

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

THE DEW OF CHRIST'S YOUTH.

A Sermon

INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, APRIL 28TH, 1901,

DELIVERED BY

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On a Thursday Evening, early in the year 1859.

“Thou hast the dew of thy youth.”—Psalm cx. 3.

WHEN you have walked in the garden, early in the morning, you must have remarked the singular freshness and beauty which a summer's morning always seems to give to the earth; the dewdrops, like tears standing in the eyes of the flowers, as if they wept for joy to see the sun again after the long night of darkness, sparkle in the sun; the greenness of vegetation has about it a more than emerald hue, and every “thing of beauty” looks more beautiful in the morning than at any other season. You have gone out again, perhaps, at noon, and you have noticed how dry and dusty everything appears; for the sun has risen, and by his burning heat he has exhaled the dew, and the freshness of the morning has departed in the drought of noon. Now, this is just a picture of all things here below; ay, and a picture of ourselves also. When we first behold many things, they have the dew upon them, and they sparkle; but in a little while, all their brightness is gone, and their brilliance scattered. Some of you have entered into pleasure, and you have found it a delusion; you have intermeddled with all kinds of knowledge, and you have found that, in the making and reading of books, there was much pleasure; but, ere long, you have discovered that, in reading many books, and in making them, there was no end, and much study was a weariness to the flesh.

Everything terrestrial has its dew in the morning, but its burning heat at noon; and we too, beloved,—I mean those of us who have received the anointing of the Holy Spirit,—is not this too much the case even with us? When we were first converted, what a sparkling dew there was upon our leaf! We could not sing God's praises loudly enough; we could not sufficiently leap for joy before the ark of the Lord. All the exultations of those who came before seemed utterly insufficient for us. There was, to us, such unction and savour in the Word, that we could feast upon it every day,—yea, and all night long, and yet never be weary. We ran in the way of God's commandments without weariness, and we mounted aloft as

on the wings of eagles, and never thought that we could ascend too high. But, alas! beloved, is it not the case with many of us, that much of that early freshness of the morning of our youth is scattered, and some, at least, of our excellence hath proved to be like the early cloud and the morning dew? Though in some things we trust that we have grown, yet we are compelled to confess that, in some other things, we have diminished; while in the depths of self-knowledge we feel that we have made progress, yet in the heights of joy in Christ, in the sublimities of a full devotion to him, we sometimes fear that we have gone backward, and that we have not the bliss of our youth, the dew of the morning.

Our text, speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ, says he has the dew of his youth. We are certain that it is Jesus Christ who is spoken of in this Psalm, for, in arguing with the Pharisees, he quoted the first verse, and applied it to himself: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." So that no doubt this third verse also alludes to him: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." Having, therefore, set ourselves and all terrestrial matters in contrast with him, it only remains for me now to enter, as fully as God may help me, into the sweet doctrine of this text,—that Jesus Christ ever has had, and ever will have, the early dew, freshness, and brilliance of his youth. First, permit me to *state the fact*; secondly, to *show the reasons for it*; and, thirdly, to *deduce the lessons from it*.

I. First of all, let me STATE THE FACT, THAT CHRIST HAS THE DEW OF HIS YOUTH.

Let me first speak of *Christ personally*; has he not all the freshness, all the vigour, all the strength of ancient times? His goings forth were of old, even from eternity; and behold he still goeth forth, every day, in the preaching of his Word, and in the ministrations of his Spirit. In the chariots of salvation still rideth he forth, and among the golden candlesticks he walketh still. Have we ever imagined that he has lost the strength of his youth? Do his steps falter? Has his arm begun to feel the palsy influence of old age? Is there any sign of decrepitude or of wasting away upon his majestic brow? When John saw him, in Patmos, "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow," for he is the Eternal of Ages; yet, as saith the spouse in the Canticles, "His locks are bushy, and black as a raven," for he has the strength of a youth, while he has the ages of eternity upon him. Well might he now rise up before us, and ask concerning himself personally, "Is mine ear heavy that I cannot hear? Is mine arm shortened that I cannot save? Am I not to-day what I was yesterday? Was I the Creator of the world? Did I speak it out of nothingness; and am I not still its Sustainer? Was I the Redeemer of the Church? Did I purchase her with mine own blood; and do I not still sustain with power those whom I redeemed with blood? Did I not on earth, with cries and groans, offer up my prayer before my Father; and do I not now plead, not with less

vigour but with greater strength, when with authority I advocate my people's cause before his throne?"

