

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

REDEMPTION AND ITS CLAIMS.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, MARCH 8TH, 1874, BY

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"Ye are bought with a price."—1 Corinthians vi. 20.

"Ye are bought with a price."—1 Corinthians vii. 23.

THE same words are found in each place, though a different inference is drawn from them. "Ye are bought with a price." This morning's text was "Without money and without price," and to the best of my ability I tried to show how freely the blessings of the gospel are bestowed upon the sons of men. But though they cost us nothing, they cost the Saviour dear. They are without price to us, but what a price he paid! Well did our poet put it in the remarkable verse which we sang—

"There's ne'er a gift his hand bestows
But cost his heart a groan."

Out of that fact grow certain most weighty practical truths, and I have chosen it as the subject of this evening's discourse that I may urge them upon your minds. May the Holy Spirit work graciously through the word which you will hear, and cause you to live as those who are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.

First, I shall have to say to you that *redemption is our chief blessing*—nothing better can be said of you than this, "Ye are bought with a price." Then I shall have to remind you that *redemption on God's part becomes his paramount claim upon us*; and thirdly, I shall have to show that *this claim is remarkably extensive*, and I shall urge you to admit it.

I. First, then, "YE ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE."

To every man of whom this may be said, it is the best news he ever heard. An angel sent from heaven could not bring to any man or woman here a more delightful message than this, "Thou art bought with a price, even with the precious blood of Christ." "Ye are Christ's," says the apostle in the chapter we read to you (1 Cor. iii.), and he seemed as if

his heart glowed as he said it. He even made it the climax of a remarkable burst of eloquence. "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." To be bought with a price is the grandest distinction of our manhood, and lifts us above angels themselves. It puts great honour upon the saints, even as the Lord has said, "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee."

Redemption is a greater mercy than *creation*. It is no mean blessing to have been made, and to have been made a man rather than a dog or a toad, or a worm, to have been blest with intellect, with a mind that can soar into the unseen, a judgment which can weigh, a memory which can retain, an imagination which can create and colour thoughts of every kind. It is no little matter to be capable of mental joys which widen the sphere of existence, beliefs which open up the past and make us see the far gone ages, and hopes which relieve the darkness of the present with lamps borrowed from the future. It is a great thing to be a man and not a bird—a man with a soul which will never fall by the fowler's gun. It is a great thing to be an immortal man, to be a creature that shall live on for ever, into whom God has dropped a spark of undying flame. It is a grand thing to have a spirit within us, and not to be dumb driven cattle. But for all that, although man is highly elevated in the scale of being, and stands even at the very top of being as respects this world, having dominion over all the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea; yet if thou, O created man, be not redeemed, everything about thee will only be turned into a curse, so that it were better for thee that a millstone had been tied about thy neck, that thou hadst been thrown into the depths of the sea, or even better for thee that thou hadst never been born, if thou art not redeemed. "Bought with a price" makes existence life; to be unredeemed would make existence an endless death.

Providence also is a short word, calling before our minds a great mass of mercies; but providence is second in its blessedness to redemption. I would remind you of the inestimable blessings which the providence of God has brought to many here present; it is no small thing to be in health, no little thing to have your reason preserved to you. It is no minor blessing to have bread to eat and raiment to put on, and not to be distressed as many of the poorest of our brethren are as to where they shall lay their heads, and where they shall find to-morrow's food. Some of us are surrounded with many comforts, and ought, every time we look at the bed on which we sleep at night, and the room in which we spend our days, to sing unto God who has favoured us so much,

"Not more than others we deserve,
But God has given us more."

