

PASSION
for
Souls



Charles H. Spurgeon
(1834-1892)

PASSION FOR SOULS

Contents

1. Why is this passion implanted in the saved? 6
2. How does this passion exercise itself? 15
3. Why is not this passion more largely developed
among Christians?..... 20
4. How can this passion be more fully aroused?..... 23

A sermon delivered on Lord's Day morning, April 26, 1874,
at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington.

© Copyright 2025 Chapel Library: annotations. Original text is in the public domain. Printed in the USA. All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version. Chapel Library does not necessarily agree with all the doctrinal positions of the authors it publishes. Permission is expressly granted to reproduce this material by any means, provided

- 1) you do not charge beyond a nominal sum for cost of duplication, and
- 2) this copyright notice and all the text on this page are included.

Chapel Library sends Christ-centered materials from prior centuries worldwide without charge, relying entirely upon God's faithfulness. We therefore do not solicit donations, but we gratefully receive support from those who freely desire to give.

Worldwide, please download material without charge from our website, or contact the international distributor as listed there for your country.

In **North America**, for additional copies of this booklet or other Christ-centered materials from prior centuries, please contact:

CHAPEL LIBRARY
2603 West Wright Street
Pensacola, Florida 32505 USA

(850) 438-6666 • chapel@mountzion.org • ChapelLibrary.org

PASSION FOR SOULS

“That I might by all means save some.”

—1 Corinthians 9:22

THE apostle speaks very broadly and talks about “saving” men. Some of our extremely orthodox brethren would say at once, “*You* save men? How can *man* do that? The expression is inaccurate in the extreme. Is not salvation of the Lord from first to last? How can you, Paul, dare to speak of saving some?” Yet Peter spoke very much like this when he said, “Save yourselves from this untoward generation” (Act 2:40). Indeed, the expression is a little more bold, if anything; and if Peter were alive now, he would be called to account.

When Paul wrote to Timothy, he said to him, “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee” (1Ti 4:16). This is another instance of language used in a popular sense by a man who had not the fear of critics before his eyes. The apostle did not intend to insinuate that he could save anybody by his own power, and no one thought that he did. He used expressions without guarding them because he was writing to people who mixed candor¹ with their knowledge of doctrine and would not willfully misunderstand him.

¹ **candor** – openness of heart; frankness.

He did not write for those who must have all the creed in every sermon and require all statements of the truth to be cut into one shape. The doctrine that salvation is of God alone and is the work of the Holy Spirit was dear to him as life itself; and, having often proclaimed it, he was not afraid of being misunderstood.

Our testimony also has for many years been clear upon this point, and therefore we shall venture to be as accurately inaccurate as was the apostle, and to speak of saving souls and winning souls after the manner of ordinary speech.

The expression used gives great prominence to *instrumentality*,² and this is the use and wont³ of Scripture. There is not much danger just now of exaggerating the power of instrumentality, and looking to men instead of their Master. The danger seems to lie in the opposite direction, in the habit of depreciating both an organized church and a recognized ministry.

Frequently we have heard it said of certain revivals that no particular person was engaged in them, neither evangelist nor minister had a hand in the work, and this is thought to be a recommendation, but indeed it is none.

I fear that many hopeful beginnings have come to a sudden collapse because faithful and holy ministers have been despised, and a slur has been cast upon ordinary instrumentalities. Men talk thus under the notion that they are honoring God. They are off the track

² **instrumentality** – referring to Christians as the means or instruments of God's saving others.

³ **wont** – frequent practice.

altogether, for God still owns and blesses His chosen ministers, and is honored thereby; and, as He still works by them, He would not have us speak disparagingly of them.

The topic of this morning is this: it has pleased God to save souls by His people, and therefore He places in them a *sacred longing by all means to save some*. He might, if He had pleased, have called all His chosen to Himself by a voice out of the excellent glory, just as He called Saul the persecutor. Or He might have commissioned angels to fly throughout the length and breadth of the world and carry the message of mercy. But, in His inscrutable wisdom, He has been pleased to bring men to Himself by men.

