

# Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

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THE SAINT ONE WITH HIS SAVIOUR.

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## A Sermon

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"He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."—1 Corinthians vi. 17.

THE connection of our text is very terrible. When we are reading the sixteenth verse one seems to remember Sodom, its infamy, and the fire and brimstone that came down from heaven upon it; but here in our text we enter into Jerusalem, the holy city, whose streets are of purity so rich and rare, as to be comparable to gold clear as transparent glass, and there we seem to behold the great white throne of the thrice Holy, surrounded by the white robed bands of the immaculate. In looking at the text I call to mind John Bunyan's description of the way through the Valley of the Shadow of Death; it was an "exceeding narrow" path, not readily kept. On the right hand the dreadful gulf, and on the left the fearful quagmire. See in my text a road fit for angels, and for the angels' Master, and yet on either hand, in the sixteenth and eighteenth verses, behold the fiends and devils howling for their prey! Happy is he who finds that path which the eagle's eye hath not seen, that centre of the King's highway of which it is written, "No lion shall be there, neither shall any ravenous beast go up thereon." How glorious is that "way of holiness!" Gaze on it—it is clear as the sapphire, bright as the terrible crystal; deep down in its depths your eye may look, but in it there is nothing to obscure, it is as the holiness of God himself, a purity so wonderful that conscious of our shortcomings we cry, "It is high, I cannot attain unto it." The exceeding elevation of the believer in being joined unto the Lord appears all the more marvellous when it is set, as in the text, in contrast with the dreadful impurity into which we might have fallen, and against which we are still solemnly warned, as if to remind us that our indwelling corruption would drag us down if grace did not prevent. Brethren, sin is never seen to be so truly horrible as when we behold it in the light of Christian privilege. It is a terrible thing for a creature to rebel against its Creator, but for the adopted son of God to be disobedient to his ever loving Father, this is worse by far. Sin is black if we see it in the dim twilight of spiritual conviction when our conscience is half awakened, but it grows blacker than hell's murkiest midnight when we set it in contrast with the amazing brightness of the

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divine favour which has shone upon us his elect, redeemed, justified, and adopted people. That yonder professor should be so careless and so inconsistent is sad, but when I remind him that he is one of the redeemed I trust he will feel his lukewarmness to be monstrous. When a man is chosen of God and washed in the Saviour's blood, must it not seem to angels a prodigy of human depravity, a marvel of human corruption, that such a one should for a moment forget the way of holiness and desire the paths of iniquity? In ourselves how heinous is all transgression, seeing we have been the objects of such ceaseless, boundless lovingkindness! For us to follow afar off, to backslide, to grow indifferent, is indescribable baseness, a violation of the sacred demands of gratitude. If the more frequent sins of Christians appear thus heinous in contrast with their great privileges, much more loathsome must be vices of the fouler kind, such as Paul here speaks of, sins not to be named among us, or even thought of without horror. God forbid that any of us who claim to be of the body of Christ should degrade ourselves by filthy lusts of the flesh.

Casting a veil over the matter forbidden, not that we may forget it altogether, but may turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, we shall now endeavour to conduct you to the elevated platform of the text itself. I see in it, first, *a mysterious deep* which I cannot fathom; and, therefore, in the second place, we will sail across it while we speak of *a manifest grace* which glistens on its surface.