Look around you! Some of you have not only the necessaries, but the luxuries of life. You are favoured exceedingly in these things. But, oh, if you be not redeemed, what will it matter though you were

clothed in scarlet and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, like Dives, and then should lift up your eyes in the flames of hell? What would it matter though you had the comeliness and majestic appearance of an Absalom, and yet over you a pious father would have to say, "Would God I had died for thee! O Absalom, my son, my son!" What would it be to you to have been possessor of the world, and to have called the seas your own, if you had no part or lot in the redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ, and were never saved from wrath through him? Redemption demands a louder note of gratitude than creation! Sweet as providence must ever be to the believer, yet redemption, redemption is the best wine kept unto the last, the last and best work of heaven, the mirror in which the brightest attributes of Jehovah are most clearly reflected. This is the head-stone of the corner, crowning the great temple of divine grace. "God so loved the world"—not as to make it fair and beautiful; that is not enough: "God so loved the world"—not so as to sustain it, and give it day and night, and summer and winter; that is not enough: but the line that will fathom the depths of divine love is this: he "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

Remember, dear friends, that redemption is that which gives effect to all the other great blessings of God. I say "great blessings," for I refer to spiritual blessings; all these need redemption to complete their design. For instance, election, the well-head of grace, needs the conduit-pipe of redemption to bring its streams down to sinners. We are chosen of God, but unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. The saints are chosen in him, and without him of what avail would election be? Where, also, would be our calling? Vain would it be to be called if there were no feast of dying love for us to be called to, and no fountain filled with blood to which we might come at the call. Redemption is the fulness of all the blessings of God; they are like Gideon's fleece, and redemption bedews them. It is the key of heaven, the channel of grace, the door of hope. It constitutes our song in the house of our pilgrimage, and will be the theme of our eternal music above.

I would not fail to remind you, also, that redemption at this moment is the foundation of all the real peace that any man possesses. If you have any peace of mind worth having, you have found it at the foot of the cross. If the tempest of your fears concerning the wrath of God has been quieted, there is only one voice which could have stilled its boisterous noise; it is the voice of Jesus. Peace apart from the blood of Jesus there is not, except it be that delusive peace which, like the solemn stillness which precedes the hurricane, is only the forerunner of destruction. All the peace you have is through redemption, and all the security you have comes by the same way. You hope to be saved at the last, your trust is that you shall die triumphantly, and rise rejoicingly, but it is all through the blood. Where were all the saints if it were not for redeeming grace and dying love? Notwithstanding their professions they are without Christ as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Piety has no root where redemption is unknown. Past experience and present enjoyment would melt away

like the rime of the morning's frost before the rising sun, were it not that we are sealed by the precious blood of Christ ; and the Lord knoweth them that are his, and will keep them securely to the end.

But, oh, beloved, there is one more truth never to be forgotten. It is through redeeming grace that we expect to enter heaven. In a few short weeks, or months, or, peradventure, years, you and I, who believe in Jesus, will be in the glory. We shall have done with these work-days here, and shall have entered into the endless Sabbath ; we shall be—

“Where congregations ne'er break up,
And worship has no end.”

Our head shall soon wear the crown immortal, and our hands shall bear the harp from which we will draw the richest music of praise ; but our only hope to enter there is through the blood, and our only song there shall be : “We have washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” O ye morning stars that sang together when a new-made world first revolved around the sun ! O ye wondering spirits who have oft admired the wisdom and the justice of God in dealing with the sinful race of men, lift high your notes and sing yet sweeter songs concerning redemption, and let your wonder never cease that God should become man, and, as man, should suffer, bleed, and die that he might redeem his people, that of them it might be said they were “bought with a price”!

II. I have thus assured you all that redemption is our best blessing ; I trust ye will not rest without it. Now, I want to dwell upon the next point, namely, that therefore REDEMPTION IS THE LORD'S PARAMOUNT CLAIM UPON US.

Paul does not say, “Ye are not your own : for God made you.” That is true of all things that are, as well the cattle, and the trees and the dust of the earth as regenerated man. He does not say, “Ye are not your own : God created you.” That would be true of the devil, and his angels, and of the whole race of rebellious men. Neither does he say, “Ye are not your own : God preserves you.” That would be most true, for God, who keeps the breath in our nostrils, ought to have our praise ; but that also would be true of all creatures, even of the most wicked. But there is a special point here, “Ye are not your own : ye are *bought*,” not merely made and preserved, but bought, and “bought with a price.” You who are children of God, you were bought as the devils never were, for Jesus never died to save them ; “he took not up angels, but he took up the seed of Abraham.” Ye are bought as the ungodly were not, for they remain the slaves of Satan, and are not redeemed from their vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers. They have rejected the purchase price : they remain unredeemed from their slavery to sin ; but you have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot ; and therefore Christ lays his pierced hand upon you and says, “You are mine.” Your King sets the broad arrow on you, and marks you to-night as royal property. There was one possession which Jacob had which he greatly valued, and which he gave to his darling son Joseph, “because,” he said, “I took it out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and

