

The New Park Street Pulpit.

LOVE TO JESUS.

A Sermon

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REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

AT EXETER HALL, STRAND.

“O thou whom my soul loveth.”—Solomon’s Song, i. 7.

IF the life of a Christian may be compared to a sacrifice, then *humility* digs the foundation for the altar; *prayer* brings the unhewn stones and piles them one upon the other; *penitence* fills the trench round about the altar with water; *obedience* lays the wood in order; *faith* pleads the Jehovah-jireh, and places the victim upon the altar; but the sacrifice even then is incomplete, for where is the fire? *Love*, love alone can consummate the sacrifice by supplying the needful fire from heaven. Whatever we lack in our piety, as it is indispensable that we should have faith in Christ, so is it absolutely necessary that we should have love to him. That heart which is devoid of an earnest love to Jesus, is surely still dead in trespasses and sins. And if any man should venture to affirm that he had faith in Christ, but had no love to him, we would at once also venture to affirm as positively, that his religion was vain. Perhaps the great want of the religion of the times is love. Sometimes as I look upon the world at large, and the Church which lieth too much in its bosom, I am apt to think that the Church hath light, but lacketh fire; that she hath some degree of true faith, clear knowledge, and much beside which is precious, but that she lacketh to a great extent, that flaming love with which she once, as a chaste virgin, walked with Christ through the fires of martyrdom; when she showed to him her undefiled, unquenchable love in the catacombs of the city, and the caves of the rock; when the snows of the Alps might testify to the virgin purity of the love of the saints, by the purple stain which marked the shedding of blood in defence of our bleeding Lord,—blood which had been shed in defence of him whom, though they had not seen his face, “unceasing they adore.”

It is my pleasant task this morning to stir up your pure minds, that you, as part of Christ’s Church, may feel somewhat in your hearts to-day of love to him, and may be able to address him not only under the title, “Thou in whom my soul trusteth,” but “Thou whom my soul loveth.” Last Sabbath day, if you remember, we devoted to simple faith, and tried to preach the gospel to the ungodly; the present hour we devote to the pure, Spirit-born, godlike, flame of love.

On looking at my text, I shall come to regard it thus: First, we shall listen to the *rhetoric of the lip* as we here read it in these words, “O thou whom my soul loveth.” We shall then observe *the logic of the heart*, which would justify us in giving such a title as this to Christ; and then come in the third place, to something which even surpasses rhetoric or logic, the *absolute demonstration of the daily life*; and I pray that we may be able to prove constantly by our acts, that Jesus Christ is *He* whom our soul loveth.

I. First, then, the loving title of our text is to be considered as expressing RHETORIC OF THE LIP. The text calleth Christ, “Thou whom my soul loveth.” Let us take this title and dissect it a little.

One of the first things which will strike us when we come to look upon it, is the *reality* of the love which is here expressed. Reality, I say; understanding the term “real,” not in contradistinction to that which is lying and fictitious, but in contrast to that which is shadowy and indistinct. Do you not notice that the spouse here speaks of Christ as of one whom she knew actually to exist; not as an abstraction, but as a person. She speaks of him as a real person, “Thou whom my soul loveth.” Why, these seem to be the words of one who is pressing him to her bosom, who sees him with her eyes, who tracks

him with her feet, who knows that he is, and that he will reward the love which diligently seeketh him. Brethren and sisters, there often is a great deficiency in our love to Jesus. We do not realize the person of Christ. We think about Christ, and then we love the conception that we have formed of him. But O, how few Christians view their Lord as being as real a person as we are ourselves,—very man—a man that could suffer, a man that could die, substantial flesh and blood—very God as real as if he were not invisible, and as truly existent as though we could compass him in our minds. We want to have a real Christ more fully preached, and more fully loved by the church. We fail in our love, because Christ is not real to us as he was to the early Church. The early Church did not preach much doctrine; they preached Christ. They had little to say of truths about Christ; it was Christ himself, his hands, his feet, his side, his eyes, his head, his crown of thorns, the sponge, the vinegar, the nails. O for the Christ of Mary Magdalene, rather than the Christ of the critical theologian; give me *the* wounded body of divinity, rather than the soundest system of theology. Let me show you what I mean.

