

# Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

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LIFE AND WALK OF FAITH.

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## A Sermon

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

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“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.”—  
Colossians ii. 6.

OUR nature is fond of change. Although man was made in the image of God at first, it is plain enough that any trace of immutability which he may once have possessed has long ago departed. Man, unrenewed, could he possess the joys of heaven, would in time grow weary of them, and crave for change. When the children of Israel in the wilderness were fed on angels' food, they murmured for variety, and groaned out, “Our soul loatheth this light bread.” It is little wonder, then, that we need cautions against shifting the ground of our hope and the object of our faith. Another evil principle will co-work with this love of change in our hearts, and produce much mischief—our natural tendency to build upon our own works. For a time that pernicious habit is cured by conviction of sin. The law, with its sharp axe, cuts down the lofty cedar of fleshly confidence, and withers all its verdure; but, since the root still remains, at the very scent of water it sprouts again, and there is good need to set the axe going with all its former edge and weight. When we think legality quite dead, it revives, and, linking hands with our love of change, it tempts us to forsake our simple standing upon Christ, the Rock of Ages, and urges us to advance to a something which it decorates before our eyes with fancied colours, and makes out to our feeble understandings to be better or more honourable to ourselves. Though this will certainly be again beaten down in a Christian, for he will meet with trouble after trouble when once he goeth astray from his first path, yet again the old secret desire to be something, to do something, to have some little honour by performing the works of the law, will come in, and we shall have need to hear the voice of wisdom in our hearts saying to us, “As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him;” persevere in the same way in which ye have begun, and, as at the first Christ Jesus was the source of your life, the principle of your action, and the joy of your spirit, so let him be the same even till life's end, the same when you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and enter into the joy and the rest which remain for the people of God.

In trying to teach this very useful, though simple lesson, I shall, in  
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the plainest possible language, first of all talk a little of the text *by way of exposition*; then, secondly, *by way of advocacy*; and then, thirdly, *by way of application*.

I. Oh that the gracious Spirit, who alone can lead us into all truth, would aid me while I endeavour to open up this verse BY WAY OF EXPOSITION.

In expounding the text, we readily break it up into two parts: here is the life of faith—receiving Christ Jesus the Lord; here is, secondly, the walk of faith—so walk ye in him.

1. The Holy Spirit here reveals to us *the life of faith*—the way by which you and I are saved, if saved at all. Remark, carefully, that it is represented as *receiving*. Now the word receiving *implies the very opposite of anything like merit*. Merit is purchasing; merit might be called making by labour, or winning by valour; but receiving is just the accepting of a thing as a gift. The eternal life which God gives his people is in no sense whatever the fruit of their exertions; it is the gift of God. As the earth drinks in the rain, as the sea receives the streams, as night accepts light from the stars, so we, giving nothing, partake freely of the grace of God. The saints are not by nature wells, or streams, they are but cisterns into which the living water flows. They are but as the empty vessel; sovereign mercy puts them under the conduit-pipe, and they receive grace upon grace till they are filled to the brim. He that talks about winning salvation by works; he that thinks he can earn it by prayers, by tears, by penance, by mortification of the flesh, or by zealous obedience to the law, makes a mistake; for the very first principle of the divine life is not giving out, but receiving. It is that which comes from Christ into me which is my salvation; not that which springs out of my own heart, but that which comes from the divine Redeemer and changes and renews my nature. It is not what I give out, but what I receive, which must be life to me.

The idea of receiving, again, seems to imply in it *a sense of realization*, making the matter *a reality*. One cannot very well receive a shadow; we receive that which is substantial. Gold, silver, precious stones—such things we can receive; estates, riches, bread, water, food, raiment—all these are things which are substances to us, and therefore it becomes possible for us to receive them. We do not receive a dream; we do not receive, again I say, a shadow; we do not speak of receiving a spectre; we do not receive a phantom. There is something real in a thing that is received. Well now so is it also in the life of faith; we realize Christ. While we are without faith, Christ is a name to us, a person that may have lived a long while ago, so long that his life is only a history to us now! By an act of faith Christ becomes a real person in the consciousness of our heart, as real to us as our own flesh, and blood, and bones, and we speak of him and think of him as we would of our brother, our father, our friend. Our faith gives a substance to the history and idea of Christ, puts real solidity into the spirit and name of Christ, and that which to the worldly man is but a phantom, a thing to hear about, and talk about, becomes to us a thing to taste, and handle, to lay hold upon, and to receive as real and true. I know, ye that are unconverted, that ye think all these things an idle tale; but you that are saved, you who

have received Christ, you know that there is substance here, and shadow everywhere else. This has become to you the one grand reality, that God is in Christ reconciling you unto himself.

