

SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST

NO. 84

A SERMON
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BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON
AT EXETER HALL, STRAND

*“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him,
seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”*
Hebrews 7:25

SALVATION is a doctrine peculiar to revelation. Revelation affords us a complete history of it, but nowhere else can we find any trace thereof. God has written many books, but only one book has had for its aim the teaching of the ways of mercy. He has written the great book of creation, which it is our duty and our pleasure to read. It is a volume embellished on its surface with starry gems and rainbow colors, and containing in its inner leaves marvels at which the wise may wonder for ages, and yet find a fresh theme for their conjectures.

Nature is the spelling book of man, in which he may learn his Maker's name, He has studded it with embroidery, with gold, with gems. There are doctrines of truth in the mighty stars and there are lessons written on the green earth and in the flowers upspringing from the sod. We read the books of God when we see the storm and tempest, for all things speak as God would have them.

And if our ears are open, we may hear the voice of God in the rippling of every rill, in the roll of every thunder, in the brightness of every lightning, in the twinkling of every star, in the budding of every flower. God has written the great book of creation to teach us what He is—how great, how mighty.

But I read nothing of salvation in creation. The rocks tell me, “Salvation is not in us.” The winds howl, but they howl not salvation. The waves rush upon the shore, but among the wrecks which they wash up, they reveal no trace of salvation. The fathomless caves of oceans bear pearls, but they bear no pearls of grace. The starry heavens have their flashing meteors, but they have no voices of salvation.

I find salvation written nowhere, till in this volume of my Father's grace I find His blessed love unfolded towards the great human family, teaching them that they are lost, but that He can save them, and that in saving them He can be “just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly.”

Salvation, then, is to be found in the Scriptures and in the Scriptures only, for we can read nothing of it elsewhere. And while it is to be found only in Scripture, I hold that the peculiar doctrine of revelation is salvation. I believe that the Bible was sent not to teach me history, but to teach me grace—not to give me a system of philosophy, but to give me a system of divinity—not to teach worldly wisdom, but spiritual wisdom.

Hence I hold all preaching of philosophy and science in the pulpit to be altogether out of place. I would check no man's liberty in this matter, for only God is the Judge of man's conscience. But it is my firm opinion that if we profess to be Christians, we are bound to keep to Christianity. If we profess to be Christian ministers, we drivel away the Sabbath-day, we mock our hearers, we insult God, if we deliver lectures upon botany or geology, instead of delivering sermons on salvation. He who does not always preach the Gospel, ought not to be accounted a true-called minister of God.

Well, then it is salvation I desire to preach to you. We have, in our text, two or three things. In the first place, we are told *who they are who will be saved*, “them that come unto God by Jesus Christ.” In the second place, we are told *the extent of the Savior's ability to save*, “He is able to save to the uttermost.” And in the third place, we have *the reason given why He can save*, “seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

I. First, we are told THE PEOPLE WHO ARE TO BE SAVED.

And the people who are to be saved are “those who come unto God by Jesus Christ.” There is no limitation here of sect or denomination. It does not say the Baptist, the Independent, or the Episcopalian that comes unto God by Jesus Christ, but it simply says, “*them*,” by which I understand men of all creeds, men of all ranks, of all classes, who do but come to Jesus Christ. They shall be saved, whatever their apparent position before men, or whatever may be the denomination to which they have linked themselves.

1. Now, I must have you notice, in the first place, *where these people come to*. They “come unto God.” By coming to God we are not to understand the mere formality of devotion, since this may be but a solemn means of sinning. What a splendid general confession is that in the Church of England Prayer Book, “We have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep. We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and there is no health in us.”

There is not to be found a finer confession in the English language. And yet how often, my dear friends, have the best of us mocked God by repeating such expressions verbally and thinking we have done our duty! How many of you go to chapel and must confess your own absence of mind while you have bowed your knee in prayer or uttered a song of praise!