Nor is this freshness confined to Christ in his person; it is the same if you *think of him as revealed in his doctrine*. We have Christ among us now, not incarnate in flesh, but incarnate in doctrine. The doctrines of grace are in a certain sense the body of Christ. We speak sometimes of a Body of Divinity; but if any man would know what the true Body of Divinity is, let him learn that it is neither Calvin's "Institutes," nor Dwight's "Theology," nor Gill's "Body of Divinity,"—it is Christ who is *the* Body of Divinity. His was the only body Divinity ever did take when it became incarnate; but taking Divinity, in another sense, to mean Divine doctrine, what Christ said, and what he did,—that is, the gospel—is the only body which Divinity ever will take. The gospel is always fresh. There are many subjects, beloved, that get exhausted after a while; but who ever heard of the gospel being exhausted? You have, some of you, come up to the house of God these thirty or forty years; did you ever feel that you wanted anything newer than the gospel? Did you ever say, as you went out, after you had heard a gospel sermon, "I should like to have some improvements made upon it"? No; if you have heard God's truth proclaimed, have you not said, "That was the food of my childhood in grace, it is my food now that, by reason of years, I am able to discern between that which is good and that which is evil, and it shall be my food all through the wilderness, and until I eat of the corn of the kingdom on the other side of Jordan"?

It is a wonderful thing, I have often thought, that any man should be able, day after day, and week after week, to attract thousands of people to hear him talk. I do not believe any man could do it with any other subject except the gospel. I have the most intense respect for that great man and mighty orator, Mr. Gough; but, with all his ability, if he were to deliver a teetotal lecture, twice every Sabbath day, in any pulpit in England, he could not command a congregation for twenty-one years at a stretch; but the Christian minister, with only one subject,—Christ crucified,—may not only keep on for twenty-one years, but if he should live as long as Methuselah, he might still keep on preaching Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and he would still find that the people of God would come to hear him, and never crave for a fresh subject. Let any great historian open, if he please, a lecture-room, and attempt to deliver two lectures upon history every week, and let him see whether he does not find the congregation, which might at first gather around him, speedily diminished. We have had an instance, in London, of one who has delivered an amusing lecture a thousand times, always to great multitudes; but then they were different persons every time. No one thought of going to hear him lecture upon the same subject the whole thousand times; it would have become a most intolerable penance even to have heard Albert Smith delivering his lecture upon Mont Blanc so often, however interesting it might have been once or twice; it would certainly pall upon the mind if we heard it so many times; but the Christian

minister may keep on, and on, and on with the same theme,—Christ Jesus, Christ Jesus; the same cross, the same crown of thorns, the same bleeding wounds,—from the first time that he enters his pulpit to the last when he lays down his charge; and the people may always say, and he can always feel, that the gospel has the dew of its youth upon it, and is always fresh and ever new.