The atonement is complete, and the Spirit's power is fully given. All that is needed is that men be led to believe for the salvation of their souls, and this part of salvation is accomplished by the Holy Ghost through the ministries of men. Those who have themselves been quickened are sent to prophesy upon the dry bones. In order that this divine arrangement may be carried out, the Lord has implanted in the hearts of all genuine believers a passion for the salvation of souls. In some, this is more lively than in others, but it ought to be a leading feature in the character of every Christian.

I shall speak upon this sacred instinct, and deal with it thus: first, why is it implanted in us? Secondly, how does it exercise itself? Thirdly, why is it not more largely manifested? And fourthly, how can it be quickened and made more practically efficient?

1. Why is this passion implanted in the saved?

For three reasons, I think, among many others, namely, for God's glory, for the good of the church, and for the profiting of the individual.

a. For God's glory

It is implanted there, first, for God's glory. It is greatly to the glory of God that He should use humble instruments for the accomplishment of His grand purposes.

When Quintin Matsys⁴ had executed⁵ a certain wonderful well-cover in iron, it was the more notable as a work of art because he had been deprived of the proper tools while he was executing it, for I think he had little more than his hammer with which to perform that wonderful feat in metal.

Now, when we look at God's work of grace in the world, it glorifies Him the more when we reflect that He has achieved it by instruments which in themselves would rather hinder than promote His work. No man among us can help God. It is true He uses us, but He could do better without us than with us. By the direct word of power, He could do in a moment that which, through the weakness of the instrument, now takes months and years, yet He knows best how to glorify His own name.

He puts a longing to save others into our souls, that He may get glory by using us, even us who have little fitness for such work except this passion which He has implanted in our breasts. He graciously uses even our weak points and makes our very infirmities

⁴ **Quentin Matsys** (1466-1530) – Flemish painter.

⁵ **executed** – completed.

to illustrate the glory of His grace, blessing our poorest sermons, prospering our most feeble efforts, and giving us to see results even from our stray words.

The Lord glorifies Himself by making our feebleness to be the vehicle of His power, and to this end He makes us pant for a work far out of our reach, and sets our hearts a-longing to “save some.”

It brings glory to God also that He should take sinful men such as we are, and make us partakers of His nature. He does this by giving us fellowship in His bowels of compassion, communion in His overflowing love. He kindles in our breasts the same fire of love which glows in His own bosom. In our own little way, we look down upon the prodigal sons, and see them a great way off, and have compassion on them, and would fain⁶ fall on their necks and kiss them.

The Lord loves men; however, after a holy fashion, He desires their sanctification and their salvation by that means. And when we desire the good of our fellow men by means of their conversion, we are walking side by side with God. Every real philanthropist is a copy of the Lord Jesus, for though it is too low a term to apply to His infinite excellence, yet truly the Son of God is the grandest of all philanthropists.

Now, that God should, by the power of His matchless grace, produce in such cold hearts as ours a burning passion for the salvation of others is a singular proof of His omnipotent power in the world of the mind. To change sinful men so that they pant after the increase of holiness, to render stubborn wills eager for the spread of obedience, and to make wandering hearts earnest for the establishment of the abiding

⁶ **fain** – gladly.

kingdom of the Redeemer, this is a mighty feat of the grace of God.

That a perfect angel should cleave the air to perform His message is a simple matter enough; but that a Saul of Tarsus, who foamed at the mouth with enmity to Christ, should live and die for the winning of souls to Jesus, is a memorable illustration of the grace of God.

In this way the Lord gets great glory over the arch-enemy, the prince of the power of the air, for He can say to Satan, "I have defeated thee, not by the sword of Michael, but by the tongues of men. I have conquered thee, O thou enemy, not with thunderbolts, but with the earnest words, and prayers, and tears of these My humble servants. O My adversary, I have pitted against thee feeble men and women, into whom I have put the love of souls, and these have torn away from thee province after province of thy dominions. These have snapped the fetters of the bonded ones. These have burst open the prison doors of those who were thy captives."