But receiving means also a third thing, that is *getting a grip of it, grasping it*. The thing which I receive becomes my own. I may believe it to be real, but that is not receiving it. I may believe, also, that if I ever do get it it must be given to me, and that I cannot earn it for myself, but still that is not receiving it. Receiving is the *bona fide* taking into my hand and appropriating to myself as my own property that which is given to me. Now this is what the soul doth when it believes on Christ. Christ becomes *my* Christ; his blood cleanses my sin, and it is cleansed; his righteousness covers me, and I am clothed with it; his Spirit fills me, and I am made to live by it. He becomes to me as much mine as anything that I can call my own; nay, what I call my own here on earth is not mine; it is only lent to me, and will be taken from me; but Christ is so mine, that neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to rob me of him. Oh! I hope, dear friends, you have that blessed appropriating faith which says, "Yes, he is not another man's Christ, he is my Christ," I hope you can look into his face to-day and say, "*My* beloved, who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*." I hope you do not talk of these things as I might talk of my lord So-and-So's park, and admire its beauties, while I myself have no right to one acre of the many thousands within the park-fence; but I trust, on the other hand, you can say—"The blessings and promises of the Lord my God are all my own; whatever I read of in the covenant of grace that is good, that is comely, that is desirable, I have heard a voice say in my ears, 'Lift up now thine eyes, and look to the north, and the south, to the east, and the west—all this have I given *thee* to be thy possession for ever and ever by a covenant of salt.'" Now put these three things together, and I think you have the idea of receiving Christ. To receive him is to have him as the result of God's free gift; to realize him; and then to appropriate him to yourselves.

The word "receive" is used in some ten or a dozen senses in holy Scripture; five of them will suffice my purpose just now. To receive is often used for *taking*. We read of receiving a thousand shekels of silver, and of receiving money, garments, olive-yards, sheep, and oxen. Perhaps in this sense we understand the words of the Master—"No man can receive anything unless it be given him from above," and that other sentence—"To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." We take Christ into us—to return to my old simile—as the empty vessel takes in water from the stream; so we receive Christ. The love, life, merit, nature, and grace of Jesus freely flow into us, as the oil into the widow's vessels. But the word is also used in Scripture to signify *holding that which we take in*; indeed, a vessel without a bottom could hardly be said to receive water. I do not suppose any one would talk of a sieve receiving water, except in a mock sense. But the life of faith consists in holding within us that which Christ hath put into us, so that Jesus Christ is formed in us the hope of glory. By faith it comes in; by faith it is kept in; faith gives me what

I have; faith keeps what I have; faith makes it mine; faith keeps it mine; faith gets hold of it with one hand, and then clasps it with both hands with a grasp that neither death nor life can loose. Then, receiving sometimes means in Scripture simply *believing*. "He came unto his own and his own received him not." We read of receiving false prophets, that is, believing them. Now, to receive Christ is to believe him. He says, "I can save you."—I receive that. He says, "I will save you."—I receive that. He says, "Trust me and I will make you like myself."—I receive that. Whatever Jesus says, I believe him, and receive him as true. I make his word so true to myself that I act upon it as being true, and regard it not as a word that may possibly be true, but which must be true, even if heaven and earth should pass away. This is receiving Christ—believing what he has said. Receiving, also, often signifies in Scripture *entertaining*. Thus the barbarous people at Melita received Paul and his companions kindly, and kindled a fire. Ah! after we have once found all in Christ to be our own, and have received him into ourselves by faith, then we entreat the Lord to enter our hearts and sup with us. We give him the best seat at the table of our souls; we would feast him on the richest dainties of our choicest love. We ask him to abide with us from morn till eve; we would commune with him every day, and every hour of the day. We entertain him; we have a reception-chamber in our hearts, and we receive Christ. And then, once again, receiving in Scripture often signifies *to enjoy*. We hear of receiving a crown of life which fadeth not away; that is, enjoying it, enjoying heaven, and being satisfied with all its bliss. Now, dear friends, when we receive Christ, there is intended in this an enjoying of it. I am only now talking the simplicities of our faith, but I do want to make them very personal to you. Are you thus enjoying Christ? If you had a crown you would wear it; you have a Christ—feed on him. If you were hungry and there were bread on the table, you would eat. Oh! eat and drink, beloved, of your Lord Jesus Christ. If you have a friend, you enjoy his company: you have a friend in Christ; Oh! enjoy his conversation. Do not leave him, like a bottle of cordial for the fainting, sealed up from us; let him not be as some choice dainty all untasted, while you are hungry. Oh! receive Christ, for this is the very heaven and rest of the soul. His flesh is meat indeed, his blood is drink indeed. Never did angels taste such divine fare. Come hither saints and satiate yourselves in him. To take him into one's self, to hold him there, to believe every word he says, to entertain him in our hearts, and to enjoy the luscious sweetness which he must confer upon all those who have eaten his flesh, and have been made to drink of his blood—this it is to receive Christ.