I. First, then, there is in the text **A MYSTERIOUS DEEP**. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."

What means that joining to the Lord which is mentioned here? There is a joining to the Lord in election. We were chosen in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world, and by sovereign love we were predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ. There was a further joining to the Lord in covenant, when Jesus became of old the Head of his church. As Adam was the head of all that came of his loins, so is Christ the Head of a spiritual seed to whom the promise belongs by a covenant signed, and sealed, and ordered in all things and sure. Further, Christ was joined to us when he took upon himself our nature. When he came into this world and was made a man, then he was truly joined to us. He left his Father, and was joined unto his bride, and they two became one flesh. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." He was one with us in nature, one in our sufferings, one in our life and death, one too in bearing our curse, taking upon himself our sin. All this makes up a glorious joining unto the Lord, but it is not the doctrine taught here, for all that are joined to Christ in the divine purpose are not yet made of one spirit with him, for many of them are still living in their natural ignorance, little aware of the grace ordained of old for them. They are yet to be brought out from the house of bondage; their election is to be followed by their calling; the Lord Jesus who is God's covenant is yet to be revealed to the eye of their faith, and a living union to Christ is yet to be created. This last work of grace is not yet wrought in the uncalled, and they are not in that sense joined to the Lord. A vital and spiritual union is meant in the text, a union which is matter of



living experience, and is wrought in us when we are born again, when we pass from darkness into Christ's marvellous light, when we rise from the death of sin to find the Lord Jesus to be our life. From that moment we are "dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God." From the moment of our regeneration, we who were once the branches of the wild olive, are grafted into the good olive, we who were cast out like withered branches to be burned, are grafted into the ever-living vine, and become one with Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the union here spoken of, and he that is joined unto the Lord in that way by a work of the Holy Spirit radically and thoroughly changing him, and renewing him, and bringing him into oneness with Christ, is said to be "one spirit."

But what does that word, "one spirit" mean? Well, we must get at it by degrees. You may guess at its meaning from the fact that in other parts of Scripture the union between Christ and his people is described by that of a marriage union, and then it is said, "these twain shall be *one flesh*;" but to take off the carnal edge of the metaphor, lest we fall into any grossness of thought, we are told that we in union with our Lord are *one spirit*. The union is a spiritual one. It is a great mystery, saith the apostle, when he speaks concerning Christ and his church. You get a glimmering then of what he means; there is a spiritual union, as real as when twain are made one flesh; but it is not to be misread, and corruptly thought of as a carnal, material matter. It is a deep truth belonging to the world of spirit.

Try to get at it again. Remember that Christ and his people *have one spirit*. The Holy Spirit who quickens *us* anointed *him*; the Holy Spirit who illuminated *us* gave to Jesus Christ the unction with which he came to preach the reconciling word to man. "The Spirit of the Lord," saith he, "is upon me, for he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted." The Holy Ghost on Christ is the same Holy Ghost as upon *us*. The oil which ran down Aaron's beard, and descended to the skirts of his garments, was the selfsame holy anointing which was poured upon his reverend head. Yes, and glory be to God for the truth, we have the same Spirit with the Lord Jesus himself. The apostle saith, "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all;" and again, "For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit;" but we need not stay there, for we may add we all have the selfsame Holy Spirit as Jesus had. The foot is baptised into the same spirit as the head; the ear not only has the same spirit as the hand, but has the same spirit as the glorious crowned and adored Head of the church.

That is not all the meaning of the text, though it helps us to come near it, we have a greater mystery here. Some have read it, "*we are of one spirit with him*," that is to say, we come to think and feel as Jesus does, have common motives, aims, emotions, and desires. This is most true, and is the practical meaning of the text, but a more spiritual sense is under it. Let us, however, turn this over a moment. We who are joined unto the Lord are of one spirit with him: the one Holy Spirit hath wrought us unto the selfsame thing. As Jesus is actuated by an intense desire for the glory of God, the Holy Spirit has wrought us unto

the selfsame fervent longing ; his meat and drink is also ours, into his labours and his joys we enter. This meaning is high—O for grace to reach it in our own characters ! Yet the text saith not that we are *of* one spirit, but we *are* one spirit ; we not only have one spirit, and are of one spirit, but *we are one spirit*. Now, what shall I say of this ? I shall say nothing but that this is a matter to be understood only by the spiritual mind, and not to be readily, if at all, expounded in human words. It is not a truth for which we have adequate expressions ; letters, syllables, words fail us. This much we can say though more be left unsaid : there is a union between Christ and his people most deep, most mysterious, most essential ; if ye would know it, ponder this sentence of our Lord's prayer, "I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Christ and his saints actually are one spirit. Oh, the depth ! Your contemplation, if aided by the heavenly Interpreter, may assist you ; as for me, I should but darken counsel by words without knowledge, if I tried to open up what these words rather conceal than reveal.