How illustriously is this truth seen when the Lord seizes the ringleaders of Satan's army and transforms them into captains of His own host! Then is the enemy smitten in the house of his former friends.

Satan desired to sift Peter as wheat, but Peter sifted him in return on the day of Pentecost. Satan made Peter deny his Master, but when restored, Peter loved his Lord all the more, and all the more earnestly did he proclaim his Master's name and gospel. The fury of the foe recoils on himself, love conquers, and where sin abounded grace doth much more abound. As for Saul, who persecuted the saints, did not he become

the apostle of Christ to the Gentiles, laboring more than any other for the good cause?

Beloved, the ultimate triumph of the cross will be the more admirable because of the manner of its achievement. Good will conquer evil, not by the assistance of governments and the arms of potentates, not by the prestige of bishops and popes, and all their pompous array, but by hearts that burn, and souls that glow, and eyes that weep, and knees that bend in wrestling prayer. These are the artillery of God; by using such weapons as these, He not only foils His foes, but triumphs over them in it, confounding the mighty by the weak, the wise by the simple, and the things which are by the things which are not.

b. For the church's good

Next, the passion for saving souls is implanted for the church's good, and that in a thousand ways, of which I can only mention a few. First there can be no doubt that the passion for winning souls expends the church's energy in a healthy manner.

I have observed that churches which do not care for the outlying population speedily suffer from disunion and strife. There is a certain quantity of steam generated in the community, and if we do not let it off in the right way, it will work in the wrong way, or blow up altogether and do infinite mischief. Men's minds are sure to work and their tongues to move, and, if they are not employed for good purposes, they will assuredly do mischief.

You cannot unite a church so completely as by calling out all its forces for accomplishing the Redeemer's grand object. Talents unused are sure to rust, and this kind of rust is a deadly poison to peace,

an acrid irritant which eats into the heart of the church. We will therefore "by all means save some," lest by some other means we become disunited in heart.

This passion for saving souls not only employs but also draws forth the strength of the church; it awakens her latent energies and arouses her noblest faculties. With so divine a prize before her, she girds up her robes for the race, and with her eye upon her Lord presses forward to the goal. Many a commonplace man has been rendered great by being thoroughly absorbed by a noble pursuit, and what can be nobler than turning men from the road which leads to hell?

Perhaps some of those ignoble souls, who have lived and died like dumb, driven cattle, might have reached the majesty of great fires if a supreme intent had fired them with heroic zeal and developed their concealed endowments. Happy is the man whose task is honorable, if he do but honorably fulfill it.

Lo, God has given to His church the work of conquering the world, the plucking of brands from the burning, the feeding of His sheep and lambs, and this it is which trains the church to deeds of daring and to nobility of soul.

Dear brethren, this common passion for souls knits us together. How often do I feel a fresh bond of union with my beloved brethren and fellow workers when I find that I was the means of the conviction of a sinner, whom one of them comforted and led to the Savior. And thus we have a joint possession in the convert.

Sometimes I have been blest of God to the salvation of my hearer, but that hearer was first brought

here by yonder friend, and so we become sharers in the joy. Communion in service and success welds the saints together and is one of the best securities for mutual love.

And moreover, when new converts are brought into the church, the fact that they are brought in by instrumentality tends to make their fusion with the church an easy matter. It is in this case much the same as with our families.

If God had been pleased to create each of us as individual men and women, and drop us down somewhere on the earth, and leave us to find our way to somebody's house and unite with his family, I daresay we should have had to wander long before we should have been welcomed. But now we come as little ones to those who rejoice to see us; and they sing, "Welcome, welcome, little stranger!" We become at once part of the family because we have parents and brothers and sisters, and these make no debate about our introduction and consider it no trouble to receive us, though I fear we have never duly rewarded them for their pains.

So is it in the church—if God had converted all men one by one, by His Spirit, without instrumentality, they would have been separate grains of sand, hard to unite into a building, and there would have been much difficulty in forming them into one body.

But now we are born into the church, and the pastor and others look upon those converted under their instrumentality as their own children, whom they love in the Lord. And the church, having shared in the common service by which they are converted, feels, "These belong to us, these are our reward." And so they are taken cordially into the Christian family.

