he come into condemnation (Joh 3:16-18). And if the child of God can be disinherited, if Christ can divorce His spouse, if the Good Shepherd shall lose His sheep; if the limbs of Christ’s mystical body can be cut off; or can be allowed to rot, then I know not what Scripture teacheth, nor do I understand how Christ can be worthy of the believer’s trust. That doctrine, I think, must be reprobated,<sup>18</sup> because it staineth the honor and glory of Christ. Without alluding to others, let that suffice as an instance. Examine well all doctrines. Look not at them with complacency because they are put in cunning language, or asserted in vigorous declamation. But if you perceive that any teaching dishonors Christ and maketh much of human ability, if it exalts man and derogates<sup>19</sup> from the grace of God, it is false and dangerous. And if on the other hand, it layeth man in the dust and lifteth up Christ as a Savior, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End of salvation, you may safely say that is the Holy Ghost’s doctrine, for He shall glorify Christ.

Third, again we may use our text as a means by which to try much of the *conviction* through which a sinner passes. In the first dawn of our spiritual life, a mighty tempest of spiritual influence sweeps over the heart. The Holy Ghost is active, and the prince of the power of the air is active too. There is more of God and more of devil in a new convert, than perhaps in any other stage of human existence. For just then Satan rageth with extraordinary fury to drag back the soul to destruction, and the Holy Ghost worketh in him mightily, with a power which only omnipotence can wield. How, in this confusion, can a man know what part of his conviction is of God, and what part of the devil? Young man, hearken to me, you have a thought in your head that you are too great a sinner to be saved. That is not of the Holy Ghost, clearly, because it detracts from the power of Christ as a Savior. That cannot be of the Holy Spirit, for the Holy

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<sup>17</sup> **escutcheon** – a shield which displays a coat of arms.

<sup>18</sup> **reprobated** – damned.

<sup>19</sup> **derogates** – takes away; detracts.

Spirit glorifies Christ. “Yes, sir, but I felt myself to be a great sinner, utterly lost and ruined.” That *is* of the Holy Spirit, because it lays you low in order that the greatness of Christ’s salvation may be the more apparent. “Oh, but,” you say, “I am not fit to come to Christ.” Surely this feeling is not of the Holy Ghost, but of the devil, for it does not glorify Christ. What, are you to make yourself *fit* to come to Christ? Why, that is making you a Christ. Yes, it is making you an antichrist, which is no work of heaven, but a foul design of hell. “But I heard old Mr. So-and-So say the other day, sir, that when he was converted, he seemed to be dragged by the hair of his head to the very depths of hell, and his soul was full of blasphemy, and his heart was in such an awful state that he cursed the day of his birth, because he thought he was shut out of the covenant, and was utterly lost beyond the reach of mercy.” Very well, no doubt what he has told you was his veritable experience; but do you want to experience every piece of devilry that a good man has known? Because a good man trips and falls into the gutter, must you trip and fall there too? Because Jonah descends into the whale’s belly, must we all dive into the sea? I tell you, soul, that much of what your friend felt was not of God, but of his own corrupt heart, and of the devil, and he knows it, and he will confess the same to you. Why, therefore, should you pant after that poison of asps, and snuff the fumes of Tophet?<sup>20</sup> Nay, but if the Lord brings thee, this morning, to put thy soul just as it is into the hands of the Redeemer, honoring Him by a childlike trust, thou hast an experience infinitely more precious than the howling of fiends and the ravings of thy proud heart could ever yield thee. To be nothing, and to accept Christ as everything, is worked in us of the Holy Ghost; but all the rest, those horrible insinuations, that terrible hell-shaking, may be well dispensed with. Good men have felt these, but they are not good things; they come from Satan and are to be avoided and prayed against, but not to be sought after. I pray you, therefore, let the Holy Spirit lead you in His own way, and ask not to be led in a way of your own choice. Why long for darkness when the Master wills to let thee walk in light? Into these balances, then, put all your convictions, and discover how far they are of God, and how far of Satan. That which glorifies Christ is of the Holy Ghost; all the rest is of flesh, or of hell.

Fourth, thus, also, we may test what is called *experience*. Very much of the experience of a Christian is not Christian experience. If any person should mount the platform and say, “I will tell you the experience of a man,” and then inform us that he had been five times tried at the Old Bailey,<sup>21</sup> you would say, “Well, *you* may have experienced that disgrace, but it is not fair to call it human experience.” So, a Christian man may fall into great darkness, and into sin too; let us mournfully confess it. But then, if he shall set up his darkness and his sin as being Christian experience, we say, “Now, we do not judge *you*; *you* may be a Christian and know this, but we cannot allow *you* to judge *us*, and decide our spiritual state according to your peculiar method of feeling. I

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<sup>20</sup> **Tophet** – the place of burning, and of wicked sacrifices near Jerusalem, mentioned primarily in the book of Jeremiah.