Yet an illustration or two. We have known on earth friends who have become one spirit ; intimacy and mutual admiration have ripened friendship into unity, till the one seemed to be the complement of the other, and the mention of one suggested the other. They pursued one object with equal footsteps, they never differed, but appeared to have one soul in two bodies. The death of one almost necessarily involved the death of the other, the two were inseparable companions. Damon and Pythias lived over again in them. Jonathan and David seemed risen from the dead. Feebly, and but feebly, this reflects the image of our text. So have we seen one spirit in another relationship, which is often used as the token of the union between Christ and his people, between the husband and the wife, of which we shall speak more particularly anon, where there has been one love, one aim, one object ; like two stars the wedded pair have shone with such blended rays as to have seemed more one than two. One name, one heart, one house, one interest, one love, they have had also one spirit. More fully still our text is illustrated by the branch and the stem. The branch in the vine is nothing if separated from the stem ; its sap is the very same sap that is in the stem ; one life is in the stem and the branch, and they are both struggling for the same object, both seeking to produce and ripen the fruit. They have no different aim, or even existence ; the stem does not hoard for itself, nor the branch blossom for itself. The branch and stem are one vine ; they are nothing separated from each other, their life one and their design one. See here again, as in a glass darkly, an amazing spiritual truth. Yet more fully is this gracious union between us and our Lord brought out in the metaphor of the union of the member with the body. In that case there is, indeed, one spirit, not only in a vital but in an intellectual sense. If there be life in this finger, it is identically the same life that is in the head ; but one spirit quickens all the parts of the body, whether comely or uncomely, whether base or honourable ; and so in the whole church of God the life of Christ is the life of his people, the spirit of Christ is the spirit of his people. They are not twain but one ; the mystical union is so complete that even the marriage bond, of which we spoke just now, cannot fully come up to it,



it is but an earthly symbol of a yet truer heavenly reality. We who are joined unto the Lord are one spirit. I say no more, what I have said may rather conduct you to the door than open it; but there is one whose work it is to be a revealer of secrets, ask him and he shall reveal even this unto you.

II. May the Holy Spirit help us while considering the second head. On the very surface of the text, there is A MANIFEST GRACE.

Our one spirit with Christ reveals itself practically in a manifest sympathy of spirit between us and our Lord, so that we being one spirit are seen to be actuated and impelled by the same influences, we are of one spirit with Jesus. That meaning I shall try and bring out.

Union with Christ in these days, when religion wears her holiday garments, is a word with a pleasant sound, and because of its honourable esteem men would fain possess it; but alas! they know not what it is. They hang a cross at their necks, or embroider it on their garments, or stamp it on their books, and fancy that this gives them some degree of unity to the Crucified. But, brethren, this matter lies quite out of their reach. To be one spirit with Christ much more is needed than to bear the Christian name. You may call yourself a Christian, or a Brother, or one of the Society of Jesus, and in so doing you may have selected what you think to be the most orthodox of terms by which to designate yourself and the congregation to which you belong, but union to the Lord standeth not in name only. There were those of old who called themselves Jews and were not, their taking the name did not give them the nature of Israelites. They that are joined unto the Lord may not always be known by the same name, they may be called Christians at Antioch and Jews at Philippi (Acts xvi. 20), but a right or a wrong name will not change the real character. Call a poppy a rose and you will not thereby give it perfume. Perhaps none in all the world are less joined to the Lord than some who adore the very name of Christian, and make an idol of the outward sign of the cross. Neither is true union to Christ to be gained by mere outward profession. Ye may be baptised in water, but unless ye are baptised into the Holy Ghost, ye know not what union with Christ is. If in baptism we are buried *with him*, then it is well indeed, but the sign in itself is nought, for Simon Magus though baptised had no part nor lot in the matter. We may sit at the Lord's table with his people, yea, in the company of apostles, and yet be sons of perdition. He may eat and drink in our streets, and yet may never know us. To eat the visible bread is not to be one with his mystical body. Union with Christ lies deeper than name, lies deeper than outward signs and seals of church fellowship, and it even lies deeper than the performance of some apparently good actions and the use of religious words in conversation. We may do many things in his name, yea, and great things, too, for in his name many cast out devils and did many wonderful works, and so were partakers of the powers of the world to come, and yet were rejected by him at the last as unknown of him. When judgment begins at the house of God small store will be set by mere visible union, for the branches in Christ after this fashion not bearing fruit will be cast forth, and withered, and burned in the fire. We must be rooted and built up in him. He must be formed in us or it will little avail us to have been numbered with his disciples.