with my bow." You also are the possession which Christ values beyond everything, because he has delivered you out of the hand of sin and Satan by his own sufferings and death; and because of this he has the highest conceivable right of property in you. He is not merely your Creator and Preserver, but he is your Redeemer; and, therefore, if all the world should refuse him homage, and all men should revolt from him, and even if the angels should desert his standard, yet you must not, for you are bought with a price. Other claims are forcible, but this claim is overwhelming. Other bands are strong, but these cords of love are invincible. The love of Christ constraineth us.

Now, let us look at this claim. Think, beloved, what you were bought from. You were a slave, and you have been redeemed. You were a slave to sin. Remember that. Perhaps there was a time when you could rap out an oath as well as anybody, and when the pleasures of this world and the lusts thereof were sweet morsels under your tongue. How came you to be saved from bad habits and filthy passions? You are bought with a price; you are the Lord's freeman to-day. You have broken those chains, but not by your own power. You have been bought with a price, for "ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ." There is a redemption from sin.

Then you have been redeemed from the punishment of sin. You had begun to feel that. You were full of doubts and fears and dreadful apprehensions of God's wrath, and you felt as if hell had begun in you: it is not so now, the blood of redemption has spoken peace, and you are no more afraid. Well do I remember when the flames of hell burned in my soul, as far as they could in this human life, yea, they dried up my spirit, and parched up my heart, so that my soul chose strangling rather than life; it was such a wretched thing to live. But it is not so now, blessed be God. We are redeemed from remorse and despair, and set free from the horrible sense of guilt. In a little time we should have been in hell; but since we have believed we never shall come into the place of torment, for sin is forgiven and the sense of sin is removed, and we can say in the words of our text of last Sunday night, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that hath risen again, who sitteth at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." We are redeemed from sin, from remorse, and from hell itself.

And now at this moment we are redeemed from the avenging justice of God. Jesus Christ has borne our sins in his own body on the tree, and by the merit of his death has for ever rendered compensation to the injured honour of divine justice. He has magnified the law and made it honourable, so that the law itself can ask no more of a sinner for whom Christ has died, for Christ has paid to the law all that justice could demand. Oh, think of that! Rejoice, beloved, that you are redeemed from sin, and death, and 'hell, and the claims of unbending justice, and surely you will feel that there is a claim upon you that you should be the Lord's.

Reflect most lovingly upon that dear friend who bought you out of iron bondage, who it was that redeemed you. You have not been

redeemed by an angel. Dear would the angelic name have been had it been so ; but angels were powerless in this grand affair. Who stooped to pick thee up, O insect of a day ? Who stooped to save thee ? Who but he who bears earth's huge pillars up and spreads the heavens abroad ? The Son of God, omnipotent, eternal, and infinite, has fallen in love with the fallen sons of men, and for them has donned the garment of human flesh, and in that flesh has suffered to the death, and died a most shameful death upon the gibbet of Calvary. Oh, tell it everywhere that Jesus Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever, has redeemed us ! and after that, who will say that we do not belong to him ?