Our text is also *specially true of Christ as revealed in the Bible*. There are many other valuable books that have been written; but, as a rule, however valuable they may be, when you have read them half-a-dozen times, you may be quite satisfied that you need not read them any more. Next to the Bible, the book that I value most is John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and I imagine I may have read that through perhaps a hundred times; it is a book of which I never seem to tire, but then the secret of that is, that John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" is the Bible in another shape. It is the same heavenly water taken out of this same well of the gospel; yet you would tire even of that book at last. You would say, "I know all that this volume contains, and I want something more. Here is the experience of the Christian pilgrim; I know it is true, and I delight in it, but I want to go somewhat further." The mind would crave for something else. But read the Bible; and, strange to say, the more you read it, the more satisfied you will be with it. When you begin to read the Bible, perhaps you want fifty other books in order that you may become a thorough Bible student; but your library will gradually diminish until, at last, the more you understand the Bible, the fewer books you will need, and you will come to say, "If I might have all my days over again, this should be the only book that I would study, and I would concentrate all my powers upon the understanding of this one volume." You can get to the bottom of all other books; you dive into them, and at first they seem to be very deep; but every time you plunge, they appear to get shallower and shallower, until at last you can see the bottom at a glance. But in God's Word, every time you dive, the depths grow deeper. The first time you read a text, in your ignorant conceit you fancy you have learned the full meaning of it; but you look at it again, and you find that, though you had the meaning in one sense, yet you had not the full meaning; and you dive again, and again, and again, and you find, each time you dive, that the meaning is still far beyond your reach, and that the Bible is altogether above your comprehension. It expands, it grows, it continually increases in interest. There is such a charm about the Bible, that he who reads it but little can never feel the full force of it. It is something like the maelstrom you have heard of, only in a different and more excellent sense. The maelstrom is a great whirlpool on the coast of Norway. A ship, at a long distance from it, will feel something of its attractive influence,—a very little, yet enough to make it veer from its course; but the nearer it gets to the whirlpool, the stronger becomes the current, and the more forcibly is the vessel carried along by it, until, at last, the ship is drawn near, whirled round at a tremendous rate, and then engulfed in its depths. In a higher and better sense,

the like is true of the Bible. The nearer you go to it, the more closely you study it, the more voraciously you devour its contents, the more rapidly do you revolve in its circles, until at last you are swallowed up in its glory, and seem to long for nothing else than to prove the heights and depths of this bliss unfathomable,—the love of God in Christ Jesus as revealed to us in his sacred Word. Truly, we may say to the Bible, "Thou hast the dew of thy youth."

Again, I may add, *everything that has to do with Christ is always young*. The beds of spices where he lieth are always green; the trees planted by him will never wither, their fruits will always come to perfection. Everything lives where he is; for he is life, and in him there is no death at all; and because he is life, he is always full of freshness, and therefore doth he scatter living force wheresoever he goeth. All this we shall best know when we shall follow him to the living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.

II. Now let us turn to the second point, and enquire, **WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THIS FRESHNESS?** What is the reason why Christ Jesus, and his gospel, and his Word, and all things about him, are always so fresh? Why have we always an abiding dew upon these holy things?

I answer, first, no man, who understands what it is to have Christ in his heart, *will ever get tired of him through want of variety*. The reason why we get tired of a thing is generally because, as we say, there is a sameness about it. There are many men who have a weighty message to deliver, consisting of very good matter; but, dear me! it is a pain to sit and listen to them, because they deliver all their words in a monotone; they always speak as if they were striking a bell, and word follows word, with no difference of tone. Now, the human ear loves variety; it cannot bear monotony. And so is it with the whole of our manhood; nothing monotonous will long retain its freshness. However sweet the music might be, if we always heard the same notes, we should most assuredly be as disgusted with even the music of an archangel, if we were compelled to hear it all day and all night long, as we are with the cackling of a goose. Everything is apt to lose its interest when it is repeated over and over again; but there is no fear of any monotony or tautology in Christ. You may look at Christ a thousand times, and you shall have, if you please, a thousand different aspects of his beauty.

If you turn to the Old Testament, you can see him in a vast variety of forms. You can see him as the paschal lamb and as the scapegoat; you can see him at one time as the bullock, strong to labour, and at another time as the lamb, patient to endure; you can see him as the dove, full of innocence; you can see him in the blood sprinkled, in the incense burning, in the laver filled with water, in Aaron's rod that budded, in the golden pot that was full of manna; in the ark, you can see him having the law within his heart; and over the ark, you can see the golden light of the Shekinah above the mercy-seat, and say, "Christ is here." In every type,

you may see Christ, and in so many different shapes, too, that you can say, "Turn this whichever way I like, there is always something fresh in it." Christ, if I may compare so glorious a Person to so humble a thing, is like the kaleidoscope. As often as you look through it, you see a fresh arrangement of colours, and a new design, and, in like manner, as often as you look at the Lord Jesus Christ, you always discover some new beauty in him.