The superficial, the nominal, and the outward will not suffice. He that is joined unto the Lord must be one spirit: deep down in the very vitals of our being must this union with Jesus Christ most eminently reside, and in our hearts and reins must his truth be found. This is solemn teaching, and it ought, like the candle of the Lord, to search the secret parts of our nature. The carnal mind loves that which is outward, for it can readily comply with it, and that without divine assistance, but the unregenerate heart kicks against that which is purely spiritual, for it cannot understand it, and herein it is compelled to feel its own powerlessness, except to counterfeit with base imitations. My brethren, this is a discerning word, dividing between the joints and marrow, and discovering the thoughts and intents of the heart. Ye who are quickened with the incorruptible seed, and discern spiritual things, come ye to the search, and see well to it that ye are joined unto the Lord, not in the form of godliness only but in the power of it also.

Let us give you, for your assistance, an illustration of what unity of spirit is as we see it among men, for herein we may dimly see it as between the Lord and our souls. We will take a copy from that rare conjugal union which exists among those who realise the highest ideal of the married life. Sometimes we have seen a model marriage, founded in pure love and cemented in mutual esteem. Therein the husband acts as a tender head, and the wife, as a true spouse, realises the model marriage relation, and sets forth what our oneness with the Lord ought to be. She delights in her husband, in his person, his character, his affection; to her he is not only the chief and foremost of mankind, but in her eyes he is all in all, her heart's love belongs to him and to him only. She finds sweetest content and solace in his company, his fellowship, his fondness; he is her little world, her paradise, her choice treasure. To please him she would gladly lay aside her own pleasure to find it doubled in gratifying him. She is glad to sink her individuality in his. She seeks no name for herself, his honour is reflected upon her, and she rejoices in it. She would defend his name with her dying breath, safe enough is he where she can speak for him. The domestic circle is her kingdom, that she may there create happiness and comfort is her life-work, and his smiling gratitude is all the reward she seeks. Even in her dress she thinks of him, without constraint she consults his taste, and thinks nothing beautiful which is obnoxious to his eye. A tear from his eye, because of any unkindness on her part, would grievously torment her. She asks not how her behaviour may please a stranger, or how another's judgment may be satisfied with her behaviour; let her beloved be content and she is glad. He has many objects in life, some of which she does not quite understand, but she believes in them all, and anything that she can do to promote them she delights to perform. He lavishes love on her and she on him. Their object in life is common. There are points where their affections so intimately unite that none could tell which is first and which is second. To see their children growing up in health and strength, to see them holding posts of usefulness and honour, is their mutual concern; in this and other matters they are fully one. Their wishes blend, their hearts are indivisible. By degrees they come very much to think the same thoughts. Intimate association creates conformity; we have



