

A Defense of Calvinism

by

CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“Salvation is of the LORD.”

—Jonah 2:9

Introduction & Brief Memoir by

Jon Cardwell

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INTRODUCTION

“A Defense of Calvinism” was taken from the 16th chapter of the first volume of *The Autobiography of Charles H. Spurgeon*, compiled by Mr. Spurgeon’s wife, Susannah, and published by Curts & Jennings in 1898. Volume I of Mr. Spurgeon’s autobiography cover the period between his birth in 1834 until his pastorate at London’s New Park Street Chapel in 1854. Charles Spurgeon’s conviction to the doctrines that are called “Calvinistic” are doctrines he embraced early in his Christian conversion.

An updated edition in modern American language has been made available from our ministry. Although many may consider the newer version unnecessary, I’m rather inclined to agree after comparing the two. Nevertheless, if only one person is aided in their comprehension of these important doctrinal truths, then the time expended and the materials used are quite worth it.

—J. CARDWELL
Moreno Valley, California
2008

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF C. H. SPURGEON

Jon Cardwell

Because this modern language edition of *All of Grace* is designed to reach an audience who may have never heard of Charles Spurgeon... or possibly have heard his name, yet did not really know anything about him, this brief memoir will, hopefully, familiarize you just a bit with this 19th century minister who is hailed, even today, as “*the Prince of Preachers.*”

Charles Haddon Spurgeon was born in Kelvedon, Essex, in England on June 19, 1834 to John and Eliza Spurgeon. His father, John, and his grandfather, James, were both Congregationalist ministers.

Charles Spurgeon fell under conviction and was converted at 15. Walking into a small Primitive Methodist assembly in Colchester on January 6, 1850, young Spurgeon heard the layman at the pulpit read from Isaiah 45:22, “*Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.*” The Spirit of the Lord moved upon him and brought him repentance and faith right there. Nearly four months later, he was baptized at the River Lark, in Isleham, on May 3, 1850. His mother, Eliza, said to him, “Ah, Charles! I often prayed the Lord to make you a Christian, but I never asked that you become a Baptist.”

Young Charles responded, “Ah, mother! The Lord has answered your prayer with His usual bounty, and given you exceeding abundantly above what you asked or thought.”

1850 proved to be a monumental year for Charles Spurgeon: saved by grace in January, baptized into fellowship in May, and later preaches his first sermon at a cottage in Teversham. Charles would preach his first sermon at Waterbeach Baptist Chapel on October 12, 1851. Waterbeach would be his first pastorate before he turned 17 years of age.

While at Waterbeach, young Spurgeon was “strongly advised” to apply for admission to the Baptist College in Stepney to more fully prepare for ministry. Arrangements were made for Charles to meet with the college's tutor, Dr. Angus, in Cambridge at the home of Mr. MacMillan. As Charles arrived at his appointed time, the housemaid showed him to a room where he waited patiently for a

couple of hours. The housemaid told no one of Spurgeon's arrival while Dr. Angus sat in another room until he could wait no longer and finally left for London. The good doctor was gone when young Charles finally inquired after him. After leaving the MacMillan house, he thought of applying for college admission at once and while walking on the little wooden bridge that leads to Chesterton, a portion of Scripture came strongly to him, "*Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not*" (Jeremiah 45:5). He immediately began to rethink his motives and intentions, as well as his passions and priorities. It seemed that God's plans and purposes for him did not include a formal college education.

A deacon of London's New Park Street Chapel was visiting the countryside and heard "The Boy Preacher" expound God's Word at Waterbeach. He invited Charles to preach at this well-known London church, whose pulpit had been filled previously with renown pastors, Benjamin Keach, John Gill, and John Rippon. Spurgeon preached his first sermon there on December 18, 1853. After preaching there, Charles was offered a 6-month provisional position as interim pastor, but Charles countered with a 3-month probation period instead of 6 months because he was concerned that if the congregation didn't like him, he wouldn't have to impose upon them any longer than necessary. The Lord's providence smiled upon the 232-member congregation because they wouldn't have to wait for 6 months to call Mr. Spurgeon to the pastorate. Charles Spurgeon accepted the Lord's call to the New Park Street pulpit and preached his first sermon as the congregation's settled resident pastor on April 28, 1854. He had not yet reached his 20th birthday.

Charles Spurgeon met his bride at the New Park Street Chapel, Miss Susannah Thompson of Falcon Square, London. They were wed on January 8, 1856 and honeymooned in Paris, France for ten days in the Spring of that year. Twins, Thomas and Charles, who were not identical, were born to the couple on September 20, 1856.