Then think of the price he paid. The text does not tell us about it, and surely the reason for its silence is to be found in the fact that words cannot express the mighty sum. "Ye are bought. Ye are bought with a price." Sometimes it is best when you cannot say what you would, to say nothing at all. The famous painter, when he drew the picture of Agamemnon at the sacrifice of his daughter, felt that he could not depict the sorrow of the father's countenance, and therefore he wisely put a veil over it, and represented him as hiding his face from the fearful sight. So the apostle seems to have felt, "I cannot tell you all that Jesus suffered, so I will leave it. Ye are bought with a price." Now, turn that over lovingly. Muse on it devoutly till your hearts burn like coals of juniper ! "A price !" The price was God born at Bethlehem as a man, and then living thirty years and more in poverty and contumely, suffering in Gethsemane till sweat of blood fell on the ground, falsely accused, ridiculed, spit upon, buffeted, mocked, scourged, nailed to a cross, left there to die, while, in his soul, the great millstone of Jehovah's wrath crushed his spirit as in an olive-press, till his heart was broken and his spirit melted within him like wax. God only knows the sufferings of the Son of God : well does the Greek liturgy pour forth that mysterious plea, "By thine unknown sufferings, good Lord deliver us," for unknown they were. O ye saints, ye were indeed bought with a price, and I charge you, by the agony and bloody sweat, by the cross and passion, own the fact that you belong to Jesus : confess that he bought you with a price incalculable. You are his, and would not wish to question that divine purchase which is the groundwork of your hope. You must not, cannot dispute the sacred claims which Jesus has upon you : rather would you cry, "O Son of David, thine are we, and all that we have."

There is yet this further consideration, that the purchase price of every child of God has been fully paid. I have seen lands which have belonged to men who were reputed to be rich, but there was a heavy mortgage upon them, so that though they called them theirs, they were scarcely so. But there is no mortgage on the saints. There is no debt to be demanded in future ages either of us or of our Redeemer. "It is finished," said the Saviour, and finished it was. He has bought you, and he has paid for you. Are you not his ? There is not one single good work of yours wanted to complete the merit, or a single pang of suffering required from you to perfect the atonement. Ye are perfect in Christ Jesus. Well, then, if the price be paid so fully, are we not completely and fully the Lord's ?

I will put this one thing very solemnly to you, and then leave the point. Beloved, if you are ready to confess that you were bought with a price, you must be equally ready to acknowledge that you cannot be your own, but belong to him who bought you: for, mark you, if the first be not true, then the second does not press; but if the first be true, namely, that Christ redeemed you, then the second is just as true, namely, that you are his, and must live as his, or otherwise you are defrauding him. If you are prepared to abjure your redemption, you may also abjure your allegiance to Christ; but if you are not willing to give up redemption by the blood—and I trust you are not, for that is to give up everything—then you must also agree to this, that you are not your own, or any other man's, but belong to Christ wholly; and for that cause you are bound to render him your whole self, spirit, soul, and body. It is only your reasonable service, for every man in reason expects to have what he has paid for; if Jesus has paid dearly for your soul, and if it be confessed that it is his, then let him have it, and be not you so base as to rob Christ of the reward of his heart's blood. "Will a man rob God?" Will you rob your Redeemer? Will you steal from him the purchase of his agonies, and deprive him of that which it cost him his life to buy? The claim is strong, but only gracious hearts will feel it. O blessed Spirit, cause us to feel it deeply now, and evermore to act under its constraining power.

III. This brings me to the third point, which is—as I have proved the Redeemer's claim—to show THE EXTENT OF IT. The claim of redemption is comprehensive. If you will kindly read the context of my first text you will see that it includes the body and the soul, "Glorify God in your body and your spirit, which are God's."

There the apostle speaks, first, of the body. Young man, read that passage when you get home, will you? I cannot read it now; but if you profess to be a Christian, recollect that this body of yours is holy, and it will rise again from the dead. I charge you, by the blood of Christ, never defile this body either by drunkenness or by lust. If it were the body of a common man, I would say to you for your own sake avoid these evils, but if you be a Christian I have a stronger argument, for your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Mark how strongly the apostle puts it, and try to feel the force of his words. You young men who come to London amidst its vices, read this passage, and shun everything that is akin to lewdness, or leads on to unchastity, for your bodies were bought with your Lord's life-blood, and they are not yours to trifle with. Shun the strange woman, her company, her wine, her glances, her house, her songs, and her resorts. Your bodies are not yours to injure by self-indulgence of any sort. Keep them pure and chaste for that heavenly Bridegroom who has bought them with his blood.