This is no small benefit, for it is at once the joy and the strength of the church to be made one by vital forces, by holy sympathies and fellowships.

We have spiritual fathers among us whom we love in the Lord, and spiritual children whose welfare is our deepest concern, and brethren and sisters to whom we have been helpful, or who have been helpful to us, whom we cannot but commune with in heart. As a common desire to defend their country welds all the regiments of an army into one, so the common desire to save souls makes all true believers akin to each other.

c. For the good of the individual

But this passion is most of all for the good of the individual possessing it. I will not try this morning to sum up in the short time allotted to me the immense benefits which come to a man through his laboring for the conversion of others, but I will venture this assertion, that no man or woman in the church of God is in a healthy state if he or she is not laboring to save some.

Those who are laid aside by suffering are taking their part in the economy of the household of Christ. But with that exception, he that doth not work neither shall he eat (2Th 3:10), he that doth not water others is not watered himself (Pro 11:25), and he who cares not for the souls of others may well stand in jeopardy about his own.

To long for the conversion of others makes us Godlike. Do we desire man's welfare? God does so. Would we fain snatch them from the burning? God is daily performing this deed of grace. Can we say that we "have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth"

(Eze 18:32)? Jehovah has declared the like with an oath. Do we weep over sinners? Did not Jehovah's Son weep over them? Do we lay out ourselves for their conversion? Did He not die that they might live? Ye are made Godlike when this passion glows within your spirit.

This is a vent for your love to God as well as your love to men. Loving the Creator, we pity His fallen creatures, and feel a benevolent love towards the work of His hands. If we love God, we feel as He does, that judgment is His strange work, and we cannot bear that those whom He has created should be cast away forever. Loving God makes us sorrow that all men do not love Him too. It frets us that the world lieth in the wicked one, at enmity to its own Creator, at war with Him Who alone can bless it. O beloved, you do not love the Lord at all unless you love the souls of others.

Trying to bring others to Christ does us good by renewing in us our old feelings and reviving our first love. When I see an inquirer penitent for sin, I recollect the time when I felt as he is feeling. And when I hear the seeker for the first time say, "I do believe in Jesus," I recollect the birthday of my own soul, when the bells of my heart rang out their merriest peals because Jesus Christ had come to dwell within me. Soul-winning keeps the heart lively and preserves our warm youth to us. It is a mighty refresher to decaying love.

If you feel the chill of skepticism stealing over you, and begin to doubt the gospel's power, go to work among the poor and ignorant, or comfort souls in distress. And when you see the brightness of their countenances as they obtain joy and peace in believing, your skepticism will fly like chaff before the wind.

You must believe in the cause when you see the result. You cannot help believing when the evidence is before your eyes. Work for Jesus keeps us strong in faith and intense in love to Him.

Does not this holy instinct draw forth all the faculties of a man? One strong passion will frequently bring the whole man into play, like a skillful minstrel whose hand brings music from every chord. If we love others, we shall, like Paul, become wise to attract them, wise to persuade them, wise to convince them, wise to encourage them. We shall learn the use of means which had lain rusted by, and discover in ourselves talents which else had been hidden in the ground if the strong desire to save men had not cleared away the soil.

And I will add here that love to souls will in the end bring to everyone who follows it up the highest joy beneath the stars. What is that? It is the joy of knowing that you have been made the spiritual parent of others. I have tasted of this stream full often, and it is heaven below. The joy of being saved one's self has a measure of selfishness about it, but to know that your fellow men are saved by your efforts brings a joy pure, disinterested, and heavenly, of which we may drink the deepest draughts without injury to our spirits.

Yield yourselves, brethren, to the divine appetite for doing good, be possessed with it and eaten up by it, and the best results must follow. Let this be henceforth your aim: "That I might by all means save some."