known this to become so complete that at the same moment the same utterance has leaped to both their lips. Happy woman and happy man ! If heaven be found on earth they have it ! At last the two are so welded, so engrafted on one stem, that their old age presents a lovely attachment, a common sympathy, by which its infirmities are greatly alleviated, and its burdens are transformed into fresh bonds of love. So happy a union of will, sentiment, thought, and heart exists between them, that the two streams of their life have washed away the dividing bank, and run on as one broad current of united existence till their common joy falls into the main ocean of felicity. Such a sight it may be is not commonly seen, but it is inexpressibly beautiful, and is a fair type of what the Christian ought to be in his oneness with his Lord. For the believer there should be no attractive beauty but in Christ, nothing that can charm him, stir the deeps of his soul, or move his nobler passions, but the glorious person of Emmanuel, the chief among ten thousand. He loved us and gave himself for us, we also love him and give him our whole selves; for us the one object of life is to please our Lord. We should not dare to sin, not because we are slavishly afraid of punishment, but because we would not grieve the Bridegroom of our souls. We must labour for his cause, not because of legal demands, but because we know no higher happiness under heaven than to make him honoured and to let him see in us, and through us, of the travail of his soul. Our Lord has great ends and objects; we cannot understand them all, but to our utmost we desire to promote them by suffering or by service. Our prayer is, "Lord, show me what thou wouldst have me to do." We would be tenderly sensitive to his desire, not surrendered to it only, but delighting in whatever he wills. We reckon it our honour to be permitted to help him, however humbly, to work out any of his designs. As to the children of his grace, both his and ours, regenerated by his Spirit and converted by our ministries, they are doubly dear to us, and their perfection we seek with him. Our constant enquiry is, can we do anything for them ? can we call home the back-sliding ? can we comfort the desolate ? can we help the poor and needy ? can we be of any service to the lambs of his flock ?—

"There's not a lamb in all his flock  
We would disdain to feed."

We would do anything by which we might show our love to him, for our union of heart, and our union of purpose, our union of thought with him, are all deep and true. Such a Christian grows to think as Christ thinks till the teachings of Jesus are plain to him. He never tries to tone down the gospel as certain philosophic minds are ever doing, because they are not in union with the great Teacher's heart; but they come to see things from the Lord's point of view, and know their Master's meaning as by a sacred instinct. Blessed consummation when their hearts at last are all wrapped up in Jesus, even as the bush at Horeb was all on fire with God. Just as Jesus has set all his love on them, so they come to set all their love on him, and they can say with the apostle, "For me to live is Christ," while the gain which they anticipate in death is the gain of being nearer to their Beloved, and for ever beholding the glory of his face. I have given you an illustration,

and have worked it out but poorly, but even had I wrought it out to perfection, it must necessarily fall short of the incomparable "one spirit" which dwells in our glorious Head and all his members. Go on till you sing with quaint old Francis Quarles—

"E'en like two little bank-dividing brooks,  
That wash the pebbles with their wanton streams,  
And having rang'd and search'd a thousand nooks,  
Meet both at length in silver-breasted Thames,  
Where in a greater current they conjoin :  
So I my best Beloved's am ; so he is mine.

E'en so we met ; and after long pursuit,  
E'en so we joined, we both became entire ;  
No need for either to renew a suit,  
For I was flax, and he was flames of fire.  
Our firm united souls did more than twine,  
So I my best Beloved's am ; so he is mine."

Where such union as that exists, what does it produce? Its fruits are precious. They who are thus one spirit with Christ live for the *same end*. He lived for God's glory. "Wist ye not," said he in his youth, "that I must be about my Father's business?" In his riper years he said, "It is my meat and my drink to do the will of him that sent me." He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit in that respect. For him the great, one, only thing, is to glorify God. In such a case the soul sees everything in this one light, and asks concerning all, how will it affect the kingdom of God! Even in reading the newspaper one says, "Great events are transpiring in politics, how will these work for the glory of God?" The engineer considers the effect the war may have on the world, the politician thinks of the balance of power, the reformer meditates on its results as to human progress, but the man who is joined unto the Lord prays only, "Father, glorify thy name." To him the profit of his business is only profit so far as it will enable him to help the Master's cause, and his honour is no honour unless he can raise out of it some matter for Jehovah's praise. The glory of God, the glory of God, the glory of God, this was the one target towards which our Lord went onward in his life. Like a shot that crashes through everything until it reaches its mark, so must our spirits find no target but the glory of God, and if we are one spirit with Christ, it will be so. God's glory, God's glory, will be first, last, midst, everywhere, everything. All for God, and God in all, will be our motto, as "hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come," is our daily prayer.