<sup>21</sup> **the Old Bailey** – the Central Criminal Court of England and Wales.

fear that many biographies have done as much mischief as service, because while no doubt they comfort many who fall into the same state, yet a sufficient discrimination is not made between the man stirred by the powers of evil and the same man when filled with the Holy Ghost. Where we get to that which cometh from beneath, we ought to write always in the spirit of our apostle who cannot describe himself without an agony. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 7:24-25). That which glorifies Christ is true Christian experience, and that which does aught but this, a Christian may experience, but it is not Christian experience.

Fifth, let us lift the scales of judgment once more. I think our text gives us an excellent test by which to try *ourselves*. My hearer, art thou saved or not this morning? If thou be saved, the bent, the tenor, the bias of thy life is to glorify Christ. What sayest thou in looking back? Does the past glorify Christ? Can you say now with all your heart, "Yes, glory be to His name; when I think of the love that cleansed me from such sin, of the grace that broke a heart so hard as mine, of the faithfulness that has kept me to this day, I can only glorify Christ." And what about the present? "Oh," can you say, "when I think of what I now am by the grace of God, and what I should have been now if the grace had not prevented; when I look within and see so much blackness, I must magnify the grace that keeps me. And when I look without and see so many temptations, I must and will speak well of His dear name; I must glorify my Lord Jesus." And what dost thou say about the future? Wilt thou glorify Him *then*? I think I see even the timid ones with their eyes a little brightening up when they say, "Ay! If He will but once bring me across the river, if I ever get beyond gunshot of the devil, and behold the face of Christ in glory, I will sing loudest of all the crowd. I will magnify Him with all my powers, for I shall owe more to Him than any else before the throne. I will never cease to sing with all the blood-washed throng,

*"Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown Him Lord of all."*

Oh! If your heart is not so that Christ is all to you, and if your soul is not desiring this morning to honor Him, Him only, then indeed I fear me the Holy Ghost has no dealing with your spirit, for where He has been at work, He must, He shall glorify Christ.

## **2. A Direction**

We are now to use our text as a direction. How are we to glorify Christ? The text tells us that we must have the Holy Spirit. Let our text, then, be sanctified to our *humiliation*. Here are we saved, by the rich love of Christ, delivered from our sins, and made alive unto God, and yet we are such weak things that we cannot glorify Christ without the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. We may pant, and long, and pray that we

may have helped to honor our Master, but we shall only dishonor Him and disgrace His cause, unless the Holy Spirit hold us up and strengthen us. Dost thou hear that, Christian man? Thou hast ten talents, but those ten talents shall make thee ten times a worse defaulter to thy Master unless the Holy Ghost help thee. Thou hast eloquence; thou hast wit; thou hast wealth: with none of these canst thou glorify Christ, unless the Holy Ghost be with thee, for "He shall glorify me." Man cannot, except as the Holy Ghost be with him. Bow your heads, then, O ye saints of God, and ascribe ye glory unto the Holy Spirit, but unto yourselves be shame and confusion of face.

Let us employ this text as an excitement to *earnest prayer*. We as a church, and I may speak freely for my own flock, we long to see Christ glorified. It is to this end we seek to train up our sons, young men in our much-loved college, that they may go forth as preachers of the Word. We have agencies by which we hope to do something in our generation for our Master, but what is everything we can do without the Holy Ghost? Let us, therefore, pray without ceasing. Oh, without prayer what are the church's agencies, but the stretching out of a dead man's arm, or the lifting up of the lid of a blind man's eye? Only when the Holy Spirit comes is there any life and force and power. Cry then mightily unto God, O ye who seek to glorify Christ, for without the Holy Spirit ye utterly fail.