2. How does this passion exercise itself?

Differently in different persons and at different periods, at first it shows itself by *tender anxiety*. The moment a man is saved he begins to be anxious about his wife, his child, or his dearest relative. And that anxiety leads him at once to pray for them. As soon as the newly opened eye has enjoyed the sweet light of the Sun of Righteousness it looks lovingly round on those who were its companions in darkness, and then gazes up into heaven with a tearful prayer that they also may receive their sight.

Hungry ones, while they are eating the first mouthful at the banquet of free grace, groan within themselves and say, "Oh that my poor starving children could be here to feed on the Savior's love with me." Compassion is natural to the new-born nature. As common humanity makes us pity the suffering, so renewed humanity makes us pity the sinful. This, I say, happens at the very dawn of the new life.

Further on in the heavenly pilgrimage, this passion manifests itself in the *intense joy* exhibited when news reaches us of the conversion of others. I have often seen, at church meetings and missionary meetings, a hearty and holy joy spread throughout an audience when some new convert, or returned missionary, or successful minister, has given details of the wonders of saving grace.

Many a poor girl who could do but little for the Savior has, nevertheless, shown what she would have done if she could, by the tears of joy which have streamed down her cheeks when she has heard that sinners have been led to Jesus. This is one of the ways in which those who can personally do little can share

in the joy of the most useful, yea, can have fellowship with Jesus Himself.

The hallowed instinct of soul-winning also shows itself in *private efforts, sacrifices, prayers, and agonies* for the spread of the gospel. Well do I remember when I first knew the Lord, how restless I felt till I could do something for others. I did not know that I could speak to an assembly, and I was very timid as to conversing upon religious subjects. And therefore I wrote little notes to different persons setting forth the way of salvation, and I dropped these written letters with printed tracts into the post, or slipped them under the doors of houses, or dropped them into areas, praying that those who read them might be aroused as to their sins and moved to flee from the wrath to come.

My heart would have burst if it could not have found some vent. I wish that all professors kept up their first zeal and were diligent in doing little things as well as greater things for Jesus, for often the lesser agencies turn out to be as effectual as those which operate upon a larger area.

I hope that all of you young people who have been lately added to the church are trying some mode of doing good, suitable for your capacity and position, that by all means you may save some. A word may often bless those whom a sermon fails to reach, and a personal letter may do far more than a printed book.

As we grow older and are more qualified, we shall take our share in the more *public agencies* of the church. We shall speak for Jesus before the few who meet at the cottage prayer meeting. We shall pray with as well as for our families, or we shall enlist in the Sunday school, or take a tract district. Ultimately,

the Lord may call us to plead His cause before hundreds or thousands, and so beginning with littles our latter end shall greatly increase.

There is one point in which zeal for the salvation of others will show itself in all who possess it, namely, in *adapting ourselves to the condition and capacity of others for their good*. Notice this in Paul. He became all things to all men, if by any means he might save some. He became a Jew to the Jews. When he met with them, he did not rail at their ceremonies but endeavored to bring out their spiritual meaning. He did not preach against Judaism but showed them Jesus as the fulfillment of its types. When he met with a heathen, he did not revile the gods but taught him the true God and salvation by His Son.

He did not carry about with him one sermon for all places but adapted his speech to his audience. What a very wonderful address that was which Paul delivered to the council of philosophers upon Mars' Hill (Act 17:22-31). It is most courteous throughout and it is a pity that our translation somewhat destroys that quality, for it is eminently conspicuous in the original. The apostle began by saying, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that ye are on all points very God-fearing." He did not say, "Too superstitious," as our version has it (v. 22), that would have needlessly provoked them at the outset. He went on to say, "For as I passed through the city and observed your sacred things, I found an altar bearing the inscription, 'To an unknown God.' What, therefore, ye worship without knowing it, that I announce unto you." He did not say, "Whom ye ignorantly worship." He was far too prudent to use such an expression.

They were a collection of thoughtful men, of cultured minds, and he aimed at winning them by courteously declaring to them the gospel. It was most adroit⁷ on his part to refer to that inscription upon the altar, and equally so to quote from one of their own poets. If he had been addressing Jews, he would neither have quoted from a Greek poet nor referred to a heathen altar; his intense love for his hearers taught him to merge his own peculiarities in order to secure their attention.