But we have not brought out the real meaning of this life of faith yet till we dwell upon another word. As ye have received. Received what? Salvation may be described as the blind receiving sight, the deaf receiving hearing, the dead receiving life; but beloved, beloved, here is a thought here—oh that you may get hold of it! We have not only received these things, but we have received CHRIST. "As ye have received *Christ Jesus the Lord*." Do you catch it? It is true that He gave us life from the dead? He gave us pardon of sin; He gave us imputed



righteousness. These are all precious things, but you see we are not content with them; we have received *Christ himself*. The Son of God has been poured out into us, and we have received him, and appropriated him. Mark, I say, not merely the blessings of the covenant, but *himself*; not merely the purchase of his blood, but he himself from whose veins the blood hath flowed has become ours; and every soul that hath eternal life is this day a possessor of Christ Jesus the Lord. Now we will put this, also, personally to you. Have I received *Christ*, that is the *anointed*? My soul, hast thou seen Christ as the anointed of the Father in the divine decree to execute his purposes? Hast thou seen him coming forth in the fulness of time wearing the robes of his priesthood, the anointed of the Father? Hast thou seen him standing at the altar offering himself as a victim, an anointed priest, anointed with the sacred oil by which God has made him a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec? My soul, hast thou seen Jesus going within the veil and speaking to thy Father and to his Father as one whom the Father has accepted, of whom we can speak, in the language of David, as our shield and God's anointed? Oh! it is a delight indeed to receive Christ not as an unsent prophet, not as a man who came of his own authority, not as a teacher who spoke his own word, but as one who is *Christos*, the anointed, the anointed of God, ordained of the Most High, and therefore most certainly acceptable, as it is written, "*I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. It pleased the Father to bruise him; he hath put him to grief.*" Delightful is the contemplation of Christ under that aspect! Soul, dost thou thus receive the Messiah of God? But the text says, "*Christ Jesus.*" Now Jesus means a Saviour. *Christ* is his relation to God, *Jesus* his relation to me. Have I received Christ in his relationship to me as a Saviour? My soul, has Christ saved thee? Come, no "ifs" and "ans" about it. Hast thou received him as thy Saviour? Couldst thou say in that happy day when thy faith closed with him, "Yes, Jesus, thou hast saved me!" Oh! there are some professors of religion who do not seem to have received Christ as *Jesus*. They look upon him as one who may help them to save themselves, who can do a great deal for them, or may begin the work but not complete it. Oh! beloved, we must get a hold of him as one that has saved us, that has finished the work. What, know ye not that ye are this day whiter than the driven snow because his blood has washed you? Ye are this day more acceptable to God than unfallen angels ever were, for ye are clothed in the perfect righteousness of a divine one. Christ has wrapped you about with his own righteousness; you are saved; you have received him as God's anointed, see that you receive him as Jesus your Saviour.