And then your soul is bought too. I was obliged to mention the body, because it is mentioned here, and it is so needful it should be kept pure. But keep the soul pure too. Christ has not bought these eyes that they should read novels calculated to lead me into vanity and vice, such as are published now-a-days. Christ has not bought this brain of mine that I may revel in the perusal of works of blasphemy and filthiness. He has not given me a mind that I may drag it through

the mire with the hope of washing it clean again, as some seem to do who imagine it to be the right thing to be always defiling themselves with scepticism and heresy that they may afterwards come to some minister to help them out of the dirt, or some wise friend to scrub the filth off. There will be enough of dust in going along the best roads : there is no need to go and roll in every dirt heap which foolish atheists and proud sceptics choose to put in the way. Do not defile your mind : it belongs to God : it is bought with the blood of Jesus.

Your whole manhood belongs to God if you are a Christian. Every faculty, every natural power, every talent, every possibility of your being, every capacity of your spirit—all were bought. It would be an awful thing for you if there were any part of you left out of the inventory. That would be a cursed part of the fabric of your being ; but it is all bought with blood, if you be indeed a redeemed man or woman. Therefore keep the whole for Jesus, for it belongs to him.

The apostle draws from the fact that we are bought with a price in my first text the inference "Ye are not your own." It is clear as the sun at noon that if you are bought you are not your own. Now, if I am not my own, what does that negative declaration imply?

It means, first, that I may not claim the right to do as I like. I am not my own. If I were my own I might do what I pleased ; but I am not my own. I am not to do what I please, but what Christ pleases. I am to please my Lord and Master in everything. My question in life is not how shall I get the most happiness to myself? but how can I bring the most honour to him? I am not my own : then I am not to follow my own passions. If I were my own I might fling the bridle on my neck and go whither I would, and no longer restrain my passions ; but since I am not my own, I must not, I cannot live after the flesh. Unless I am false to him that bought me, I dare not obey the bidding of my corruptions.

Neither if I am not my own may I follow my own tastes if in any way I should so bring grief to the people of God or dishonour to the name of Christ. I think, dear brethren, that one of the best tests of a Christian is that he will not only do no wrong, but he will not do that which might lead others to do wrong. Many things are lawful to us which are not expedient ; and often the Christian will say to himself, "Such a thing I think I might do if I were Alexander Selkirk on a desert island, and nobody saw me ; but insomuch as there are others who will take occasion to go beyond this act of mine, and weak ones who will be scandalised by what I do, God forbid I should make my brother to offend ; for I am not my own. If I were my own master, and had not my Lord and his cause to consider, I might do a thousand things ; but I will deny myself many lawful things for his sake, and the sake of his church, for I am not my own ; I will deny myself even allowable things that I may manifest that I do not belong to myself, but to him."

I am not my own. Then I must not trust my own reasonings. If I were my own teacher, then, of course, I should learn my lessons from my own book ; but I have a Rabbi, even Jesus, and I am resolved with meekness to learn of him. I thought I was wise once, but now I have become a little child, and I love to sit at Jesus' feet to learn of him, for

my reason I have surrendered to him. I believe what he teaches me because he says so, his *ipse dixit* stands to me instead of argument, for what he says must be true.

I am not my own, and so I must not seek my own ends. I must not live in this world that I may get rich, or that I may be famous. I may trade and get riches, but it must be that I may use them for him. I have a family to be kept. Yes, I must give my family to Christ, and then work to keep Christ's family, and so shall I be working for Christ. It is not my business to support myself; for the Lord is my Shepherd, but the Lord supports me through my own exertions, therefore do I even in common labour serve him. "Having food and raiment," I shall be therewith content: and I shall live to do good to the poor, and to the church of God, and to my fellow-men; when he sends me riches I shall take my alabaster box, and break it, and pour it on his head, and never count my treasures so well used as when I give them up to him. If, like Joseph of Arimathea, the believer possessed a new tomb wherein never man lay prepared for himself, he would count it best used if his Lord deigned to use it for his burial; gladly would he lend his chamber for Jesus to keep the passover, or his ass that his Lord might ride into Jerusalem thereon: for the saint holds all things ready at his Master's beck and call. His life is consecration. He has vowed unto the Lord, "I will work for him; I will suffer for him; I will write for him; I will live for him; I will even die for him: by some means or other I will show that I am not my own, or anything that I have." Oh, brethren, I would not like to have an unconsecrated hair of my head, or an unconsecrated hour of the day, or an unconsecrated faculty. Every mental power which God has given to a man ought to be used for God's cause. No faculty which is essentially natural to us may be excused from bowing its neck to the yoke of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sometimes when I have said a humorous thing in preaching I have not asked you to excuse me, for if God has given me humour I mean to use it in his cause; many a man has been caught, and his ear arrested, and his attention won by a quaint remark. If any one can prove it is a wickedness, and not a natural faculty, I will abandon it; but it is a faculty of nature, and it ought to be consecrated and used for the cause of Christ. Whatever you can do, if it is a right thing to do, and God has made it a characteristic of your being, do it for Jesus. If you cannot speak like Mr. Moody, sing like Mr. Sankey; but somehow or other help to promote the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ; for you are not your own, "You are bought with a price."