My friends, it is one thing to go to church or chapel. It is quite another thing to go *to God*. There are many people who can pray right eloquently, and who do so, who have learned a form of prayer by heart, or perhaps, use an extemporary form of words of their own composing, but who, instead of going to God, are all the while going from God.

Let me persuade you all not to be content with mere formality. There will be many damned who never broke the Sabbath, as they thought, but who, all their lives were Sabbath-breakers. It is as much possible to break the Sabbath in a church as it is to break the Sabbath in the park. It is as easy to break it here in this solemn assembly as in your own houses.

Every one of you virtually break the Sabbath when you merely go through a round of duties, having done which, you retire to your chambers, fully content with yourselves and fancy that all is over—that you have done your day’s work—whereas you have never come to God at all, but have merely come to the outward ordinance and to the visible means, which is quite another thing from coming to God Himself.

And let me tell you, again, that coming *to God* is not what some of you suppose—*now and then sincerely performing an act of devotion, but giving to the world the greater part of your life*. You think that if sometimes you are sincere, if now and then you put up an earnest cry to heaven, God will accept you, and though your life may still be worldly and your desires still carnal, you suppose that for the sake of this occasional devotion, God will be pleased, in His infinite mercy, to blot out your sins.

I tell you, sinners, there is no such thing as bringing half of yourselves to God and leaving the other half away. If a man has come here, I suppose he has brought his whole self with him, and so if a man comes to God, he cannot come, half of him, and half of him stay away. Our whole being must be surrendered to the service of our Maker. We must come to Him with an entire dedication of ourselves, giving up all we are and all we shall ever be, to be thoroughly devoted to His service. Otherwise we have never come to God aright.

I am astonished to see how people in these days try to love the world and love Christ too. According to the old proverb, they “hold with the hare and run with the hounds.” They are real good Christians sometimes, when they think they ought to be religious, but they are right bad fellows at other seasons, when they think that religion would be a little loss to them.

Let me warn you all. It is of no earthly use for you to pretend to be on two sides of the question. “If God be God, serve him; If Baal be God, serve him.” I like an out-and-out man of any sort. Give me a man that is a sinner, I have some hope for him when I see him sincere in his vices and open in acknowledging his own character. But if you give me a man who is half-hearted, who is not quite bold

enough to be all for the devil, nor quite sincere enough to be all for Christ, I tell you, I despair of such a man as that. The man who wants to link the two together is in an extremely hopeless case.

Do you think, sinners, you will be able to serve two masters, when Christ has said you cannot? Do you fancy you can walk with God and walk with mammon too? Will you take God on one arm and the devil on the other? Do you suppose you can be allowed to drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of Satan at the same time? I tell you, you shall depart a cursed and miserable hypocrite, if so you come to God.

God will have the whole of you or else you shall not come at all. The whole man must seek after the Lord. The whole soul must be poured out before Him, otherwise it is no acceptable coming to God at all. Oh! halts between two opinions, remember this and tremble.

I think I hear one say, "Well, then, tell us what it is to come to God." I answer, coming to God implies *leaving something else*. If a man comes to God, he must leave his sins. He must leave his righteousness. He must leave both his bad works and his good ones, and come to God, leaving them entirely.

Again, coming to God implies *that there is no aversion towards Him*, for a man will not come to God while he hates God. He will be sure to stay away. Coming to God signifies having *some love for God*. Again, coming to God signifies *desiring God*, desiring to be near to Him. And above all, it signifies *praying to God and putting faith in Him*. That is coming to God and those that have come to God in that fashion are among the saved. They come *to God*, that is the place to which their eager spirits hasten.

2. But notice, next, *how they come*. They "come to God by *Jesus Christ*." We have known many persons who call themselves natural religionists. They worship the God of nature and they think that they can approach God apart from Jesus Christ. There be some men we know of who despise the mediation of the Savior, and who, if they were in an hour of peril, would put up their prayer at once to God, without faith in the Mediator.