And here what a lesson our text reads us of *entire dependence* upon the Holy Spirit. Nothing can ye do, ye ministers of God, nothing ye faithful watchmen of Jerusalem. Nothing can ye do, ye teachers of youth, nothing ye heralds of the cross in foreign fields, nothing ye ten thousands who are willing to give all your substance, your time, and your talents. Absolutely nothing can ye accomplish until God the Holy Spirit comes. We are by the sea-side; there are a number of ships left high and dry by the ebb of the tide. A long tract of mud stretches out before us. What is to be done? Call the king's horses, bring the king's men, gather together the wise and the mighty; what can they all do? Nothing. Their learning can only avail to prove most clearly that they can do nothing. But see, the tide rolls in, wave after wave rises from the deep, and lo—every ship floats, and all the mud and sand is covered with the fullness of the sea. So is it with the churches. We all lie high and dry upon the beach, and there is nothing but the rock and mud of our inability that is visible, and we can do nothing, absolutely nothing, till lo, the holy tide comes, the blessed spirit of revival; the Holy Ghost is poured out. And now the heaviest church is floating out to sea, and that which was most inactive begins to move! Oh, what can we not do if we have the Holy Spirit? What can we do if we have Him not? See our utter and entire dependence upon Him. When we, as a church, first came out into broader light and more public notice, I bear my witness, we had an entire dependence upon the Holy Ghost. What prayers have I heard, what strivings and what groanings. We are reaping now the ripe fruits of the early sowing. Lo, your minister, but a stripling from the country all untrained in academic lore, knowing nothing but just the doctrine of the cross, came forth before the multitudes to tell out simply the Word. How he felt his nothingness then, and how often he told you

so! You cried to God, and the child, the lad, was helped. What mighty deeds were done in the conversion of hundreds! And now we have a name. And there is a great temptation to rest upon our success, and for men to think there is something in the preacher, that he can gather the crowd, can preach the Word, and it is sure to be blessed when he preaches it. Brethren, again I say we are nothing; we are less than nothing. Your minister a fool, and naught beyond, except the Holy Ghost be with him; able to do nothing except mischief; nothing that shall be profitable to you, or make any heart glad but the heart of the evil one, unless the Holy Ghost be with us still. Joyously would I receive again the jeer, the sneer, the constant slander that was heaped upon my devoted head, if I might have back again your entire dependence upon the Holy Ghost. Oh, members of this church, you who have been quickened under our word, let not your faith stand in the wisdom of man, but still in the demonstration of the Spirit. And let us one and all feel that we are still as weak as water, and as vain as the whistling wind, unless He that was first with us be with us still. "He shall glorify me." The Holy Ghost shall do it. None can do it if He be absent.

I know I am addressing some this morning who have seen the goings forth of the Holy One of Israel. In fact we as a church have had to rejoice these nearly nine years in a blessed revival, but how diligent should we be while we have that revival, in order that we may retain it! All the farmers in England cannot make it leave off raining, but when it does leave off, and the sun shines, I know what they can do—get their wheat in as quick as they can. All the sailors on the ocean cannot make a capful of wind. When the sail flaps to and fro they cannot make it swell out as in the gale, but what can they do when the wind does blow? They can crowd on every yard of canvas. So all the Christians in the world cannot make the Holy Spirit work. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth" (Joh 3:8). But what we can do is this: when we have the Holy Spirit, we can use Him; when He is with us we can work. We must make hay while the sun shines; we must grind while the wind blows, we must be active and diligent for God when the visitation of the Holy Spirit is with us. The revival has to a great extent ceased in many places. I fear me it is because they did not diligently use its influence. In Ireland how much of revival there was, but the Holy Spirit withdrew necessarily because it was held up as a curiosity. Every newspaper reeked with the news of the revival; people went from England to see it. It could not last then; God never does His great works to be stared at, to be held up as curiosities. The thing was ruined the moment men began curiously to talk of it and spread abroad the news thereof as of a phenomenon worthy of philosophical investigation. These good things should never be made a subject of "Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD" (2Ki 10:16). While the good work goes on, we should be so hard at work for the Master that we have not time to put into every penny newspaper the tale of what God is doing. Let us then be up while the Master is with us and doing His work, doing it in the Spirit's own way, seeking to glorify Jesus, and seeking to retain the Spirit in our midst.

### 3. A Stimulus

And now, lastly, I am to take my text by way of a stimulus. Does the Holy Ghost glorify Christ? Ah, then, how should we aim to do it! Let us make, then, beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, let us make this the one object of our life, to glorify Christ. You have been a man in a large way of business. Could you say while you were doing business so largely that your object was to honor Christ in it? Well, you have come down in the world; you have a smaller shop now. Yes, but suppose you can glorify God more. Then you are in a better position than you used to be. I have seen many a man who prospered in his soul and honored his Master much, who has made a wrong step, and has injured his usefulness and happiness. Wanting to get more business, he has launched into wide speculations, and has had less time for serving his Lord; and has thus really been in a worse position, for spirituals were under a decay. You may have seen in the newspapers an instance of what sometimes comes through getting wealthy. A man and his wife were prospering in a little way of business, as hard-working people, near Birmingham. A friend died and left the wife some £1,300, no great sum, but quite enough to ruin a man. They at once took a public-house,<sup>22</sup> and you will remember that he now lies in prison on a charge of murdering his wife. Little marvel that when, tempted by what little they had to seek after more, they entered upon an ill occupation in order to increase their wealth. That evil trade soon led to vicious habits and to death. Now I have seen believers mournfully impoverish their souls by seeking after carnal wealth instead of seeking Christ. But let a man's only object be to glorify Christ, and he will feel very little concern where providence places him, so long as he may still promote his one object, and put crowns on the Redeemer's head.