Then, again, it is clear that saving faith consisteth also in receiving him *as he is in himself, as the divine Son*. "*Ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord.*" Those who say they cannot believe in his Deity have not received him. Others theoretically admit him to be divine, but he is never a subject of confidence as such; *they* have not received him. But I trust I speak to many hundreds this morning who willingly accept his Godhead, and say, "I entertain no doubt about his Deity, and, moreover, on that I risk my soul; I do take him into my heart as

being God over all, blessed for ever, Amen; I kiss his feet while I see his humanity; but I believe that, since those feet could tread the waters, he is divine. I look up to his hands, and as I see them pierced I know that he is human; but as I know that those hands multiplied the loaves and fishes till they fed five thousand, I know that he is divine. I look upon his corpse in the tomb, and I see that he is man; I see him in the resurrection, and I know that he is God. I see him on the cross, suffering, and I know that he is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; but I hear a voice which saith, 'Let all the angels of God worship him;' 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;' and I bow before him and say, 'Oh Lord, thou Son of God and son of Mary, I receive thee as Christ Jesus *the Lord*.'

Now this is all very plain talking you will say; and I remind you that souls are saved by very plain truths, and the dealings of men's souls with Christ are not carried on in learned or metaphysical terms. We do believe, and so take Christ Jesus the Lord into us, and by that act of faith, without any doing of our own, we are completely saved.

I shall only make this further remark here, that the apostle speaks of this *as a matter of certainty*, and goes on to argue from it. Now we do not argue from a supposition. I must have you clear, dearly beloved in the Lord, that this is a matter of certainty *to you*. We can hardly get to the next point unless you can say, "I have received Jesus." The verse runs, "As or since *ye have* received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in him." We must not alter it into, "Since *I hope* I have," "Since *I trust* I have." Ye either have or have not; if ye have not, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, and cry to him for his great gift; but if you have, O, dear friends, do not let it be a question with you, but say "Yes, yes, yes, I can say, once for all, I have received him; poor, weak, and worthless though I am, I do put my humble seal to the fact that God is true, and I trust in him who is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him." This is the life of faith.

2. Now, in expounding the text, our second point was *the walk of faith*. "Since ye have received him, walk in him." Walk implies, first of all, *action*. Do not let your reception of Christ be a mere thing of thought to you, a subject only for your chamber and your closet, but act upon it all. If you have really received Christ, and are saved, act as if you were saved, with joy, with meekness, with confidence, with faith, with boldness. Walk in him; do not sit down in indolence, but rise and act in him. Walk in him; carry out into practical effect that which you believe. See a man who has received an immense fortune, his purse is bursting, and his caskets are heavy; what does he do? Why, he behaves like a rich man; he sees a luxury which pleases him, and he buys it; there is an estate he desires, and he purchases it; he acts like a rich man. Beloved brethren, you have received Christ—act upon it. Do not play the beggar now that boundless wealth is conferred upon you. Walking, again, implies *perseverance*, not only being in Christ to-day, that would be standing in him and falling from him; but being in him to-morrow, and the next day, and the next, and the next, and the next; walking in him all your walk of life. I remember Matthew Henry, speaking about Enoch walking with God, says he did not only take a

turn or two up and down with God, and then leave him, but he walked with God four hundred years. This implies perseverance. You have received Christ—persevere in receiving him; you have come to trust him—keep on trusting him; you hang about his neck as a poor, helpless sinner—remain hanging there; in other words abide in him. Walking implies *habit*. When we speak of a man's walk and conversation, we mean his habits, the constant tenor of his life. Now, dear friends, if you and I sometimes enjoy Christ, and then forget him; sometimes say he is ours, and anon loose our hold, that is not a habit; we do not *walk* in him. But if you have received him, let it be your habit to live upon him; keep to him; cling to him; never let him go, but live and have your being in Him. This walking implies a *continuance*. There is no notice given in the text of the suspension of this walking, but there must be a continual abiding in Christ. How many Christians there are who think that in the morning and evening they ought to come into the company of Christ, and then they may be in the world all the day. Ah! but we ought always to be in Christ, that is to say, all the day long, every minute of the day; though worldly things may take up some of my thoughts, yet my soul is to be in a constant state of being in Christ; so that if I am caught at any moment, I am in him; at any hour if any one should say to me, "Now, are you saved?" I may be able still to say, "Yes." And if they ask me for an evidence of it, I may, without saying so, prove it to them by the fact that I am acting like a man who is in Christ, who has Christ in him, has had his nature changed by receiving Christ's nature, and has Christ to be his one end and aim. I suppose, also, that walking signifies *progress*. So walk ye in him; proceed from grace to grace, run forward until you reach the uttermost limit of knowledge that man can have concerning our Beloved. "As ye have received him walk in him."