Do such of you fancy that you will be heard and saved by the great God your Creator, apart from the merits of His Son? Let me solemnly assure you, in God's most holy name, there never was a prayer answered for salvation, by God the Creator, since Adam fell, without Jesus Christ the Mediator. "No man can come to God but by Jesus Christ."

And if any of you deny the divinity of Christ, and if any soul among you do not come to God through the merits of a Savior, bold fidelity obliges me to pronounce you condemned persons, for however amiable you may be, you cannot be right in the rest, unless you think rightly of Him.

I tell you, you may offer all the prayers that ever may be prayed, but you shall be damned, unless you put them up through Christ. It is all in vain for you to take your prayers and carry them yourself to the throne. "Get you hence, sinner, get you hence," says God. "I never knew you. Why did you not put your prayer into the hands of a Mediator? It would have been sure of an answer. But as you presented it yourself, see what I will do with it!" And He reads your petitions and casts it to the four winds of heaven, and you go away unheard, unsaved.

The Father will never save a man apart from Christ. There is not one soul now in heaven who was not saved by Jesus Christ. There is not one who ever came to God aright, who did not come through Jesus Christ. If you would be at peace with God, you must come to Him through Christ, as the way, the truth, and the life, making mention of His righteousness, and of His only.

3. But when these people come, *what do they come for?* There are some who think they come to God, but who do not come for the right thing. Many a young student cries to God to help him in his studies. Many a merchant comes to God that he may be guided through a dilemma in his business. They are accustomed, in any difficulty, to put up some kind of prayer, which if they knew its value, they might cease from offering, for "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD."

But the poor sinner, in coming to Christ, has only one object. If all the world were offered to him, he would not think it worth his acceptance if he could not have Jesus Christ.

There is a poor man, condemned to die, locked up in the condemned cell, the bell is tolling. He will soon be taken off to die on the gallows. There, man, I have brought you a fine robe. What! no smile at it? Look! it is stiff with silver! Mark you not how it is bedizened with jewels? Such a robe as that cost many and many a pound, and much fine workmanship was expended on it. Contemptuously he smiles at it!

See here, man, I present you something else—here is a glorious estate for you, with broad acres, fine mansions, parker and lawns, take that title deed, 'tis yours. What! not smile, sir? Had I given that estate to any man who walked the street, less poor than you are, he would have danced for very joy. And will you not afford a smile, when I make you rich and clothe you with gold?

Then let me try once more. There is Caesar's purple for you. Put it on your shoulders—there is his crown. It shall sit on no other head but yours. It is the crown of empires that know no limit. I'll make you a king. You shall have a kingdom upon which the sun shall never set. You shall reign from pole to pole. Stand up, call yourself Caesar. You are emperor. What! No smile?

What do you want? "Take away that bauble," says he of the crown. "Rend up that worthless parchment. Take away that robe. Ay, cast it to the winds. Give it to the kings of the earth who live, but I have to die and of what use are these to me? Give me a pardon and I will not care to be a Caesar. Let me live a beggar, rather than die a prince."

So is it with the sinner when he comes to God, he comes for salvation. He says,

*“Wealth and honor I disdain;
Earthly comforts, Lord, are vain,
These will never satisfy,
Give me Christ, or else I die.”*

Mercy is his sole request. O my friends, if you have ever come to God, crying out for salvation, and for salvation only, then you have come to God aright. It were useless then to mock you. You cry for bread, should I give you stones? You would but hurl them at me. Should I offer you wealth? It would be little. We must preach to the sinner who comes to Christ, the gift for which he asks—the gift of salvation by Jesus Christ the Lord—as being his own by faith.

4. One more thought upon this coming to Christ. In *what style do these persons come?* I will try and give you a description of certain persons, all coming to the gate of mercy, as they think, for salvation. There comes one, a fine fellow in a coach and six! See how hard he drives and how rapidly he travels. He is a fine fellow. He has men in livery and his horses are richly caparisoned. He is rich, exceeding rich.