When you have done with looking at him typically, look at him officially. You have not time to consider all his glories as a Priest, —you have hardly passed your eyes over his flowing vesture, and his glittering breastplate, and listened to the ringing of the bells, and marked the beauty of the pomegranates, before you see him come forth as a King; and you can scarcely stop to look at the many crowns on his head before he comes forth as a Prophet; and you have hardly time to admire him as a Prophet before he comes forth as Mediator, as Shepherd, as Captain of our salvation, as Head of the Church, as the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. If you go further, and look at his person, you will see what a wonderful variety there is in him. You see him as the Child born, the Son given; when he comes into this world, you know him to be God, and you are lost in admiration of his Deity; you also know him to be man, and you still stand astonished when you regard him in that aspect as bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. The reason why everything else loses its freshness to us is because of its want of variety. You may go to any exhibition that has ever been opened to attract attention and awaken interest; but you will find that, after a certain time, there is a want of variety in it; but with Christ there never is such a lack, and therefore to the mind's eye he always has the dew of his youth.

There is also another reason; Christ has the dew of his youth *because of his excellence*. To-day, stepping in to see a gentleman, I observed a table which had upon it a great variety of objects. I wondered what they were, and took the liberty of asking him. He told me that he had some beautiful stereoscopic views there, which had been taken at an immense expense in Egypt, in the Holy Land, and in all parts of the world; and he showed me one or two Scriptural subjects which very much interested me. They were certainly pre-eminently excellent as works of art. He said, "There, sir, I never get tired of looking at these slides; I could examine them constantly, and never be weary of them." "Well," I said, "I can quite understand that; they are so excellent; for, really, there is half-an-hour's study in this one picture; and then one might begin again, it is so full of beauty, and it seems so true to the original." But I thought to myself, "Excellent as they are, I think, if I call to see my friend in a year's time, he will tell me that he has had to buy a fresh set of views, for he has been looking at these others so often that he has become altogether tired of them." They would not have any freshness to him, because he had seen them so many times. But mark, the reason why he could look at them so often was because they were so excellent. If they had been poor pictures, if there had not been great skill and art bestowed

upon them, he would soon have become weary of looking at them. There are some views in nature which a man might gaze upon a hundred times, and yet always wonder at them; but the reason is, because they are so beautiful. There are other things that might strike one at first, but which, when they were looked into more closely, would lose their freshness, because there would be no real ground for admiration, no excellence in them. But Christ Jesus will always have the dew of his youth, because he is always so excellent.

Ah, brethren! you thought Christ was sweet when first you tasted him; but you will know him to be sweeter still when you know more of him, and taste and see that he is good; but you can never know all his sweetness, for you can eat, and eat, and eat to the full, and yet not discover it all; possibly, scarcely in heaven itself will you know all the sweetness of Christ. You imagine, perhaps, that you know how great is his love to you; but remember, it passeth knowledge. You think that you have fully proved his faithfulness; but you have not proved it as you will yet do. All the tests to which you have ever put the Saviour, it may be, are but little compared with those that are to come after. You have proved him with the footmen, you shall soon prove him with the horsemen; you have proved him in the land of peace, you shall soon prove him in the swellings of Jordan. But the more you test and try him, the more shall you discover that he is excellent, and worth the proving; and because his excellence shall become more and more manifest, the more you look at him, you shall say to him continually, "Thou hast the dew of thy youth. I find thee better and better. Fairest of the sons of men, thou growest fairer every day! Bread of heaven, thou becomest sweeter to my taste every hour! Thou wast once like wafers made with honey; thou art sweeter than angels' food now. Water of life, thou growest more cooling to my tongue, and more refreshing to my thirst continually! I loved thee as soon as I knew thee; but I love thee more now; I delighted in thee once, but I delight in thee more fully now."

Still, I do not know but that the most excellent thing you and I have ever seen would, in time, lose its freshness to us, because we should discover all its excellence; but Christ will never lose his freshness to us, *because he is divine*. Whatever is not divine, in due time must lose its freshness. Suppose the Lord should give to us, to engross our attention and to interest us, the whole fields of space. Suppose, in eternity, the Lord should say, "Now I will give to you the works of my creation to be for ever the objects of your attention." My dear friends, there is enough in a single flower, the botanist tells us, to occupy a man's wonder and admiration for a number of years. There is so much skill and wisdom in but a single flower of the field, that a man might look and wonder as long as that. Well, just put together all the flowers and all the creatures of this world, and all the mighty rocks that are full of such marvellous secrets, and imagine that these are to be the objects of our eternal study and interest. I can suppose that a man would exhaust all the knowledge of this world in due time; it might take him thousands