In my second text the apostle brings forth another inference. Read the seventh chapter at the twenty-third verse: "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men:" by which he means this—As you are not to live for yourself, so you are not to make yourself the slave of other men, and give your powers up to any but to the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not even follow good men slavishly. Do not say, "I am of Paul; I am of Apollos; I am of Calvin; I am of Wesley." Did Calvin redeem you? Did Wesley die for you? Who is Calvin and who is Wesley but ministers by whom ye believed as the Lord gave unto you? Do not so surrender yourself to any

leadership that you rather follow the man than his Master. I will follow anybody if he goes Christ's way, but I will follow nobody, by the grace of God, if he does not go in that direction. Do not pin your faith to anybody's sleeve. Keep close to the Lord Jesus Christ. Ye are bought with a price ; be ye not the servants of men. Do not give yourselves up to party spirit. It is a pity when a man cares only for politics, when the one grand thing he lives for is to return a Liberal for Parliament, or to get in a Radical, or to lift a Tory to the top of the poll. To live for a political party is unworthy of a man who professes to be a Christian. The most advanced politics beneath the sun are nothing compared with living for the bleeding Saviour, and spending one's self for the promotion of the immortal principles of the cross. We are not to give ourselves up to any scientific speculation, educational effort, or to any philanthropic enterprise so as to divert our minds from the grand old cause of Jesus and our God. A story is told of one of the early saints—I think it was Jerome—that he dreamed that he died, and went to the gates of heaven, and they said to him, "Who art thou?" And he said, "I am Jerome, a student of Scripture." And they said to him, "No, you are not ; you are one Jerome, a student of Cicero ;" for he had been much more accustomed to the study of Cicero and the great Latin writers, than to the reading of the Scriptures. He dreamed that, therefore, he was not permitted to enter heaven ; and upon waking from his dream he put aside his classic books to make the Word of God the main study of his life. Alas ! there are a great many people in the world who do not live for Christ. They are living for something else. The main thing with them is often a trifle light as air, a pursuit of almost infinitesimal value. I heard once a great divine saying to another great divine that he had spent a most important day on Snowdon, he considered it one of the most successful days of his life. Being in their line myself, I wondered what great revival services had been held on Snowdon, among the Welshmen. The eminent ecclesiastic said he had been many years on the watch, but had never till that day been able to satisfy himself. I wondered if he had been in prayer, watching for the conversion of the Welsh people. He said he found three different kinds of them, and was now sure they were quite distinct. Did he mean three kinds of religious inquirers whose cases he had at last been able to understand ? Not he. He had been speaking of three species of beetles which he had met with after a day's searching. The minister of Christ had much joy over three beetles, but probably cared little for repenting sinners. And I am afraid there are many who spend their time in trifles as small as that, and perhaps far less innocent. Everything is a trifle to a man who is a Christian except the glorifying of Christ. "Felix has driven into an ambassador," said good old William Carey, when they told him that his son Felix had been made ambassador from the British court to the court of Burmah. He had been a poor missionary before, and now they had made him a great ambassador ; but his father said, "He has driven into an ambassador." If a man who lives for Jesus and preaches the gospel could suddenly be transformed into the Emperor of Germany, it would be a frightful come-down for him. To live for

Jesus is the highest style of man. God grant we may realise that, for we are bought with a price.