Suppose an infant taken away from its mother, and you should seek to foster in it a love to the parent by constantly picturing before it the idea of a mother,—and attempting to give it the thought of a mother's relation to the child. Indeed, my friends, I think you would have a difficult task to fix in that child the true and real love which it ought to bear towards her who bore it. But give that child a mother; let it hang upon that mother's real breast; let it derive its nourishment from her very heart: let it see that mother; feel that mother; put its little arms about that mother's real neck and you have no hard task to make it love its mother. So is it with the Christian. We want Christ—not an abstract, doctrinal, pictured Christ—but a real Christ. I may preach to you many a year, and try to infuse into your souls a love of Christ; but until you can feel that he is a real man and a real person, really present with you, and that you may speak to him, talk to him, and tell him of your wants, you will not readily attain to a love like that of the text, so that you can call him, "Thou whom my soul loveth." I want you to feel, Christian, that your love to Christ is not a mere pious affection; but that as you love your wife, as you love your child, as you love your parent, so you love Christ; that though your love to him is of a finer cast, and a higher mould, yet it is just as real as the more earthly passion. Let me suggest another figure. A war is raging in Italy for liberty. The very thought of liberty nerves a soldier. The thought of a hero makes a man a hero. Let me go and stand in the midst of the army and preach to them what heroes should be, and what brave men they should be who fight for liberty. My dear friends, the most earnest eloquence might have but little power. But put into the midst of these men Garibaldi—heroism incarnate; place before their eyes that dignified man—who seems like some old Roman newly arisen from his tomb, they see before them what liberty means, and what daring is, what courage can attempt, and what heroism can perform; for there he is, and fired by his actual presence, their arms are strong, their swords are sharp, and they dash to the battle at once; his presence ensuring victory, because they realise in his presence the thought which makes men brave and strong. So the Church needs to feel and see a real Christ in her midst. It is not the *idea* of disinterestedness; it is not the idea of devotion; it is not the idea of self-consecration; that will ever make the Church mighty: it must be that idea incarnate, consolidated, personified in the actual existence of a realised Christ in the camp of the Lord's host. I do pray for you, and pray you for me, that we may each one of us have a love which realises Christ, and which can address him as "Thou whom my soul loveth."

But again, look at the text and you will perceive another thing very clearly. The Church, in the expression which she uses concerning Christ, speaks not only with a realisation of his presence, but with a firm *assurance* of her own love. Many of you, who do really love Christ, can seldom get further than to say, "O thou whom my soul desires to love! O thou whom I hope I love!" But this sentence saith not so at all. This title hath not the shadow of a doubt or a fear upon it: "O thou whom my soul loveth!" Is it not a happy thing for a child of God when he knows that he loves Christ? when he can speak of it as a matter of consciousness?—a thing out of which he is not to be argued by all the reasonings of Satan?—a thing concerning which he can put his hand upon his heart, and appeal to Jesus and say, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee?" I say, is not this a delightful frame of mind? or, rather, I reverse the question, Is not that a sad miserable state of heart in which we have to speak of Jesus otherwise than with assured affection? Ah, my brethren and sisters, there may be times when the most loving heart may, from the very fact that it loves intensely and loves sincerely, doubt whether it does love at all. But then such times will be