upon thousands of years, yet I can imagine that he might so fully examine everything that is noble and grand in this world, that at last he could sit down, and say, "I know every secret of nature here upon the earth; I have made every rock tell out its story; I have dived into every mine of truth, and I have ransacked all its secret treasures; but there are the stars for me yet to look at." So picture the man going from star to star, and discovering all the wonders of God in the seemingly boundless universe. Here is a great conception for you. Imagine that all these stars were inhabited, and all full of fresh wonders; yet I can understand that, after myriads and myriads of years, all these marvels might be exhausted. Some stupendous mind, growing by that upon which it fed, might at last say, of all the secrets of God's works, "I know them all. I have found out every wonder, and all the storehouses of God's wisdom have I ransacked;" but, beloved, Jesus Christ is such a boundless field of knowledge, in him there is such a gathering up of all the secrets of God, that the whole of eternity must be exhausted before we could learn them all. He will have, he must have for ever, the dew of his youth, because he is divine. The wing of knowledge, though it had all the fields of space to fly in, must at last reach a boundary. The ship of wisdom, though it should sail across the sea that seems without a shore,—the as yet unnavigated sea of ether,—must at last reach a haven; but give a man Christ to be the subject of study, the object to awaken his interest and excite his wonder, and then you have indeed shot an arrow which shall never reach its mark; it shall fly on, on, on, and shall never stay. You have bidden the man plunge into a bottomless ocean. You have launched him, like Noah's ark, upon a sea without a shore. He may go on, and on, and on, but he can never reach the end of that voyage. Christ must for ever be full of interest to him, because he is divine, and, therefore, inexhaustible.

Another reason why Christ will always have the dew of his youth is, *because he meets all the cravings of our nature.* Suppose I am introduced into a place full of the wonderful works of man. I look, and I look on; but why is it that I get tired of them, however interesting they may be? Because they only appeal to my eye. But suppose that there is the sweetest music at the same time, then I have something for my ear. Why is it that, even then, I get tired? Because I have another craving,—I hunger and I thirst. But suppose I have the richest dainties set before me; and I sit and feast, and look, and hear sweet sounds all the time, why is it that, even then, I should, after a time, however excellent might be the entertainment, grow tired? Why, because I have other propensities that are not brought into play, and other desires which have not their fair room for exercise. But suppose me to become like Solomon, so that I have all which the eye, or the ear, or the passions can delight in; should I, after all, be tired? Yes; Solomon tried it, and he said, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Why? Because there were other cravings in Solomon which all these things did not satisfy; his mind was hungering after knowledge; and when Solomon satisfied that, for he spake of all things, from the hyssop

on the wall up to the cedar of Lebanon, there was one thing that was still not satisfied, that was his soul. His immortal spirit was longing for communion with his God; there was a hunger and thirst after something higher than mere mental food. His mind could not be contented with wine to drink and meat to eat, for it wanted knowledge; and his spirit could not be satisfied with mere knowledge, for it needed something higher than that,—the ethereal and celestial ambrosia of the glorified. His spirit was panting for communion with God, and therefore Solomon felt that all here was vanity, because it could not satisfy that craving.

Give me Christ, and I have no desire for anything beyond him, for Christ is all. Whatever of good we may wish for, it is all in Christ; it is impossible for the mind that is filled with Christ to imagine anything else; and in the day when we shall get to heaven,—we talk a great deal about golden harps, and golden crowns, and golden streets,—I imagine we shall find that all those harps and crowns and streets are contained in that one word "Christ." When we really have Christ, we feel that we have nothing else that we can wish for. He that drinketh desireth to eat, but he that drinketh Christ drinketh food. He that eats desires to be clothed, but he that feedeth on Christ is clothed at the same time. He that is clothed needeth something wherewithal to adorn himself, but he that is clothed in the righteousness of Christ is robed in the court dress of heaven, and hath all the jewels of Divinity upon him. He that is adorned yet needeth something wherewithal to wash himself and keep himself beauteous, but he that is clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and adorned with God's grace, is washed, and is clean every whit. He that is clean needs to be kept clean; but he that has Christ shall be kept clean. Dear friends, there is nothing that a sinner can want, there is nothing that a saint can want, that is not in Christ. There are many things that we think we want that are not in him, but nothing we really need that is not in him, for "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and the fulness of the Godhead must be more than sufficient fulness for manhood. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" and if all fulness cannot meet our wants, what can? Therefore, shall we never be weary of Christ, because every craving of the heart is satisfied in him.