If we do not belong to man, it follows that we ought not to follow the fashions of the world. Some people must be in the fashion, cost what it may; out of the fashion they feel they might as well be out of the world. It is almost death to them if they cannot dress and act after the manner of *society*; hence they run into extravagance, pride, show, and folly. The pride of life eats them up. When fashions go wrong it should be the Christian's fashion to go against the fashion.

Let no man be your master. If ye have masters according to the flesh, serve them with all faithfulness, as becomes you, giving unto them diligent service; but as to any master over your spirit, allow no one to be so; consciences were made for God alone. Bow not down your heart and conscience before man, but be free, for "you are bought with a price."

To close. We are, then, it seems, wholly Christ's. Christ, then, my brethren and sisters, if we are as we should be, is Lord of our time. We may not say, "I have an hour of my own to waste." It is Christ's time. He is Lord of our household; we do not claim to be paramount there, but we say, "Lord, these are thy children; help us to bring them up for thee. Our household is thine. Lord, grant that by family prayer and by holy example we may make our family to be 'Holiness to the Lord.'" You will go out to business and say, "This business is not mine; it is my Master's." You will not trade in any dishonest way if you do that. It will be holy trading. The farmer goes to the field, and says, "This is the Redeemer's field, and what profit I shall make from it is his profit." If he feels in that way his actions will be kind, and generous, and right, and God-fearing. I would that every young man felt, "If I have talents they are God's talents, to be used for him." Young men will join clubs and societies, and become most energetic members; but when they join churches, we get the distinguished honour of having their names on the book to encumber the church-roll, and not much more, very often. That is not right if they belong to Jesus.

Christian people ought in all they do to be looking out for opportunities of serving Christ. I have heard of a Jew who, going forth to trade, and having a choice between two towns, asked "Where is the synagogue?" and when he had found there was a synagogue in one town and not in the other, he gave the preference to that in which he could worship with his brethren. It ought to be so with the Christian. But often Christian men forget even to inquire about such matters. They make money, and go and live out of London, and where do they select their residence? They say, "Here is a beautiful view, and a respectable neighbourhood." But there is no place of worship where they can take their children, and where they can go themselves,—does that always influence them? I fear not. They look to other matters first. I have known them go to places where they could not possibly get any good, and they have not even tried to do any. I like to hear a Christian man say, "There is a destitute village. Now, if I live there I may build a little place of worship, and so I may do good." This is an object worth aiming at; and if the wealthy Chris-

tians of England, when they remove from large centres of population, always set to work to try and spread the gospel round about where they live, they would be like seed sown in the ground or like salt scattered among society to preserve the land. Our first aim in life should be to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am afraid I am rapping some of you a little hard, or perhaps you will call it treading on your corns. You should not have corns, you know, and then I could not tread upon them. If you are not doing right, and anything I say comes very closely home, it ought to come home. Dear brother, try to mend. Find not fault with the preacher because he finds out your faults. Go and amend. There came into this house some years ago a dear brother, an earnest Christian young man, and I was preaching some such sermon as this; and he felt that he had not been living for Christ. He went back to the city where he lived, and he began to preach in the street. He continued to preach and God blessed him, and he developed into an earnest and talented servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose name is very dear to you all. One of the best days' work I ever did was to be the means of calling him out to such a service. Is there not some young man of that kind here? May there not be here present a Christian woman, with ability, and talent, and education, who ought to be teaching young women, and doing good, and bringing them to the Saviour? My dear sister, you are not your own; you are not your own. If you were, I think you would be quite right in taking your ease on the Sabbath-day, and making yourself comfortable in the week. But you are not your own; you are not your own. The blood of Jesus has bought every particle of you. Will you not devote yourself to him? Will you not pray to make your consecration more practical than it has hitherto been from this time forth? See the sacred blood mark is on every part of your spirit and your body, do not try to hide it. Give up all to Jesus, that while you live, and when you die, you may fight a good fight, and finish your course, and have it said to you, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

O ye who know nothing about being bought with a price, you will be lost unless you do know it. If Christ has not bought you, hell will receive you, and despair will be your portion. May God grant you may know the power of redemption, through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—1 Corinthians iii.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—658, 663, 660.