But now I want you to notice just this; it says, "Walk ye *in him*." Oh! I cannot attempt to enter into the mystery of this text—"Walk *in him*!" You know if a man has to cross a river, he fords it quickly and is out of it again at once, but you are to suppose a person walking *in* a certain element always, in Christ. Just as we walk in the air, so am I to walk in Christ; not sometimes, now and then coming to him and going away from him, but walking in him as my element. Can you comprehend that? Not a soul here can make anything out of that but the most silly jargon, except the man who having received the inner spiritual life, understandeth what it is to have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Dear friends, in trying to open up that point just for a moment, let us notice what this walking in Christ must mean. As Christ was at first when we received him *the only ground of our faith*; so as long as we live, we are to stand to the same point. Did you not sing the other day when you first came to him—

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all,  
But Jesus Christ is my all in all?"

Well, that is how you are to continue to the end. We commence our faith with—

"Nothing in my hands I bring,  
Simply to the cross I cling."



When thou art hoary with honours, when thou art covered with fame, when thou hast served thy Master well, still come in just the same way with—

“A guilty weak and helpless worm,  
On Christ’s kind arms I fall,  
He is my strength and righteousness,  
My Jesus and my all.”

Let not your experience, your sanctification, your graces, your attainments, come in between you and Christ, but just as you took him to be the only pillar of your hope at first, so let him be even to the last. You received Christ, again, as *the substance of your faith*. The infidel laughed at you, and said you had nothing to trust to; but your faith made Christ real to you. Well, now, just as the first day when you came to Jesus you no more doubted the reality of Christ than you did your own existence, so walk ye in him. Well can I recollect that first moment when these eyes looked to Christ! Ah! there was never anything so true to me as those bleeding hands, and that thorn-crowned head. I wish it were always so, and indeed it ought to be. As ye have received Christ really, so keep on realising and finding substance in him. And that day, beloved, Christ became to us *the joy of our souls*. Home, friends, health, wealth, comforts—all lost their lustre that day when He appeared, just as stars are hidden by the light of the sun. He was the only Lord and giver of life’s best bliss, the one well of living water springing up unto everlasting life. I know that the first day it mattered not to me whether the day itself was gloomy or bright. I had found Christ; that was enough for me. He was my Saviour; he was my all. I do think that that day I could have stood upon the faggots of Smithfield to burn for him readily enough. Well now, just as you received him at first as your only joy, so receive him still, walking in him, making him the source, the centre, ay, and the circumference too of all your souls’ range of delight, having your all in him. So, beloved, that day when we received him, we received him as *the object of our love*. Oh! how we loved Christ then! Had we met him that day, we would have broken the alabaster box of precious ointment, and poured it upon his head; we would have washed his feet with our tears, and wiped them with the hairs of our head. Ah! Jesus, when I first received thee, I thought I should have behaved far better than I have; I thought I would spend and be spent for thee, and should never dishonour thee or turn aside from my faith, and devotedness, and zeal; but ah! brethren, we have not come up to the standard of our text—walking in him as we have received him. He has not been by us so well beloved as we dreamed he would have been.

I take it then to be the meaning of our text, as Christ Jesus the Lord was at the first All-in-All to you, so let him be while life shall last.

II. I shall be very brief upon THE ADVOCACY OF THIS PRINCIPLE, for surely you need no urgent persuasion to cleave unto such a Lord as yours.

In advocating this principle, I would say, first of all, suppose, my brethren, you and I having been so far saved by Christ, should now



begin to walk in some one else, what then? Why, *what dishonour to our Lord*. Here is a man who came to Christ and says he found salvation in him, but after relying upon the Lord some half-a-dozen years, he came to find it was not a proper principle, and so now he has begun to walk by feelings, to walk by sight, to walk by philosophy, to walk by carnal wisdom. If such a case could be found, what discredit would it bring upon our Holy Leader and Captain. But I am certain no such instance will be found in you, if you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Have you not up till now found your Lord to be a compassionate and generous friend to you, and has not simple faith in him given you all the peace your spirit could desire? I pray you, then, unless you would stain his glory in the dust, as you have received Christ, so walk in him.