times of distress, seasons of great soul-searching, nights of anguish. He who truly loves Christ will never give sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eyelids, when he is in doubt about his heart belonging to Jesus. "No," saith he, "this is a matter too precious for me to question as to whether I am the possessor of it or no; this is a thing so vital that I cannot let it be with a 'perhaps,' as a matter of hap-hazard. No, I must know whether I love my Lord or no, whether I am his or not." If I am addressing any this morning who fear they do not love Christ, and yet hope they do, let me beg you, my dear friend, not to rest contented in your present state of mind; never be satisfied till you know that you are standing on the rock, and until you are quite certain that you really do love Christ. Imagine for a moment, one of the apostles telling Christ that he *thought* he loved him. Fancy for a moment your own spouse telling you that she hoped she loved you. Fancy your child upon your knee saying, "Father, I sometimes trust I love you." What a stinging thing to say to you! You would almost as soon he said, "I hate you." Because, what is it? Shall he, over whom I watch with care, merely think he loves me? Shall she who lieth in my bosom, doubt, and make it a matter of conjecture, as to whether her heart is mine or no? O God, forbid we should ever dream of such a thing in our ordinary relations of life! Then how is it that we indulge in it in our piety? Is it not sickly and maudlin piety? is it not a diseased state of heart that ever puts us in such a place at all? is it not even a deadly state of heart that would let us rest contented there? No, let us not be satisfied till, by the full work of the Holy Spirit, we are made sure and certain, and can say with unstammering tongue, "O thou whom my soul loveth."

Now, notice something else equally worthy of our attention. The Church, the spouse, in thus speaking of her Lord, thus directs our thoughts not merely to her confidence of love, but to the *unity* of her affections with regard to Christ. She hath not two lovers, she hath but one. She doth not say, "*O ye* on whom my heart is set!" but "*O thou!*" She hath but one after whom her heart is panting. She has gathered her affections into one bundle, she hath made them but one affection, and then she hath cast that bundle of myrrh and spices upon the breast of Christ. He is to her the "Altogether Lovely," the gathering up of all the loves which once strayed abroad. She has put before the sun of her heart a burning-glass, which has brought all her love to a focus, and it is all concentrated with all its heat and vehemence upon Christ Jesus himself. Her heart, which once seemed like a fountain sending forth many streams, has now become as a fountain which hath but one channel for its waters. She hath stopped up all the other issues, she hath cut away the other pipes, and now the whole stream in one strong current runs toward him, and him alone. The Church, in the text here, is not a worshipper of God and of Baal too; she is no time-server, who hath a heart for all comers. She is not as the harlot, whose door is open for every wayfarer; but she is a chaste one, and she seeth none but Christ, and she knoweth none whom her soul desireth, saving her crucified Lord. The wife of a noble Persian having been invited to be present at the wedding feast of King Cyrus, her husband asked her merrily upon her return whether she did not think the bridegroom-monarch a most noble man. Her answer was, "I know not whether he be noble or not; my husband was so before my eye that I saw none beside him; I have seen no beauty but in him." So if you ask the Christian in our text, "Is not Such-an-one fair and lovely?" "No," she replieth, "my eyes are fully fixed on Christ, my heart is so taken up with him that I cannot tell if there be beauty anywhere else; I know that all beauty and all loveliness is summed up in him." Sir Walter Raleigh used to say, "That if all the histories of tyrants, the cruelty, the blood, the lust, the infamy, were all forgotten, yet all these histories might be re-written out of the life of Henry VIII." And I may say by way of contrast, "If all the goodness, all the love, all the gentleness, all the faithfulness that ever existed could all be blotted out, they could all be re-written out of the history of Christ." To the Christian, Christ is the only one she loveth; she hath no divided aims, no two adored ones; but she speaketh of him as of one to whom she has given her whole heart, and none have aught beside. "Oh thou whom my soul loveth."