He drives up to the gate and says, "Knock at that gate for me. I am rich enough, but still I dare say it would be as well to be on the safe side. I am a very respectable gentleman. I have enough of my own good works and my own merits, and this chariot, I dare say, would carry me across the river death and land me safely on the other side. But still, it is fashionable to be religious, so I will approach the gate. Porter! Undo the gates and let me in, see what an honorable man I am." You will never find the gates undone for that man. He does not approach in the right manner.

There comes another. He has not quite so much merit, but still he has some. He comes walking along, and having leisurely marched up, he cries, "Angel! Open the gate to me, I am come to Christ. I think I should like to be saved. I do not feel that I very much require salvation, I have always been a very honest, upright, moral man. I do not know myself to have been much of a sinner. I have robes of my own, but I would not mind putting Christ's robes on. It would not hurt me. I may as well have the wedding garment. Then I can have my own too." Ah! the gates are still hard and fast, and there is no opening of them.

But let me show you the right man. There he comes, sighing and groaning, crying and weeping all the way. He has a rope on his neck, for he thinks he deserves to be condemned. He has rags on him. He

comes to the heavenly throne, and when he approaches mercy's gate, he is almost afraid to knock. He lifts up his eyes and he sees it written, "Knock and it shall be opened to you."

But he fears lest he should profane the gate by his poor touch. He gives at first a gentle rap and if mercy's gate open not, he is a poor dying creature. So he gives another rap, then another and another, and although he raps times without number, and no answer comes, still he is a sinful man, and he knows himself to be unworthy, so he keeps rapping still.

And at last the good angel smiling from the gate, says, "Ah! this gate was built for beggars, not for princes. Heaven's gate was made for spiritual paupers, not for rich men. Christ died for sinners, not for those who are good and excellent. He came into the world to save the vile.

*“Not the righteous—
Sinners, Jesus came to call.”*

“Come in, poor man! Come in. Thrice welcome!” And the angels sing, “Thrice welcome!”

How many of you, dear friends, have come to God by Jesus Christ in that fashion? Not with the pompous pride of the Pharisee, not with the cant of the good man who thinks he deserves salvation, but with the sincere cry of a penitent, with the earnest desire of a thirsty soul after living water, panting as the thirsty hart in the wilderness after the water brooks, desiring Christ as they that look for the morning, I say, more than they that look for the morning.

As my God who sits in heaven lives, if you have not come to God in this fashion, you have not come to God at all. But if you have thus come to God, here is the glorious word for you, “He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him.”

II. Thus we have disposed of the first point, the coming to God. And now, secondly, WHAT IS THE MEASURE OF THE SAVIOR'S ABILITY?

This is a question as important as if it were for life or death—a question as to the ability of Jesus Christ. How far can salvation go? What are its limits and its boundaries? Christ is a Savior, how far is He able to save? He is a Physician, to what extent will His skill reach to heal diseases? What a noble answer the text gives! “He is able to save to the uttermost.”

Now, I will certainly affirm, and no one can deny it, that no one here knows how far the uttermost is. David said, if he took the wings of the morning to fly to the uttermost parts of the sea, even there should God reach him. But who knows where the uttermost is? Borrow the angel's wing and fly far, far beyond the most remote star—go where wings have never flapped before, and where the undisturbed ether is as serene and quiet as the breast of Deity itself—you will not come to the uttermost.

Go on still, mounted on a morning ray, fly on still, beyond the bounds of creation, where space itself fails, and where chaos takes up its reign—you will not come to the uttermost. It is too far for mortal intellect to conceive of. It is beyond the range of reason or of thought. Now, our text tells us that Christ is “able to save to the uttermost.”

1. Sinner, I shall address you first, and saints of God, I shall address you afterwards. Sinner, Christ is “able to save to the uttermost,” by which we understand that *the uttermost extent of guilt* is not beyond the power of the Savior. Can anyone tell what is the uttermost amount to which a man might sin? Some of us conceive that Palmer has gone almost to the uttermost of human depravity. We fancy that no heart could be much more vile than that which conceived a murder so deliberate and contemplated a crime so protracted.