Besides, *what reason have you to make a change?* Has there been any argument in *the past*? Has not Christ proved himself all-sufficient! He appeals to you to-day—"Have I been a wilderness unto you?" When your soul has simply trusted Christ, have you ever been confounded? When you have dared to come as a guilty sinner and believed in him, have you ever been ashamed? Very well, then, let the past urge you to walk in him. And as for *the present*, can that compel you to leave Christ? Oh! when we are hard beset with this world or with the severer trials within the Church, we find it such a sweet thing to come back and pillow our head upon the bosom of our Saviour. This is the joy we have to-day, that we are in him, that we are saved in him, and if we find this to-day to be enough, wherefore should we think of changing! I will not forswear the sunlight till I find a better, nor leave my Lord until a brighter Lover shall appear; and, since this can never be, I will hold him with a grasp immortal, and bind his name as a seal upon my arm. As for *the future*, can you suggest anything which can arise that shall render it necessary for you to tack about, or strike sail, or go with another captain in another ship? I think not. Suppose life to be long—He changes not. Suppose you die; is it not written that "neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!" You are poor; what better than to have Christ who can make you rich in faith? Suppose you are sick; what more do you want than Christ to make your bed in your sickness? Suppose you should be maltreated, and mocked at, and slandered for his sake—what better do you want than to have him as a friend who sticketh closer than a brother? In life, in death, in judgment, you cannot conceive anything that can arise in which you would require more than Christ bestows.

But, dear friends, it may be that you are tempted by something else to change your course for a time. Now what is it? Is it the wisdom of this world, the cunning devices and discoveries of man? Is it that which our apostle mentions as philosophy? The wise men of the world have persuaded you to begin questioning; they have urged you to put the mysteries of God to the test of common-sense, reason, and so forth, as they call it, and not lean on the inspiration of God's Word. Ah! well, beloved, it is wisdom, I suppose, which philosophy offers you.

Well, but have you not that in Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge? You received Christ at first, I thought, as being made of God unto you wisdom, and sanctification, and righteousness, and so on; well, will you cast him off when you have already more than all the wisdom which this philosophy offers?

Is it *ceremonies* that tempt you? Has the priest told you that you ought to attend to these, and then you would have another ground of confidence? Well, but you have that in Christ. If there is anything in the circumcision of the Jews, you have that, for you are circumcised in him. If there be anything in baptism, as some think that to be a saving ordinance, you have been buried with him in baptism; you have that. Do you want life? your life is hid with him. Do you want death? You are dead with Christ, and buried with him. Do you want resurrection? he hath raised you up with him. Do you want heaven? he hath made you sit together in heavenly places in him. Getting Christ, you have all that everything else can offer you; therefore be not tempted from this hope of your calling, but as ye have received Christ, so walk in him.

And then, further, do you not know this? that your Jesus is the Lord from heaven? *What can your heart desire* beyond God? God is infinite; you cannot want more than the infinite. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Having Christ you have God, and having God you have everything. Well might the apostle add to that sentence, "And ye are complete in him!" Well, then, if you are complete in Christ, why should you be beguiled by the bewitcheries of this world to want something besides Christ? If resting upon him, God is absolutely yours, and you are, therefore, full to the brim with all that your largest capacity can desire, oh! wherefore should you thus be led astray, like foolish children, to seek after another confidence and another trust? Oh! come back, thou wanderer; come thou back to this solid foundation, and sing once again with us—

"On Christ the solid rock I stand,  
All other ground is sinking sand."

### III. And now, last of all, a few words BY WAY OF APPLICATION.

"So walk ye in him." One of the first applications shall be made with regard to some who complain of a want of communion, or rather, of those of whom we ought to complain, since they injure us all by their distance from Christ. There are some of you who never have much communion with Christ. You are members of the Church, and very decent people, I dare say, in your way; but you do not have communion with Christ. Ask some professors—"Do you ever have communion with Christ?" They would be obliged to say—"Well, I do not know that my life is inconsistent; I do not think anybody could blame me for any wrong act towards my fellow-man; but if you come to that, whether I have ever had communion with Christ, I am compelled to say that I have had it now and then, but it is very seldom; it is like the angels' visits, few and far between." Now, brethren, you have received Christ, have you not? Then the application of the

principle is, as you have received him, so walk in him. If it were worth while for you to come to him at first, then it is worth while for you always to keep to him. If it were really a safe thing for you to come to him and say, "Jesus, thou art the way," then it is a safe thing for thee to do now; and if that was the foundation of blessedness to thee, to come simply to Christ, then it will be the fountain of blessedness to thee to do the same now. Come, then, to him *now*. If thou wert foolish in trusting him at the first, then thou art wise in leaving off doing so now. If thou wert wise, however, in approaching to Christ years gone by, thou art foolish in not standing by Christ now. Come, then, let the remembrance of thy marriage unto the Lord Jesus rebuke thee; and if thou hast lost thy fellowship with Jesus, come again to his dear body wounded for thy sake, and say, "Lord Jesus, help me from this time forth as I have received thee, day by day to walk in thee."