Come, brethren and sisters, do we love Christ after this fashion? Do we love him so that we can say, "Compared with our love to Jesus, all other loves are but as nothing." We have those sweet loves which make earth dear to us; we do love those who are our kindred according to the flesh, we were indeed beneath the beasts if we did not. But some of us can say, "We do love Christ better than husband or wife, or brother or sister." Sometimes we think we could say with St. Jerome, "If Christ should bid me go this way, and my mother did hang about my neck to

draw me another ; and my father were in my way, bowing at my knees with tears entreating me not to go ; and my children plucking at my skirts should seek to pull me the other way, I must unclasp my mother, I must push to the very ground my father, and put aside my children, for I must follow Christ." We cannot tell which we love the most till they have come into collision. But when we come to see that the love of mortals requires us to do this, and the love of Christ to do the reverse, then shall we see which we love best. Oh, those were hard times with the martyrs ; with that good man for instance, Mr. Nicholas Ferrar, who was the father of some twelve children, all of them but little ones. On the road to the stake his enemies had contrived that his wife should meet him with all the little ones, and she had set them in a row kneeling down by the roadside. His enemies expected that surely now he would recant, and for the sake of those dear babes would certainly seek to save his life. But no ! no ! He had given them all up to God, and he could trust them with his heavenly Father ; but he could not do a wrong thing even for the felicity of covering these little birds with his wings and cherishing them beneath his feathers. He took them one by one to his bosom, and looked, and looked again ; and it pleased God to put into the mouth of his wife and of his children words which encouraged him instead of discouraging him, and ere he went from them his very babes had bidden the father play the man and die boldly for Christ Jesus. Ay, soul, we must have a love like this which cannot be rivalled, which cannot be shared ; which is like a flood tide—other tides may come up very high upon the shore, but this cometh up to the very rocks and beats there, filling our soul to the very brim. I pray God we may know what such a love to Christ as this may mean.

Furthermore, I want to pluck you one more flower. If you will look at the title before us, you will have to learn not only its reality, its assurance, its unity ; but you will have to notice its *constancy*, "O thou whom my soul loveth " Not, "*did love yesterday* ;" or, "may begin to love to morrow ;" but "thou whom my soul loveth,"—"thou whom I have loved ever since I knew thee, and to love whom has become as necessary to me as my vital breath or my native air." The true Christian is one who loves Christ for evermore. He doth not play fast and loose with Jesus ; pressing him to-day to his bosom, and then turning aside and seeking after any Delilah who may with her witcheries pollute him. No, he feels that he is a Nazarite unto the Lord ; he cannot and he will not pollute himself with sin at any time or in any place. Love to Christ in the faithful heart is as the love of the dove to its mate ; she, if her mate should die, can never be tempted to be married unto another, but she sitteth still upon her perch and sigheth out her mournful soul until she dieth too. So were it with the Christian ; if he had no Christ to love he must e'en die, for his heart has become Christ's. And so if Christ were gone, love could not be ; then his heart would be gone, too, and a man without a heart were dead. The heart, is it not the vital principle of the body ? and love, is it not the vital principle of the soul ? Yet, there are some who profess to love the Master, but only walk with him by fits, and then go abroad like Dinah into the tents of the Shechemites. Oh, take heed, ye professors, who seek to have two husbands ; my Master will never be a part-husband. He is not such a one as to have half of your heart. My Master, though he be full of compassion and very tender, hath too noble a spirit to allow himself to be half-proprietor of any kingdom. Canute, the Danish king, might divide England with Edmund the Ironside, because he could not win the whole country, but my Lord will have every inch of thee, or none. He will reign in thee from one end of the isle of man to the other, or else he will not put a foot upon the soil of thy heart. He was never part-proprietor in a heart, and he will not stoop to such a thing now. What saith the old Puritan ? "A heart is so little a thing, that it is scarce enough for a kite's breakfast, and ye say it be too great a thing for Christ to have it all." No, give him the whole. It is but little when thou weighest his merit, and very small when measured with his loveliness. Give him all. Let thy united heart, thy undivided affection be constantly, every hour, given up to him.

"Can ye cleave to your Lord ? can ye cleave to your Lord,
When the many turn aside ?
Can ye witness he hath the living Word,
And none upon earth beside ?
And can ye endure with the Virgin band,
The lowly and pure in heart,
Who, whithersoever their Lamb doth lead,
From his footsteps ne'er depart ?