But I can conceive it possible that there might be even worse men than he, and that if his life were spared, and he were set at large, he might become even a worse man than he is now. Yes, supposing he were to commit another murder, and then another, and another, would he have gone to the uttermost? Could not a man be yet more guilty? As long as ever he lives, he may become more guilty than he was the day before. But yet my text says Christ is, “able to save to the uttermost.”

I may imagine a person has crept in here who thinks himself to be the most loathsome of all beings, the most condemned of all creatures. “Surely,” says he, “I have gone to the utmost extremity of sin. None could outstrip me in vice.” My dear friend, suppose you had gone to the uttermost, remember that even then you would not have gone beyond the reach of divine mercy. For He is, “able to save to the uttermost,” and it is possible that you yourself might go a little further, and therefore you have not gone to the uttermost yet. However far you may have gone—if you have gone to the very arctic regions of vice, where the sun of mercy seems to scatter but a few oblique rays, there can the light of salvation reach you.

If I should see a sinner staggering on in his progress to hell, I would not give him up, even when he had advanced to the last stage of iniquity. Though his foot hung trembling over the very verge of perdition, I would not cease to pray for him. And though he should in his poor drunken wickedness go staggering on till one foot were over hell and he were ready to perish, I would not despair of him.

Till the pit had shut her mouth upon him, I would believe it still possible that divine grace might save him. See there! he is just upon the edge of the pit, ready to fall, but ere he falls, free grace bids, “Arrest that man!” Down mercy comes, catches him on her broad wings, and he is saved, a trophy of redeeming love.

If there be any such in this vast assembly—if there be any here of the outcast of society, the vilest of the vile, the scum, the draff of this poor world—oh, you chief of sinners! Christ is “able to save to the uttermost.” Tell that everywhere, in every attic, in every cellar, in every haunt of vice, in every kennel of sin, tell it everywhere! “To the uttermost!” “He is able also to save them to the uttermost.”

2. Yet again—not only to the uttermost of crime, but to *the uttermost of rejection*. I must explain what I mean by this. There are many of you here who have heard the Gospel from your youth up. I see some here, who like myself are children of pious parents. There are some of you upon whose infant forehead the pure heavenly drops of a mother’s tears continually fell.

There are many of you here who were trained up by one whose knee, whenever it was bent, was ever bent for you. She never rested in her bed at night till she had prayed for you, her first-born son. Your mother has gone to heaven, it may be, and all the prayers she ever prayed for you are as yet unanswered. Sometimes you wept. You remember well how she grasped your hand and said to you, “Ah! John, you will break my heart by this, your sin, if you continue running on in those ways of iniquity. Oh! if you did but know how your mother’s heart yearns for your salvation, surely your soul would melt and you would fly to Christ.”

Do you not remember that time? The hot sweat stood upon your brow and you said—for you could not break her heart—“Mother, I will think of it.” And you did think of it. But you met your companion outside and it was all gone, your mother’s expostulation was brushed away, like the thin cobwebs of the gossamer, blown by the swift north wind, not a trace of it was left.

Since then you have often stepped in to hear the minister. Not long ago you heard a powerful sermon. The minister spoke as though he were a man just started from his grave, with as much earnestness as if he had been a sheeted ghost come back from the realms of despair, to tell you of his own awful fate, and warn you of it.

You remember how the tears rolled down your cheeks, while he told you of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come? You remember how he preached to you Jesus, and salvation by the cross, and you rose up from your seat in that chapel and you said, “Praise God. I am spared another day, I will turn to Him with full purpose of heart?”

And there you are, still unchanged—perhaps worse than you were. And you have spent your Sunday afternoons, the angel knows where. And your mother’s spirit knows where you have spent it too, and could she weep, she would weep over you who have this day despised God’s Sabbath and trampled on His Holy Word.