I will mention only one other reason why Christ will always have the dew of his youth. We shall never be tired of Christ, *because the need that we have of Christ can never cease.* While I am on earth, I shall never cease sinning; therefore I shall never cease to need the fountain filled with blood where I can wash away all my guilty stains. So long as I am here, my conscience will never leave off accusing me; therefore I shall ever need an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous. While I am here, I shall never be free from trouble; therefore I shall always need him who is the Consolation of Israel. While I am here, I shall never get rid of weakness; therefore I can never bear to be without him who is my strength. While I am here, I shall never, I fear, cease from

backsliding in some measure; therefore can I never cease to love him who restoreth my soul, and leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

You have heard, perhaps, the story of a party of travellers who were crossing the desert; they had exhausted all their supply of water, and they knew not where they should find any. But, at last, after some days' march, they came near a turbid stream of the most filthy water, and in dashed the camels, and defiled it still worse. Yet the poor travellers, who had come across the arid desert, were so thirsty that they drank what was more earth than water, and thought it sweeter than any wine they had ever tasted. But after they had satisfied their thirst, did they still think so? Did they then say the water was sweet? No; they understood then what it was they had been drinking; and after their thirst was once quenched, you could not have compelled them to drink there again until the thirst returned in all its force. But so long as the Christian is here, he will always have the pangs of hunger, he will always have all the sufferings of spiritual thirst if Christ be removed from him, and, therefore, that longing will always make Christ sweet to him. Our Lord must ever have the dew of his youth upon him, because we shall always have an appetite for him as long as we are here; or if we lose it for a little while,—for fools will abhor all manner of meat sometimes,—yet that appetite must and shall return, and we shall again fly to those living waters as with the wings of a dove, and hasten again to those cooling streams with all the speed of the panting hart that longs after the water-brook, for it must drink or die. Therefore, beloved, you see yet again that, because we shall always need Christ, therefore will he always be fresh to us.

"But," says one, "we shall not need him in heaven." Who told you that? Whoever told you so, has certainly misled you. Not need Christ in heaven! Why, beloved, if you could take Christ away from heaven, you would take heaven away altogether, and leave every saint in hell. They do not "want" Christ in heaven, in one sense of the word, because they have him; therefore they do not "want" him as the Scotch use the word "want." But they still need to have Christ with them every hour, for he is the sum and substance of heaven. If I shall not need Christ to cleanse me in heaven, yet I shall want Christ to commune with him. If I shall not need his blood to wash me, yet I shall need the offering of praise wherewith to bless and honour God. If I shall not need to pray to him, I shall want to praise him. If I shall not need him to forgive me, yet I shall want him to embrace me. If I shall not need him as a Shepherd, I shall need him as a Husband, as a Priest, as a King, that I may for ever serve him with joy and gladness.

III. WHAT ARE THE LESSONS WE SHOULD LEARN FROM THIS TRUTH?

The first is for the pulpit, *a lesson of admonition*. Dear brethren, we who occupy the pulpit must take care that we never, for a moment, entertain the idea that the gospel has become worn out. It still has the dew of its youth. There is a good deal of nonsense talked about a gospel adapted to the times. People say that the

way Whitefield preached, and the way that John Berridge and Rowland Hill preached, was all wrong. True, many sinners were converted under their ministry; but, you know, sinners then were different from the sinners of these days, who do not need the same sort of preaching. Some say that the devil himself is improved, but I find him worse if anything,—improved the wrong way. They say that sinners are improved, and do not need to be addressed with the same fiery, burning words as of old; they say that they do not need the same simple preaching of Christ. The nineteenth century has become so learned that it has advanced beyond the simple knowledge of Christ crucified, it has become so erudite, that the simplicity of the gospel is far behind it, it has marched on so far ahead that it has left the cross miles in the rear.