Do ye answer, 'We can?' Do ye answer, 'We can,
Through his love's constraining power?'
But ah remember the flesh is weak,
And will shrink in the trial-hour?
Yet yield to his love, who round you now,
The bands of a man would cast;
The cords of his love, who was given for you,
To the altar binding you fast."

May that be your lot, constant, still to abide in him who has loved you.

I will make but one more remark, lest I weary you in thus trying to anatomize the rhetoric of love. In our text you will clearly perceive a vehemence of affection. The spouse saith of Christ, "O thou whom my soul loveth." She means not that she loves him a little, that she loves him with an ordinary passion, but that she loves him in all the deep sense of that word. Oh, Christian men and women, I do protest unto you I fear there are thousands of professors who never knew the meaning of this word "love," as to Christ. They have known it when it referred to mortals; they have felt its flame, they have seen how every power of the body and of the soul are carried away with it; but they have not felt it with regard to Christ. I know you can *preach* about him, but do you love him? I know you can *pray* to him, but do you love him? I know you trust him—you think you do—but do you love him? Oh! is there a love to Jesus in your heart like that of the spouse when she could say, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his lips, for his love is better than wine." "No," say you, "that is too familiar for me." Then I fear you do not love him, for love is always familiar. Faith may stand at a distance, for her look is saving; but Love comes near, for she must kiss, she must embrace. Why, beloved, sometimes the Christian so loves his Lord, that his language becomes unmeaning to the ears of others who have never been in his state. Love hath a celestial tongue of her own, and I have sometimes heard her speak so that the lips of worldlings have mocked, and men have said, "That man rants and raves—he knoweth not what he saith." Hence it is that Love often becomes a Mystic, and speaks in mystic language, into which the stranger intrudeth not. Oh! you should see Love when she hath her heart full of her Saviour's presence, when she cometh out of her chamber! Indeed, she is like a giant refreshed with new wine. I have seen her dash down difficulties, tread upon hot irons of affliction and her feet have not been scorched; I have seen her lift up her spear against ten thousand, and she has slain them at one time. I have known her give up all she had, even to the stripping of herself, for Christ; and yet she seemed to grow richer, and to be decked with ornaments as she unarrayed herself, that she might cast her all upon her Lord, and give up all to him. Do you know this love, Christian brethren and sisters? Some of you do I know, for I have seen you evince it in your lives. As for the rest of you, may you learn it, and get above the low standing of the mass of Christ's Church at the present day. Get up from the bogs and fens and damp morasses of lukewarm Laodiceanism, and come ye up, come ye up higher, up to the mountain top, where ye shall stand bathing your foreheads in the sunlight, seeing earth beneath you, its very tempests under your feet, its clouds and darkness rolling down below in the valley, while you talking with Christ, who speaks to you out of the cloud, are almost caught up into the third heaven to dwell there with him.

Thus have I tried to explain the rhetoric of my text, "Thou whom my soul loveth."

II. Now let me come to THE LOGIC OF THE HEART, which lies at the bottom of the text. My heart, why shouldst thou love Christ? With what argument wilt thou justify thyself? Strangers stand and hear me tell of Christ, and they say "Why shouldst thou love thy Saviour so? My heart, thou canst not answer them so as to make them see his loveliness, for they are blind, but thou canst at least be justified in the ears of those who have understandings; for doubtless the virgins will love him, if thou wilt tell to them why thou lovest him. Our hearts give for their reason why they love him, first, this: We love him for *his infinite loveliness*. If there were no other reason, if Christ had not bought *us* with his blood, yet sometimes we feel if we had renewed hearts, we must love him for having died for others. I have sometimes felt in my own soul, that setting aside the benefit I received from his dear cross, and his most precious passion, which, of course, must ever be the deepest motive of love, "for we love him because he first loved us;" yet setting aside that, there is such beauty in Christ's character—such loveliness in his passion—such a glory in that self-sacrifice, that one must love him. Can I look into thy eyes and not be smitten with thy love?