But do you feel in your heart tonight the tender motions of the Holy Spirit? Do you feel something say, “Sinner! Come to Christ now?” Do you hear conscience whispering to you, telling you of your past

transgression? And is there some sweet angel voice, saying, “Come to Jesus, come to Jesus. He will save you yet?”

I tell you, sinner, you may have rejected Christ to the very uttermost, but He is still able to save you. There are a thousand prayers on which you have trampled, there are a hundred sermons all wasted on you, there are thousands of Sabbaths which you have thrown away. You have rejected Christ. You have despised His Spirit, but still He ceases not to cry, “Return, return!” He is, “able to save thee to the uttermost,” if you come unto God by Him.

3. There is another case which demands my particular attention tonight. It is that of the man who has gone to *the uttermost of despair*. There are some poor creatures in this world, who from a course of crime have become hardened, and when at last aroused by remorse and the prickings of conscience, there is an evil spirit which broods over them, telling them it is hopeless for such as they are to seek salvation.

We have met with some who have gone so far that they have thought that even devils might be saved rather than they could. They have given themselves up for lost and signed their own death warrant, and in such a state of mind have positively taken the halter in their hand to end their unhappy lives. Despair has brought many a man to a premature death. It has sharpened many a knife and mingled many a cup of poison.

Have I a despairing person here? I know him by his somber face and downcast looks. He wishes he were dead, for he thinks that hell itself could be scarce worse torment than to be here expecting it. Let me whisper words of consolation to him. Despairing soul! hope yet, for Christ “is able to save to the uttermost.”

And though you are put in the lowest dungeon of the castle of despair, though key after key has been turned upon you, and this iron grating of your window forbids all filing, and the height of your prison wall is so awful that you could not expect to escape, yet let me tell you, there is one at the gate who can break every bolt and undo every lock. There is one who can lead you out to God’s free air and save you yet, for though the worst may come to the worst, He “is able to save you to the uttermost.”

4. And now a word to the saint, to comfort him, for this text is his also. Beloved brother in the Gospel! Christ is able to save you to the uttermost. Are you brought very low by *distress*? Have you lost house and home, friend and property? Remember, you have not come “to the uttermost” yet. Badly off as you are, you might be worse. He is able to save you, and suppose it should come to this, that you had not a rag left, nor a crust, nor a drop of water, still He would be able to save you, for “He is able to save to the uttermost.”

So with temptation. If you should have the sharpest *temptation* with which mortal was ever tried, He is able to save you. If you should be brought into such a predicament that the foot of the devil should be upon your neck and the fiend should say, “Now I will make an end of you,” God would be able to save you then.

Ay, and in the uttermost *infirmity* should you live for many a year, till you are leaning on your staff, and tottering along your weary life, if you should outlive Methuselah, you could not live beyond the uttermost, and He would save you then. Yea, and when your little bark is launched by *death* upon the unknown sea of eternity, He will be with you. And though thick vapors of gloomy darkness gather round you and you cannot see into the dim future, though your thoughts tell you that you will be destroyed, yet God will be “able to save you to the uttermost.”

Then, my friends, if Christ is able to save a Christian to the uttermost, do you suppose He will ever let a Christian perish? Wherever I go, I hope always to bear my hearty protest against the most accursed doctrine of a saint’s falling away and perishing. There are some ministers who preach that a man may be a child of God (now, angels! do not hear what I am about to say, listen to me, you who are down below in hell, for it may suit you) that a man may be a child of God today, and a child of the devil tomorrow. That God may acquit a man and yet condemn him—save him by grace and then let him perish—suffer a man to be taken out of Christ’s hands, though He has said such a thing shall never take place.

How will you explain this? It certainly is no lack of power. You must accuse Him of a want of love and do you dare to do that? He is full of love and since He has also the power, He will never suffer one of His people to perish. It is true and ever shall be true, that He will save them to the very uttermost.