In the same manner we also sink⁸ ourselves; and instead of demanding that others submit to us, we cheerfully submit to them in all unessential matters, that we may gain their favorable consideration of the claims of Jesus.

Mark you there was never a man more stern for principle than Paul. In things where it was necessary to take his stand, he was firm as a rock. But in merely personal and external matters, he was the servant of all. Adaptation was his *forte*.

Beloved, if you have to talk to children, be children, and do not expect them to be men. Think their thoughts, feel their feelings, and put truth into their words. You will never get at their hearts till your heart is in sympathy with their childhood. If you have to comfort the aged, enter also into their infirmities, and do not speak to them as if they were still in the full vigor of life. Study persons of all ages and be as they are, that they may be led to be believers as you are.

Are you called to labor among the educated? Then choose out excellent words and present them apples of

⁷ **adroit** – skillful.

⁸ **sink** – lower or humble.

gold in baskets of silver (see Pro 25:11). Do you work among the illiterate? Let your words be as goads, speak their mother tongue, use great plainness of speech, so that you may be understood; for what avails to speak to them in an unknown tongue?

Are you cast among people with strange prejudices? Do not unnecessarily jar with them, but take them as you find them. Are you seeking the conversion of a person of slender understanding? Do not inflict upon him the deeper mysteries, but show him the plain man's pathway to heaven in words which he who runs may read. Are you talking with a friend who is of a sorrowful spirit? Tell him of your own depressions, enter into his griefs, and so raise him up as you were raised. Like the good Samaritan, go where the wounded man lies, and do not expect him to come to you. A real passion for winning souls reveals the many sides of our manhood, and uses each one as a reflector of the divine light of truth.

There is a door to each man's heart, and we have to find it and enter it with the right key, which is to be found somewhere or other in the Word of God. All men are not to be reached in the same way, or by the same arguments, and as we are by all means to save some, we must be wise to win souls, wise with wisdom from above. We desire to see them conquered for Christ, but no warrior uses always the same strategy. There is for one open assault, for another a siege, for a third an ambush, for a fourth a long campaign.

On the sea there are great rams which run down the enemy, torpedoes under water, gunboats, and steam frigates. One ship is broken up by a single blow, another needs a broadside, a third must have a shot between wind and water, a fourth must be driven on

shore. Even thus must we adapt ourselves and use the sacred force entrusted to us with grave consideration and solemn judgment, looking ever to the Lord for guidance and for power. All the real power is in the Lord's hands, and we must put ourselves fully at the disposal of the divine Worker that He may work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure, so shall we by all means save some.

3. Why is not this passion more largely developed among Christians?

The preacher needs not answer that question; each of his hearers may do that for himself. Why is it that we do not yearn more over the perishing souls of men?

a. Little grace

Is it not that we have but very little grace? We are dwarfish Christians, with little faith, little love, little care for the glory of God, and therefore with little concern for perishing sinners. We are spiritually naked, and poor, and miserable, when we might be rich and increased in goods if we had but more faith. That is the secret of the matter and is the fountain of all the mischief.

b. Doctrinal one-sidedness

But if we must come to particulars, do you not think that men are careless about the souls of others because they have fallen into one-sided views of gospel doctrines, and have turned the doctrines of grace into a couch for idleness to rest upon? "God will save His own," say they. Yes, but His own do not talk in that fashion. They are not like Cain, who said, "Am I my

brother's keeper?" (Gen 4:9). Unquestionably the Lord will see that His own elect are called in due season, but He will do this by the preaching or teaching of the Word. Predestination is not a legitimate reason for inaction. Men do not consider it so in other matters, why then in religion? Except the Lord prospers us in business, all our efforts are in vain; and yet we do not say, "I shall have as many pounds in my pocket as God intends I shall have, and therefore I need not work or trade."