can I gaze upon thy thorn-crowned head, and shall not my heart feel the thorn within it? Can I see thee in the fever of death, and shall not my soul be in a fever of passionate love to thee. It is impossible to see Christ and not to love him; you cannot be in his company without at once feeling that you are welded to him. Go and kneel by his side in Gethsemane's garden, and I am persuaded that the drops of gore as they fall upon the ground, shall each one of them be irresistible reasons why you should love him. Hear him as he cries "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Remember that he endures this out of love to others, and you must love him. If you ever read the history of Moses you believe him to be the grandest of men, and you admire him, and look up to him as to some huge colossus, some mighty giant of the olden times. But you never feel a particle of love in your hearts towards Moses; you could not; his is an unloveable character; there is something to admire, but nothing to win attachment. When you see Christ you look up, but you do more, you feel drawn up; you do not admire so much as love; you do not adore so much as embrace; his character enchants, subdues, o'erwhelms, and with the irresistible impulse of its own sacred attraction—it draws your spirit right up to him. Well did Dr. Watts say—

"His worth, if all the nations knew,
Sure the whole earth would love him too."

But still, love hath another argument why she loveth Christ, namely, *Christ's love* to her. Didst thou love me Jesus, King of heaven, Lord of angels, Master of all worlds, didst thou set thy heart on me? What, didst thou love me from of old, and in eternity choose me to thyself? Didst thou continue to love me as the ages rolled on? Didst thou come from heaven to earth that thou mightest win me to be thy spouse, and dost thou love me so that thou dost not leave me alone in this poor desert world; and art thou this very day preparing a house for me where I shall dwell with thee for ever? A very wretch Lord I should prove had I no love to thee. I must love thee, it is impossible for me to resist it; that thought that thou lovest me hath compelled my soul to love thee. Me! me! what was there in me; couldst thou see beauties in me; I see none in myself; my eyes are red with weeping, because of my blackness and deformity; I have said even to the sons of men, "Look not upon me, for I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." And dost thou see beauties in me? What a quick eye must thou have, nay, rather it must be that thou hast made my eyes to be thy looking-glass, and so thou seest thyself in me, and it is thy image that thou lovest; sure thou couldst not love me. That ravishing text in the Canticles, where Jesus saith to the spouse, "Thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee." Can you imagine Christ saying that to you; and yet he has said it, "Thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee," he hath put away thy blackness, and thou standest in his sight as perfect as though thou hadst never sinned, and as full of loveliness as though thou wert what thou shalt be when made like unto him at last. Oh brothers and sisters, some of you can say with emphasis, "Did he love me, then I must love him." I run my eye along your ranks, there sits a brother who loveth Christ who not many months ago cursed him. There sits a drunkard—there another who was in prison for crimes; and he loved *you*, even you; and you could abuse the wife of your bosom, because she loved the dear name, you were never happier than when you were violating his day, and showing your disrespect to his ministers, and your hatred to his cause, yet he loved you. And *me!* even *me!*—forgetful of a mother's prayers, regardless of a father's tears, having much light, and yet sinning much, he loved me, and has proved his love. I charge thee, oh my heart, by the roes and by the hinds of the field that thou givest thyself wholly up to my Beloved, and that thou spend and be spent for him. Is that your charge to your heart this morning? Oh! it must be if you know Jesus, and then know that Jesus loves you.

One more reason does love give us yet more powerful still. Love feels that she must give herself to Christ, because of Christ's suffering for her.

"Can I Gethsemane forget?
Or there thy conflict see,
Thine agony and bloody sweat,
And not remember thee?"

"When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God! my sacrifice!
I must remember thee."