Further, if we are joined to Christ, so as to be one spirit, we shall seek the same end *for the same reason*. He desired the glory of God not for his own glory, but because he loved God. He was one with the Father; he loved the Father, therefore would he see the Father glorified. Brethren, it is easy to seek the glory of God with a view to your own glory. Did you never find yourself doing so, desiring that the children in your class should be converted, that in the school it might be said what a successful teacher is so-and-so? Oh, how have I sought to wring that black drop out of my spirit, when the desire to bring souls to Christ has been backed with the desire that I might have a



good standing as a successful minister! Into Christ's thoughts so base an element never entered—he sank himself in God. He knew his Father would give him the reward, and for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, but self-seeking never threw its alloy into the pure gold of his devotion to the Father. If we are one spirit with Christ, self will be swallowed up in God. Lord, do what thou wilt with me, so long as thou art glorified! If I can glorify thee best in silence, then let me never speak again. If it be most for thy glory that I should die, though my life appears to be useful to thy church, yet let me end my days. If it will glorify thee that I should be unsuccessful, that I should be in the world's judgment a disappointed man, perhaps a fool without brain enough to succeed, Lord, let me be fool, or idiot for thee; only glorify thyself in me, and that is enough. This is true oneness of spirit with Jesus. Self is nothing, God is to be all in all. Comfort, esteem, joy, and even life will be as the small dust of the balance to a man filled with Christ's spirit.

Then we shall come, if we are one spirit with Christ, to aim at the glory of God *by the same means*. How did he aim at it? By the conversion of souls: not by being made a king, not by being called rabbi. He sought for the souls of little children, of peasant women, and of outcasts. If my mind be as Christ's mind, I shall seek God's glory by following after the waifs and strays of society, by bringing in backsliders, by seeking the lost sheep of the house of Israel; labouring by any means to save some. How, say ye, my brethren, are ye bending your souls towards the conversion of sinners? It is a great mark of oneness of spirit with Christ, when we have a great tenderness towards lost souls. Do you ever think of souls lost already? Do you ever bring yourselves to the painful consideration of this huge city, so much larger than Jerusalem in our Saviour's day, and, I was about to say, equally wicked? Do ye never pour out floods of tears for it because it knoweth not its day, and is neglectful of the invitations of grace? If you are one spirit with Christ you will weep with him, you will burn with an ardent passion to gather this city's children beneath the wings of mercy. You will pray for them, sigh for them, live for them, and persevere in labour for them. Your thought about a person will not merely be what trade you can do with him, or how much you may trust him in business, but, "How much good can I do him, and can I find an opportunity in any way of bringing him as a jewel to adorn my Saviour's crown!" If our spirits were one with Christ's we should each one be missionaries of the cross, bearing witness to his saving power.

Beloved, with such a spirit we should be content *to use the same modes as our Lord*. Christ's modes of winning souls were very simple, and he always adhered to them; teaching, preaching, living, suffering, and dying were his whole art. Some nowadays seem tired of Christ's plans, and hunt up more rapid methods. I do not believe that Jesus ever strained after effect by animal excitement; he did not strive and cry, and become fanatical, and try to excite poor ignorant people, who know not what they do, to say what they do not understand. He went to work by instructing the ignorant, enlightening their consciences and understandings, and gradually leading them to himself. When his spirit is

ours we shall be better satisfied with that old-fashioned way of gospel preaching which the critics nowadays are so fond of sneering at. We shall feel this is the best way, this hard, plodding way, that does not usually produce a great mass of converts all at once; this is best, for Jesus thought so. We shall pine for large harvests, but go on sowing the same seed, and preaching *his* gospel and no new one of our own. What was wisdom to him will be wisdom to us.