III. Now, in the last place, WHY IS IT THAT JESUS CHRIST IS “ABLE TO SAVE TO THE UTTERMOST?”

The answer is, that He “ever liveth to make intercession for them.” This implies that *He died*, which is indeed the great source of His saving power. Oh! how sweet it is to reflect upon the great and wondrous works which Christ has done, whereby He has become “the high priest of our profession,” able to save us! It is pleasant to look back to Calvary’s hill and to behold that bleeding form expiring on the tree. It is sweet, amazingly sweet, to pry with eyes of love between those thick olives and hear the groans of the Man who sweat great drops of blood.

Sinner, if you ask me how Christ can save you, I tell you this—He can save you, because He did not save Himself. He can save you, because He took your guilt and endured your punishment. There is no way of salvation apart from the satisfaction of divine justice. Either the sinner must die, or else someone must die for him. Sinner, Christ can save you, because if you come to God by Him, then He died for you. God has a debt against us and He never remits that debt. He will have it paid. Christ pays it and then the poor sinner goes free.

And we are told another reason why He is able to save, not only because He died, but *because He lives to make intercession for us*. That Man who once died on the cross is alive. That Jesus who was buried in the tomb is alive. If you ask me what He is doing, I bid you listen. Listen, if you have ears! Did you not hear Him, poor penitent sinner? Did you not hear His voice, sweeter than harpers playing on their harps? Did you not hear a charming voice?

Listen! What did it say? “O My Father! Forgive _____!” Why, He mentioned your own name! “O My Father, forgive him, he knew not what he did. It is true he sinned against light, and knowledge, and warnings—sinned willfully and woefully, but Father, forgive him!” Penitent, if you can listen, you will hear Him praying for you. And that is why He is able to save.

A warning and a question, and I have done. First, a warning. Remember, *there is a limit to God’s mercy*. I have told you from the Scriptures that, “He is *able* to save to the uttermost.” But there is a limit to His purpose to save. If I read the Bible rightly, there is one sin which can never be forgiven. It is the sin against the Holy Ghost.

Tremble, unpardoned sinners, lest you should commit that. If I may tell you what I think the sin against the Holy Ghost is, I must say that I believe it can be different in different people. But in many persons, the sin against the Holy Ghost consists in stifling their convictions. Tremble, my hearers, lest tonight’s sermon should be the last you hear.

Go away and scorn the preacher, if you like, but do not neglect his warning. Perhaps the very next time you laugh over a sermon, or mock a prayer, or despise a text, the very next oath you swear, God may say, “He is given to idols, let him alone. My Spirit shall no more strive with that man. I will never speak to him again.” That is the warning.

And now, lastly, the question. *Christ has done so much for you, what have you ever done for Him?* Ah! poor sinner, if you knew that Christ died for you—and I know that He did, if you repent—if you knew that one day you will be His, would you spit upon Him now? Would you scoff at God’s day, if you knew that one day it will be your day? Would you despise Christ if you knew that He loves you now and will display that love by and by?

Oh! there are some of you who will loathe yourselves when you know Christ, because you did not treat Him better. He will come to you one of these bright mornings, and He will say, “Poor sinner, I forgive you,” and you will look up in His face and say, “What! Lord, forgive me? I used to curse You, I laughed at Your people, I despised everything that had to do with religion. Forgive me?” “Yes,” says Christ, “give Me your hand. I loved you when you hated Me, come here!”

And sure there is nothing that will break a heart half so much as thinking of the way in which you sinned against one who loved you so much.

Oh! beloved, hear again the text, “He is able also to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him.” I am no orator. I have no eloquence, but if I were the one, and had the other, I would preach to you with all my soul. As it is, I only talk right on and tell you what I do know. I can only say again,

*“He is able;
He is willing: doubt no more.*

*Come, ye thirsty, come and welcome,
God’s free bounty, glorify:
True belief and true repentance,
Every grace that brings us nigh—
Without money
Come to Jesus Christ, and buy.”*

“For he is able also to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him.” O Lord! Make sinners come! Spirit of God! Make them come! Compel them to come to Christ by sweet constraint and let not our words be in vain or our labor lost. For Jesus Christ’s sake! Amen.

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.