My life when it shall ebb out may cause me to lose many mental powers, but memory will love no other name than is recorded there. The agonies of Christ have burnt his name into our hearts; you cannot stand and see him mocked by Herod's men of war, you cannot behold him made nothing of, and spit upon by menial lips, you cannot see

him with the nails pierced through his hands and through his feet, you cannot mark him in the extreme agonies of his awful passion without saying, "And didst thou suffer all this for me, then I must love thee, Jesus. My heart feels that no other can have such a claim upon it as thou hast, for none others have spent themselves for me as thou hast done. Others may have sought to buy my love with the silver of earthly affection, and with the gold of a zealous and affectionate character, but thou hast bought it with thy precious blood, and thou hast the richest claim to it, thine shall it be, and that for ever."

This is love's logic. I may well stand here and defend the believer's love to his Lord. I wish I had more to defend than I have. I dare stand here and defend the utmost extravagancies of speech, and the wildest fanaticisms of action, when they have been done for love to Christ. I say again, I only wish I had more to defend in these degenerate times. Has a man given up all for Christ? I will prove him wise if he has given up for such an one as Christ is. Has a man died for Christ? I write over his epitaph that he surely was no fool who had but the wisdom to give up his heart for one who had his heart pierced for him. Let the Church try to be extravagant for once; let her break the narrow bounds of her conventional prudence, and for once arise and dare to do wonders—let the age of miracles return to us—let the Church make bare her arm, and roll up from her the sleeves of her formality, let her go forth with some mighty thought within her, at which the worldling shall laugh and scoff, and I will stand here, and before the bar of a scoffing world, dare to defend her. Oh Church of God, thou canst do no extravagance for Christ. Ye may bring out your Marys, and they may break their alabaster boxes, but he deserves the breaking well. Thou mayst shed thy perfume, and give to him rivers of oil, and ten thousands of the fat of fed beasts, but he deserves it well. I see the Church as she was in the first centuries, like an army storming a city—a city that was surrounded with a vast moat, and there was no means of reaching the ramparts except by filling up the moat with the dead bodies of the Church's own martyrs and confessors. Do you see them? A bishop has just now fallen in; his head has been smitten off with the sword. The next day at the tribunal there are twenty wishing to die that they may follow him; and on the next day twenty more; and the stream pours on till the huge moat is filled. Then, those who follow after, scale the walls and plant the blood-red standard of the cross, the trophy of their victory upon the top thereof. Should the world say, "Why this expense of blood?" I answer, he is worthy for whom it was shed. The world says, "Why this waste of suffering? why this pouring out of an energy in a cause that at best is but fanatical?" I reply, "He is worthy, he is worthy, though the whole world were put into the censer, and all men's blood were the frankincense, he is worthy to have it all sacrificed before him. Though the whole Church should be slaughtered a hecatomb, he is worthy upon whose altar it should be sacrificed. Though every one of us should lie and rot in a dungeon, though the moss should grow upon our eyelids, though our bodies should be given to the kites, and the carrion crows, he is worthy to claim the sacrifice; and it were all too mean a gift for such an one as he is." Oh Master, restore unto the Church the strength of love which can hear such language, and feel it to be true.

III. Now I come to my last point, upon which I must dwell but briefly. Rhetoric is good, logic is better, but A POSITIVE DEMONSTRATION is the best.

I sought to give you rhetoric when I expounded the words of the text. I have tried to give you logic now that I have given you the reasons for the love in the text. And now I want you to give—I cannot give it—I want *you* to give, each for himself, the demonstration of your love for Christ in your daily lives. Let the world see that this is not a mere label to you—a label for something that does not exist, but that Christ really is to you "him whom your soul loves." You ask me how you shall do it, and I reply thus: I do not ask you to shave your crown and become a monk, or to cloister yourself, my sister, alone, and become a nun. Such a thing might even show your love to yourself rather than your love to Christ. But I ask you to go home now, and during the days of the week engage in your ordinary business; go with the men of the world as you are called to do, and take the calling which Christ has given to you, and see if you cannot honour him in your calling. I, as a minister of course, must find it to some degree less honourable work to serve Christ than you do, because my calling doth as it were supply me with gold; and for me to make a golden image of Christ out of that is but small work, though God wotteth I find it more than my poor strength could do apart from his grace. But for you to work out the image of Christ in the iron, or clay, or common metal of your ordinary conversation,—Oh, this will be glorious indeed! And I think you may honour Christ in your sphere as much as I can in mine; perhaps