Then shall we, if we are of one spirit with Jesus, go to work as he did, *with the same emotions*. If we had but six men thoroughly of one spirit with Jesus, London would soon be shaken from end to end; but where are they? God make all his servants such, and we shall hear a new sort of preaching to what is current at this hour; for when Jesus preached, it was tremendous preaching; true, it was pleasing, attractive, interesting, but was far more, it was full of deep heart-power, such as made men see his solemn earnestness, and such as overcame men's souls. His soul, as it were, leaped upon them in all the majesty of love's omnipotence. O that we felt as he did the weight of souls, the guilt of sin, the terror of the wrath to come, and the tenderness of divine mercy. If these great principles actuated and moved *our* spirit as they moved *his* spirit, we should rise to a higher standard, and our age would know it.

Let me add that if we are fully joined to our Lord, and of one spirit with him, we shall have *the same tastes as Jesus*. What he loves will charm us, what he hates we shall loathe. We shall then come to have *the same will* with him. As one said, "If God wills not as I will, yet at any rate we will be agreed, for I will will as he wills if he will but graciously enable me." If I cannot have things as I would like, I will like to have them as Jesus pleases. Oh, to have the two wills, the human and divine perfectly coinciding, this is perfection! Brethren, if this unity between our spirit and Christ's spirit goes on we shall abide in him, and he will abide in us. Oh, to be our Beloved's and to know that he is ours! I cannot resist quoting another two verses from old Quarles, they so depict my ideal.

"Nor time, nor place, nor chance, nor death can bow  
My least desires unto the least remove;  
He's firmly mine by oath; I his by vow;  
He's mine by faith; and I am his by love;  
He's mine by water; I am his by wine;  
Thus I my best Beloved's am; thus he is mine.

He is my altar; I his holy place;  
I am his guest; and he my living food;  
I'm his by penitence; he mine by grace;  
I'm his by purchase; he is mine by blood;  
He's my supporting wall; and I his vine:  
Thus I my best Beloved's am; thus he is mine."

I have many things to say, but time fails me, and therefore in a mass let me just pour out a few thoughts. There would be produced in you and in me if we were joined unto the Lord great *oneness of aim* in our service of God. We have a dozen aims now, but if we were of one spirit with Jesus we should have but one object in life. A man dies, and they say, "Ah, he died a martyr to his science." Another dies, and



they say, "He killed himself with attention to his business." When will men be thus said to die for Christ? Men commonly say of their fellows, "He is a man of one idea, he lives for it, wherever he is he must always ride his hobby." How I wish they would say the same of Christians! Wherever our Lord was, not imprudently, but with the truest wisdom, he was sure to pursue his life work; where Jesus was there would the gospel be heard or seen before long. If he sat to eat bread at a Pharisee's house nobody could suspect him of being a Pharisee, or need to ask who he was, his speech ere long betrayed him, for the one object of his soul was uppermost. May it ever be so with us, may we be of one idea, that one idea to glorify God through the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ.

This would give us beside unity of purpose, *great force*, great fervour. We should feel this in private; our prayers if we had the spirit of Christ would be very different from what they are. This would be visible in public also; our public service of God would never be so sluggish and sleepy as it now is. With what ardour did the Saviour burn! Would God that selfsame fire dropped into my soul, and utterly consumed me as a living sacrifice.