Do not believe them for a moment, my dear brethren; if you want to wake up the people of England, preach the old-fashioned gospel; if you want to crowd your halls, and gather thousands round you, it is the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, that you must preach. As for the manner and style of your preaching, you may leave that to the occasion; and stick to your subject, the simple gospel in all its freshness and glory. Pentecostal youth shall be seen in the gospel again when it is preached in all its fulness and purity. I know why some preachers like to be obscure; it is because it gives a man a peculiar kind of popularity. I believe some people like to hear a man whom they cannot understand; and some, when they hear a man they can only just comprehend, are very flattered, because the minister seems to say to them, "Now, you know that you are all very clever people, I must therefore preach you a very clever sermon;" and then they feel pleased that the minister should have such a good opinion of them, and should think them so clever. But when you go to hear some plain blunt man, who just simply tells out the gospel, and who believes that, to try to be eloquent when he is preaching would be just as stupid as to paint the rose or to white-wash the lily, then you say, "Well, now, he did not compliment me; why! he talked to me and all of us as if we had been a common lot of clod-hoppers and crossing-sweepers. He told us just the simple story of the cross, and there is nothing flattering in that." Ay! and, by the grace of God, I trust that from our pulpits there will never be anything taught that is flattering to you. I hope each one of us will be able to say, with the apostle Paul, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Be you assured that there will be more unction resting upon the enunciation of the simple truths of the gospel, there will be more freshness to the hearers, than there will be upon the most polished oratory garnished with almost seraphic eloquence, and elaborated until it grows far beyond the comprehension of ordinary intellects. That lesson is for the pulpit.

The second lesson is a caution, *a lesson of self-examination* to each one here present. Do you, dear friend, take less interest in the gospel than you used to do? Do you find that it has become dull to you, and that even Christ himself has lost his freshness to you? Christ has not really lost his freshness, though you may have lost yours. What you should ask yourself is, "Have I found the right Christ? If the Christ I have found has lost his freshness, is it not very likely that I have found a wrong christ, one of my own making, one of my own conception? For the real Christ is always fresh, always interesting, always new. Have I not either laid hold of the wrong truth, or held it in the wrong way?" I said, "the wrong truth;" have I contradicted myself? Yet that is the palpable contradiction of this age. One man says, "Yes," and another man says, "No." I am told that it is uncharitable to say that another man is wrong if I am right; but I cannot make it out how both are to be right, or how yea and nay are to be made to agree together. He is a clever man who is able to tie the tails of yes and no together, and make them run in the same row. The fact is, if you have lost your interest in the gospel, it is not the right one that you have received, or else you never really accepted it; if you have lost your interest in Christ, it is because it is not the Christ of God in whom you were interested. It is very probable that, if your former zeal and your former delight in Christ have departed, you have made a mistake; and it is well that you should question yourselves very solemnly, lest you should be found building upon the sand when you thought you were building upon the Rock of ages.

I have just another word to add, and that is, *a word of aspiration*. If Christ has the dew of his youth upon him, let us, my dear friends who serve the Lord Jesus Christ, aspire to show the world that we do so. In the olden time, the dew of Christ's youth made his people love him so much that they were ready to die for him; they gave all their substance to him; they lived a life of shame, and they were prepared to die a death of pain. Now let us prove to the world that Christianity has not lost its ancient vigour, that there is a godly seed yet left in the earth, and that the arm of the Church is not withered. Let us prove to the world that, as Christ made his people holy in olden time, he makes his people holy now; and that, as the religion of Christ made men disinterested, and devoted to him, zealous for his cause, prepared them to live, and helped them to die, it can do so now. It is for you and for me to prove to the world that our religion has not lost its force by letting them see its influence in our daily life. Emulate the noble army of martyrs, the glorious host of confessors; seek to live like the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and like that noble company of the apostles; and when you shall live the holy and devoted lives they did, then shall all the world say, "These men have been with Christ, for they have the dew of the youth of Christianity upon them. They are like the early Christians, and therefore the old religion has not grown old, so as to be likely to depart and pass away."