This brings me to say, brethren, while we make this our aim, let us take every opportunity of glorifying Christ. We throw thousands of opportunities away. Where we might do good we neglect it. I chide my own self here very bitterly and very often, but I fear me I might chide many of you too. You had an opportunity yesterday, but you lost it; you might have spoken for Christ but you did not. No one can tell the good you might have done, but you did not do it. You were backward. Oh, as the Holy Ghost glorifies Christ everywhere, so do you! I pray you do this always, not merely at particular times, but make your whole life a glorifying of Christ. As I sat on an omnibus<sup>23</sup> yesterday, I heard a man saying behind me how greatly he admired the continental way of keeping Sundays—going to the church in the morning, and going to the theater at night. “Don't you see,” he said, “it is irrational to think that the Almighty expects us to spend the whole day in praying. There is no man living who can pray for six hours together, let alone twelve.” That was just putting in broad language what most ungodly people feel, but then I wonder what they would make of the Apostle Paul's admonition, “Pray without ceasing” (1Th 5:17). Here was a man who thought that nobody could pray for six hours together,

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<sup>22</sup> **public-house** – bar.

<sup>23</sup> **omnibus** – a large transport vehicle.

while the saints of God are to continue always in prayer. No man comes up to the stature of the Christian, or such a man as he should be, unless he cannot only pray for six hours together, but his whole life long. It was said of good old Rowland Hill (1744-1833), that people did not so much notice his particular times of retirement, for he was a man who was always praying, wherever he might be. You would often find him alone talking to himself. And ever in company his heart would be going away to the object of his best love: he would still be in communion with Christ. Be ye always glorifying Christ, Christians, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Whether ye work at a lapstone,<sup>24</sup> or drive a plough, or lay the stones in a building, serve the Master in all these things. Whether ye are diligent with the pen, or whether ye buy and sell, or plough the sea, do all even to your eating or your drinking in the name of the Lord Jesus. And so, like the Holy Spirit, let it be said of you: “He shall glorify me.”

We conclude by endeavoring to magnify our Master ourselves. I want to say just two or three things to glorify Him, and they shall be just these. I shall say this to the poor troubled, doubting sinner: “Sinner, my Master is able to save you.” “Oh, but I am the biggest sinner out of hell.” Yes, He is the greatest of all Saviors. “Yes, but I have gone over head and ears in iniquity.” Yes, but He was baptized also in His agonies that He might save you. “Oh, but He *cannot* save me!” Ay! But He can; and if I am now addressing the scum of the earth, one of the devil’s sweepings, one who is hardly fit for decent company, my Master is able to save you. Unto the uttermost He saveth; and your sin, though black, He can cleanse, and make you whiter than snow.

I would say something else to glorify *Him*. He is willing to save you; His generous heart desireth you. Your perishing will not make Him glad, but He will weep over you as He did over Jerusalem. But your being saved will give Him to see the travail of His soul. “Do you know who you are speaking to, sir?” No I don’t, but my Master does; for now He fixes His poor tearful eyes on thee. Where is the sinner? Is he behind that pillar in yonder corner? The Master looketh at him; and He saith, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Mat 11:28-29). What, are ye so far away? How loudly doth He call you: “Come, sinner, repent and come.” Art thou willing to come? Lo! He meets thee, in the road He meets thee; embracing thee, He falls upon thy neck to kiss thee. He saith, even this morning He saith it, “Take off his rags and clothe him in fine apparel; wash him and make him clean, for I have put away his sins like a cloud, and like a thick cloud his iniquities.” That which glorifies Christ the most of all is the preaching of the gospel to sinners, and therefore have I glorified Him now, and would do so as long as I live. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...[for] he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...he that believeth not shall be damned” (Act 16:31; Mar 16:16). God give us to glorify Christ by trusting in Him! Amen. ✨

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<sup>24</sup> **lapstone** – a stone for the lap, on which shoemakers beat leather.