more, for some of you may know more trouble, you may have more poverty, you may have more temptation, more enemies ; and therefore you, by loving Christ under all these trials, may demonstrate more fully than ever I can, how true your love is to him, and how soul-inspiring is his love to you. Away, I say, and look out on the morrow, and the next day, for opportunities of doing something for Christ. Speak up for his dear name if there be any that abuse him ; and if you find him wounded in his members, be you as Eleanor, Queen of England's king, suck the poison out of his wounds. Be ready to have *your* name abused rather than he should dishonoured ; stand up always for him, and be his champion. Let him not lack a friend, for he stood thy friend when you had none beside. If thou meet with any of his poor people, show them love for his sake, as David did to Mephibosheth out of love to Saul. If thou knowest any of them to be hungry, set meat before them ; thou hadst as good set the dish before Jesus Christ himself. If thou seest them naked, clothe them ; thou dost clothe Christ when thou clothest his people. Nay, do thou not only seek to do this good temporally to his children, but seek thou evermore to be a Christ to those who are not his children as yet. Go among the wicked and among the lost, and the abandoned ; tell them the words of him ; tell them Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners ; go after his lost sheep ; be thou shepherd as he was a shepherd, so wilt thou show thy love. Give what thou canst to him ; when thou diest, make him heir of some of thy estate ; I should not think I loved my friend, if I did not sometimes make him a present ; I should not think I love Christ if I did not give him somewhat, some sweet cane with money, some fat of my burnt sacrifices. I heard the other day a question asked concerning an old man, who had long professed to be a Christian. They were saying he left so much and so much, and one said, "But did he leave Christ anything in his will?" Some one laughed and thought it ridiculous. Ah ! so it would be, because men do not think of Christ as being a person ; but if we had this love it would be but natural to us to give to him, to live for him, and perhaps if we had ought at last to let him have it,—that so even dying we might give our friend in our dying testament a proof that we remembered him, even as he remembered us in his last testament and will. Oh brothers and sisters—what we want more of in the Church is, more extravagant love to Christ. I want each of you to show your love to Jesus, sometimes by doing something the like of which you have never done before. I remember saying one Sabbath morning that the Church ought to be the place of invention as much as the world. We do not know what machine is to be discovered yet by the world, but every man's wit is at work to find out something new. So ought the wits of the Church to be at work to find out some new plan of serving Christ. Robert Raikes found out Sabbath-schools ; John Pounds the Ragged-school : but are we to be content with carrying on their inventions ? No ; we want something new. It was in the Surrey Hall, through that sermon, that our brethren first thought of the midnight meetings that were held,—an invention suggested by the sermon I preached upon the woman with the alabaster box. But we have not come to the end yet. Is there no man that can invent some new deed for Christ ? Is there no brother that can do something more for him than has been done to-day, or yesterday, or during the last month ? Is there no man that will dare to be strange and singular and wild, and in the world's eye to be fanatical—for that is no love which is not fanatical in the eye of man. Depend upon it, that is no love that only confines itself to propriety. I would the Lord would put into thy heart some thought of giving an unwonted thank-offering to him, or of doing an unusual service, that so Christ might be honoured with the best of thy lambs, and that the fat of thy bullocks might be exceeding glorified by your proof of love to him.

God bless you as a congregation. I can only invoke his blessing, for O these lips refuse to speak of love which I trust my heart knows, and which I desire to feel more and more. Sinner, trust Christ before thou seek to love him, and trusting Christ thou art saved.