There are many of you who complain of a *want of comfort*. You are not so comfortable as you would like to be, and why? Why you have sinned. Yes, yes, but how did you receive Christ. As a saint? "No, no," say you, "I came to Christ as a sinner." Come to him as a sinner now, then. "Oh! but I feel so guilty." Just so, but what was your hope at first? Why, that guilty though you were, he had made an atonement, and you trusted in him. Well, you are guilty still; do the same as you did at first; walk in him, and I cannot imagine a person without comfort who continually makes this the strain of his life, to rest on Christ as a poor sinner, just as he did at first. Why, Lord, thou knowest the devil often says to me, "Thou art no saint." Well then if I be not a saint, yet I am a sinner, and it is written "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Then

"Just as I am, and waiting not,  
To rid my soul of one foul spot,  
To him whose blood can cleanse each blot,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

Why, you cannot help having comfort if you walk with your Surety and Substitute as you did at the first, resting on Him, and not in feelings, nor experience, nor graces, nor anything of your own; living and resting alone on him who is made of God unto you all that your soul requires.

There is yet another thing. There are many Christians whose lives really *are not consistent*. I cannot understand this if they are walking in Christ; in fact, if a man could completely walk in Christ he would walk in perfect holiness. We hear an instance, perhaps, of a little shopkeeper who puffs and exaggerates as other shopkeepers do—he does not exactly tell a lie, but something very near it. Now I want to know whether that man was walking in Christ when he did that. If he had said to himself, "Now I am in Christ," do you think he would have done it? We hear of another who is constantly impatient, always troubled, fretting, mournful. I want to know whether that man is really walking in Christ as he walked at first, when he is doubting the goodness, the providence, the tenderness of God. Surely he is not. I have heard of hard-hearted professors who take a Christian brother by the throat with, "Pay me what thou owest." Do you think they are walking in Christ when they do that? We hear

of others, when their brothers have need, shut up the bowels of their compassion; are mean and stingy; are they walking in Christ when they do that? Why, if a man walks in Christ, then he so acteth as Christ would act; for Christ being in him, his hope, his love, his joy, his life, he is the reflex of the image of Christ; he is the glass into which Christ looks; and then the image of Christ is reflected, and men say of that man, "He is like his Master; he lives in Christ." Oh! I know, dear brethren, if we lived now as we did the first day we came to Christ, we should live very differently from what we do. How we felt towards him that day! We would have given all we had for him! How we felt towards sinners that day! Lad that I was, I wanted to preach, and

"Tell to sinners round,  
What a dear Saviour I had found."

How we felt towards God that day! When we were on our knees what pleading there was with him, what a nearness of access to him in prayer! Oh! how different; how different with some now! This world has with rude hand brushed the bloom from the young fruit. Is it true that flowers of grace, like the flowers of nature, die in the autumn of our piety? As we all get older, ought we to be more worldly? Should it be that our early love, which was the love of our espousals, dies away? Forgive, O Lord, this evil, and turn us anew unto thee.

"Return, O holy Dove! return,  
Sweet messenger of rest!  
We hate the sins that made thee mourn,  
And drove thee from our breast.

The dearest idol we have known,  
Whate'er that idol be,  
Help us to tear it from thy throne,  
And worship only thee.

So shall our walk be close with God,  
Calm and serene our frame;  
So purer light shall mark the road  
That leads us to the Lamb."

"As ye have received him walk in him," and if ye have not received him, oh! poor sinner, remember he is free and full, full to give thee all thou needest, and free to give it even to thee. Let the verse we sung be an invitation to thee:

"This fountain, though rich, from charge is quite clear;  
The poorer the wretch, the welcomer here:  
Come, needy and guilty; come, loathsome and bare;  
Though leprous and filthy, come just as you are.

Trust in God's anointed—that is receive him—and then, having trusted him, continue still to trust him. May his Spirit enable you to do it, and to his name shall be glory for ever and ever.