Although a formal college education was not what the Lord would have for Charles Spurgeon, he was not uneducated. Spurgeon read as many as six books per week. He read John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* annually and often sat with his wife, Susannah, reading to one another from the works of the Puritan authors.

By this time, Charles Spurgeon had become the most well-known minister in London. Crowds flocked to hear the young minister and many were convicted and converted under the Spirit's anointing through the preaching of Christ and Him crucified. Souls were saved, not by human “decisions” from man's “free will” prompted by planned or purposed tactics, but instead, by presenting quite clearly and simply the very plain gospel truths of Scripture. Because of the numerous conversions and his popularity as a preacher of God's Word, the New Park Street Chapel had already added several services to Sunday's schedule. Even with the additional services, the congregation had outgrown their facility. In 1856, the Metropolitan Tabernacle Building Committee had already begun meeting for the construction of a larger facility. Meanwhile, the congregation moved to Exeter Hall, and later to Surrey Music Hall. There, Mr. Spurgeon would preach to audiences of more than 10,000 people.

1856 saw also the beginning of what would eventually be called “The Pastor's College.” The school started with one student-minister, Mr. T. W. Medhurst, with Mr. George Rogers as the teacher. Eventually, The Pastor's College would grow to over one hundred students during Mr. Spurgeon's lifetime. The theological foundation of the Pastor's College was Calvinistic in the tradition of the Reformed faith and Baptist in the tradition of the Puritans. Spurgeon was very careful that both staff and students adhered to those doctrines, stating, “We know nothing of new ologies; we stand by the old ways.. Believing that the Puritanic school embodied more of gospel truth in it than any other since the days of the apostles, we continue in the same line of things; and by God's help, hope to have a share in that revival of Evangelical doctrine which is as sure to come as the Lord Himself.” Many of the students not only filled empty pulpits throughout the British Empire, but also filled pulpits among the 80 or more churches planted by Mr. Spurgeon himself.

The Metropolitan Tabernacle was constructed at Elephant and Castle, in Southwark, with seating for 5,500 and standing room for another 500. The Metropolitan Tabernacle opened with a Great Prayer Meeting on March 18, 1861.

The ministry of Charles Spurgeon and the Lord's congregation under his care were involved in a great many ministries locally and abroad. Orphanages were built and staffed. Mission work was supported to distant lands. Through his

friendship and spiritual kinship with James Hudson Taylor, Mr. Spurgeon personally supported the work in China through the China Inland Mission, an interdenominational evangelistic mission founded by Mr. Taylor.

Charles Spurgeon was a man well acquainted with physical suffering, having an opportunity to draw nearer his Lord and trusting in Him alone for solace due to chronic gout, rheumatoid arthritis, and kidney disease (Bright's disease). When once asked to describe the pain he was in when the stricken with rheumatism one winter, Mr. Spurgeon replied very candidly, "Imagine placing your foot in a vice and tightening the vice as far as it will go; then tighten it four more turns."

Charles Spurgeon preached his last sermon at the Metropolitan Tabernacle on June 7, 1891. Suffering from very poor health because of the symptoms of his ailments, Mr. Spurgeon traveled to Menton, France, on October 26, 1891. Resting in Menton for three months, Charles Spurgeon retired to his bed on January 20, 1892 and passed into glory on January 31, 1892. His remains were taken back to England and were interred and buried at West Norwood Cemetery in London on February 11, 1892.

For nearly 40 years, beginning with his first sermon at Waterbeach Baptist Chapel in the Fall of 1851 and ending with his last sermon at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in the Summer of 1891, the pastoral ministry of Charles Spurgeon saw the publication of several books, thousands of sermons and articles, the establishment of several missions, mercy ministries, and church plants, and 14,692 souls baptized. It would be very reasonable to say that the ministry and influence of Mr. Charles Haddon Spurgeon has reached far more people all around the world in the past 127 years following his death than all those reached during his lifetime.

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:20-21).

A DEFENSE OF CALVINISM

CHARLES H. SPURGEON

“The old truth that Calvin preached, that Augustine preached, that Paul preached, is the truth that I must preach today, or else be false to my conscience and my God. I cannot shape the truth; I know of no such thing as paring off the rough edges of a doctrine. John Knox’s gospel is my gospel. That which thundered through Scotland must thunder through England again.” —*C. H. S.*

It is a great thing to begin the Christian life by believing good solid doctrine. Some people have received twenty different “gospels” in as many years; how many more they will accept before they get to their journey’s end, it would be difficult to predict. I thank God that He early taught me *the* gospel, and I have been so perfectly satisfied with it, that I do not want to know any other. Constant change of creed is sure loss. If a tree has to be taken up two or three times a year, you will not need to build a very large loft in which to store the apples. When people are always shifting their doctrinal principles, they are not likely to bring forth much fruit to the glory of God. It is good for young believers to begin with a firm hold upon those great fundamental doctrines which the Lord has taught in His Word. Why, if I believed what some preach about the temporary, trumpety salvation which only lasts for a time, I would scarcely be at all grateful for it; but when I know that those whom God saves He saves with an everlasting salvation, when I know that He gives to them an everlasting righteousness, when I know that He settles them on an everlasting foundation of everlasting love, and that He will bring them to His everlasting kingdom, oh, then I do wonder, and I am astonished that such a blessing as this should ever have been given to me!