No, men save their fatalism to play the fool with in spiritual things. In all other things they are not such idiots as to suffer predestination to paralyze their minds. But here, since idleness wants an excuse for itself, they dare to abuse this sacred truth to stultify their consciences.

c. Worldliness

In some professors, downright worldliness prevents their seeking the conversion of others. They are too fond of gain to care for saving souls, too busy about their farms to sow the seed of the kingdom, too much occupied with their shops to hold up the cross before the sinner's eyes, too full of worldly care to care for the salvation of the lost.

d. Covetousness

Covetousness eats up the very soul of many. They have far more business than they can manage without injury to their spiritual health, and yet they are eager after more. Prayer meetings are neglected, the class in the school is given up, efforts for the poor and ignorant are never made, and all because they are so taken up with the world and its cares. This age is peculiarly

tempted in that direction, and it needs strong piety to be able to love the souls of men practically.

e. Little faith

With some I fear that the cause of indifference is want⁹ of faith. They do not believe that God will bless their efforts, and therefore they make none. They have a vivid recollection of far-gone times when they tried to be useful and failed, and instead of past failure being made a reason for double exertion in the present, to make up for lost time, they have given up labor for the Lord as a bad case and do not attempt anything more.

f. Laziness

It is to be feared that with many church members the reason for the absence of this passion is that they love ease and are worm-eaten with indolence. They say, "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. Why trouble about others?" (see Luk 12:19). "Send the multitude away," said the disciples (Mat 14:15). They did not want to be worried with them.

True, the people were very hungry and weary, and it was a painful thing to see them fainting. But it was easier to forget their needs than to relieve them! London is perishing, millions are dying in their sins, the world still lies in the wicked one, and sloth calls forgetfulness to her aid to ignore the whole matter. Such people do not want to be made uncomfortable, neither do they wish to spend and be spent for the glory of Christ.

⁹ **want** – lack.

g. Spiritual indifference

The secret of it all is that the great majority of Christians are out of sympathy with God, and out of communion with Christ. Is not this an evil? O eyes that never wept over dying men, do you expect to see the King in His beauty? O hearts that never throbbed with anxiety for those that are going down to the pit, do you hope to leap for joy at the Master's coming? O lips that never speak for Jesus, how will you answer to the searching questions of the last great day?

I beseech you, Christian people, if you have grown indifferent to the conversion of those around you, search out the secret reason. Find what is the worm at the root of your piety, and in the name of Christ seek to be delivered therefrom.

4. How can this passion be more fully aroused?

a. Seek more grace yourself.

It can be aroused only, first, by our obtaining a higher life. The better man shall do the better deed, the stronger in grace the stronger to save some. I do not believe in a man's trying to pump himself up beyond his level. The man must be up, and then all that comes out of the man will have risen. If love to God glows in your soul, it must show itself in your concern for others.

Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good. It will not do for you to begin a more earnest career by stimulating yourself to a hectic zeal which will come and go like the flush on the consumptive's¹⁰ cheek.

¹⁰ **consumptive's cheek** – cheek of one suffering from tuberculosis.

The life within must be permanently strengthened, and then the pulsing of the heart and the motion of the whole man will be more vigorous. More grace is our greatest need.

b. Inform yourself of sinners' misery around you.

This being granted, it will greatly help us to care for the conversion of sinners if we are fully cognizant of their misery and degradation. How differently one feels after seeing with your own eyes the poverty, filth, and vice of this city. I wish some of you respectable people, who have never seen any part of London except the broad thoroughfares, would take a stroll down the courts which open into the narrow side streets. I would like you to go down courts such as Queen Victoria never saw, and alleys far from green.

Ladies, you may leave some of that finery at home, and gentlemen, you may put away your pocket handkerchiefs and your purses, unless you would like to empty them out among the wretched beings you will meet. There are sights to be seen close to our own homes which might well make our hearts bleed and harrow¹¹ up our spirits. When you have seen them, you will begin to feel aright towards the sinful.

We sit at home comfortably at our fires in the winter time and think the weather is not so very cold, but if we go out and see the poor shivering in their rags, or find them cowering over their empty grates, we begin to think that cold is a greater evil than we dreamed.