This would produce in each of us *an abiding pertinacity*. Defeated in one place we should try in another. It would be with us a determination never to be overcome in doing good. Like Jesus who sought the souls of men, not in a languid search, but over hill and dale till he went down into death's cold shade, and traversed the sepulchre that he might deliver them, so we also in honour and dishonour, in evil report and good report, in poverty and wealth, in life and death, should still be seeking the glory of God, and the salvation of the sons of men.

This same spirit would work in us *a wonderful serenity of spirit*. If our spirit were like to Christ's spirit, altogether set on God's glory, we should not be disturbed and vexed so soon as we are with little, petty remarks of men, nor should we even be moved by great calamities. If any disaster happened to us we should only say, "How can I use this for God's glory?" or if prosperity smiled on us we should ask, "How can I make this glorify my Lord?" We should not be cast down by the one nor lifted up by the other. If men sneered at us we should say, "It is well that they think little of me, for now if God will bless my efforts they will think the more of God and know that the work was not done by my power." If, on the other hand, we find men thinking highly of us, we should say, "How can I use the influence I thus obtain to advance the great cause of my Lord and Master?" When self is dead our sorrows are sweet; when self-seeking is gone, then serene is the calm lake of the soul, unruffled by the storms of ambition which continually toss with blustering breath the minds which seek themselves. I am persuaded, brethren, your highest state, your happiest condition, will be when you are so joined with the Lord as to be one spirit.

Lastly, what does all this teach us by way of practical lesson? These three things: First, *see here a rebuke for us*. We have been joined to Christ, but have we been manifestly one spirit with him? Angry—was that Christ's spirit? Worldly—was that Christ's spirit? Frivolous, verging upon impropriety—was that Christ's spirit? Proud, dictatorial, slothful, repining, or unbelieving—was that Christ's spirit? O brethren,

if you can read that verse without a tear you are either better or worse men than I; you are worse perhaps, for you do not feel the penitence you should; or you are better, and you have no need to confess the same faults which unhappily rise before my memory. The spirit of Jesus, we have a measure of it I trust, but does not our own spirit adulterate it dreadfully!

The next practical word is one of *hope*. We want to have the same spirit as Christ. Well, brethren, our hope is that we shall have it, for we are joined to the Lord, and he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Are you not joined to Jesus, my brother, my sister? I know what you say, "I sometimes fear I am not." Well, but what do you add to that? You add, "But I desire to be, and I do to-day renew my union with him by another act of faith and confidence in him. Dear Lord and Saviour, thou art my only hope; I at this hour embrace thy cross once more. I know thou savest sinners, I know that they who believe in thee are saved, and therefore I am saved; now being persuaded of this I love thee. O that I could kiss thy feet where the nail prints are, and that my whole life could be a washing of those feet with my tears!" Since then you are joined to Christ, you are one spirit, and though it is not yet fully seen, it will be ere long. There are better times coming, there are deeper degrees of grace for you yet, only persevere.

The last word will help you to *persevere*. Perceive you not, my brethren, the way to get more of the spirit of Christ? It is indicated in the text, it is by thinking more of your union with him. To be nearer the Lord is the way to be more like him. Do not let doubts and fears endanger your fellowship with him. You may think, "I fear I have no right to say, I am one with Christ." But that suspicion will not sanctify you; it will not help you to be holier to doubt your union to your Lord. Men never grow in grace by departing from the Saviour by unbelief. The more you need Christ the closer cling to him; the less you are like him the faster hold to him; your hope lies there. "If my spirit be not yet subdued to thy spirit, my Saviour, yet I cannot let thee go, for that were to drive the physician away because I am still sick; that were to renounce my friend because I have great need of him. Nay, but closer to thee will I cling by thy Holy Spirit from this day forth, that being joined to thee, I may be of one spirit."

I feel I have feebly addressed you, but at the same time I know precious truth has been set forth. May the Holy Spirit open it up to your hearts, and bless it to your souls, and he shall be magnified; but if you have no part nor lot in this matter, may that dreadful fact lead you at this hour to seek the Saviour.

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PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—1 Corinthians xii.