We come here to this place of worship; and while we are listening to the Word, we forget the destitution

¹¹ **harrow** – break; tear.

of those who hear it not. Why, at this very moment around the doors of the gin¹² palaces and public houses of London there are thousands standing waiting till the blessed hour of one, when they can obtain the cheering draught which their souls thirst after. The assemblies now tarrying for the god Bacchus¹³ can be counted by the thousands.

What have these men been doing with the Sabbath hours up till now? Reading the Sunday newspaper, lying in bed, or loafing about their little gardens in their shirt sleeves. That is the occupation of hundreds of thousands this day all around us and at our doors. Have we done our best to bring them to the house of prayer?

Hundreds of thousands hard by have never heard the gospel in their lives, and never think of entering places where it is preached. Of course, if they had lived in Calcutta we should have thought about them; living in London close to us shall we neglect them?

One of the best things that could be done for us all would be to go round for a week with a city missionary to houses in the worst parts of the city that we might see for ourselves what is to be seen. Then would sin and poverty become palpable and stand out in grim reality. Your fellow countrymen, men born of women, who are of the same flesh and blood as yourselves, are living in daily neglect of your dear Savior, living in jeopardy of their immortal souls. If you did but realize this, it would quicken you by all means to save some.

¹² **gin** – distilled alcohol.

¹³ **Bacchus** – Greek god of wine.

c. Consider sinners' eternal punishment.

Brethren, the strongest argument I have ever seen for the doctrine of the eternity of future punishment is an argument which is often used against it. They say, "If the eternity of future punishment is true, we wonder that believers in it can rest in their beds, or eat their meals, for the truth is so horrible that it ought to stir them to incessant efforts to deliver others from going into this boundless misery." It is true and spoken as by a prophet; and that is one reason why I believe the doctrine, because it has a tendency, if anything has, to move us to compassion and rouse us to action.

If the advocate of other views is prepared to teach me a doctrine which will make me think more lightly of sin and make me feel more easy about the damnation of my fellow men, I do not want his doctrine, for I am too careless now and have a dread of being more so. If with the most terrible argument for incessant sorrow for the ruin of the souls of my hearers, I cannot be as tender as I would, what should I be if I could lay the flattering unction to my soul that after all it was of smaller consequence than I had thought whether they were damned or saved?

Ah, dear friends, can you bear to think of it, that all around you there are men and women who will, in a few years, suffer the terrible wrath of God, and be banished forever from His presence? If you could but realize hell and its horrors, you must be stirred by all means to save some.

d. Seek a deeper sense of obligation to God's grace.

Many other things might move us, but certainly this last ought to do it. A sense of our own solemn

obligations to the grace of God should arouse all our energies. If we are what we profess to be, we are saved men, redeemed by the heart's blood of the Son of God. Do we not owe something to Christ for this? Shall we be easy¹⁴ till we have found many jewels for His crown? Can we be content while so many myriads are ignorant of Him, or opposed to Him? If you love Him, what will you do for Him? Show Him a proof of your love, and the best proof you can give is your own personal holiness and persevering effort to gather in His redeemed.

Brother, sister, do something for Jesus. Do not talk about it, *do* it. Words are leaves, actions are fruits. Do something for Jesus, do something for Jesus today! Ere the sun goes down, think of some one action which may tend to the conversion of some one person, and do it with your might. Let the object of the effort be your child, your servant, your brother, your friend—but do make the effort *today*. Having done it today, do it tomorrow, and every day. And doing it in one way, do it another way. And doing it in one state of heart, do it in another.

Let your joy enchant, let your sorrow arouse, let your hope attract. Let your changeful moods help you to attack sinners from different quarters, as your varying circumstances bring you into contact with differing persons. Be always awake. Turn yourself about like a gun on a swivel to reach persons who are found in any direction, so that some may fall wounded by the gospel's power.

By all means, save some. God grant it may be so. And oh, that some might be saved this morning by

¹⁴ **easy** – contented; satisfied.

simply believing in Christ Jesus, for that is the way of salvation. Jesus puts away sin wherever there is a simple trust in Him. May seekers exercise that trust now and live forever. Amen.