“Pause, my soul! adore, and wonder!
 Ask, 'Oh, why such love to me?'
 Grace hath put me in the number
 Of the Saviour's family:
 Hallelujah!
 Thanks, eternal thanks, to Thee!”

I suppose there are some persons whose minds naturally incline towards the doctrine of free-will. I can only say that mine inclines as naturally towards the doctrines of sovereign grace. Sometimes, when I see some of the worst characters in the street, I feel as if my heart must burst forth in tears of gratitude that God has never let me act as they have done! I have thought, if God had left me alone, and had not touched me by His grace, what a great sinner I should have been! I should have run to the utmost lengths of sin, dived into the very depths of evil, nor should I have stopped at any vice or folly, if God had not restrained me. I feel that I should have been a very king of sinners, if God had let me alone. I cannot understand the reason why I am saved, except upon the ground that God would have it so. I cannot, if I look ever so earnestly, discover any kind of reason in myself why I should be a partaker of Divine grace. If I am not at this moment without Christ, it is only because Christ Jesus would have His will with me, and that will was that I should be with Him where He is, and should share His glory. I can put the crown nowhere but upon the head of Him whose mighty grace has saved me from going down into the pit. Looking back on my past life, I can see that the dawning of it all was of God; of God effectively. I took no torch with which to light the sun, but the sun enlightened me. I did not commence my spiritual life—no, I rather kicked, and struggled against the things of the Spirit: when He drew me, for a time I did not run after Him: there was a natural hatred in my soul of everything holy and good. Woosings were lost upon me—warnings were cast to the wind—thunders were despised; and as for the whispers of His love, they were rejected as being

less than nothing and vanity. But, sure I am, I can say now, speaking on behalf of myself, “He only is my salvation.” It was He who turned my heart, and brought me down on my knees before Him. I can in very deed, say with Doddridge and Toplady—

“Grace taught my soul to pray,
And made my eyes o'erflow;”

and coming to this moment, I can add—

“’Tis grace *has* kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.”

Well can I remember the manner in which I learned the doctrines of grace in a single instant. Born, as all of us are by nature, an Arminian, I still believed the old things I had heard continually from the pulpit, and did not see the grace of God. When I was coming to Christ, I thought I was doing it all myself, and though I sought the Lord earnestly, I had no idea the Lord was seeking me. I do not think the young convert is at first aware of this. I can recall the very day and hour when first I received those truths in my own soul¹—when they were, as John Bunyan says, burnt into my heart as with a hot iron, and I can recollect how I felt that I had grown on a sudden from a babe into a man—that I had made progress in Scriptural knowledge, through having found, once for all, the clue to the truth of God. One week-night, when I was sitting in the house of God, I was not thinking much about the preacher’s sermon, for I did not believe it. The thought struck me, *How did you come to be a Christian?* I sought the Lord. *But how did you come to seek the Lord?* The truth flashed across my mind in a moment—I should not have sought

¹ “See the letter, dated April 6, 1850, on page 121, and the entry in Diary on page 129, —April 7: —“Arminianism does not suit me now.” [This footnote was in original 1898 publication. See Appendix I.]

Him unless there had been some previous influence in my mind to *make me* seek Him. I prayed, thought I, but then I asked myself, *How came I to pray?* I was induced to pray by reading the Scriptures. *How came I to read the Scriptures?* I did read them, but what led me to do so? Then, in a moment, I saw that God was at the bottom of it all, and that He was the Author of my faith, and so the whole doctrine of grace opened up to me, and from that doctrine I have not departed to this day, and I desire to make this my constant confession, “I ascribe my change wholly to God.”

I once attended a service where the text happened to be, “*He shall choose our inheritance for us;*” and the good man who occupied the pulpit was more than a little of an Arminian. Therefore, when he commenced, he said, “This passage refers entirely to our temporal inheritance, it has nothing whatever to do with our everlasting destiny, for,” said he, “we do not want Christ to choose for us in the matter of Heaven or hell. It is so plain and easy, that every man who has a grain of common sense will choose Heaven, and any person would know better than to choose hell. We have no need of any superior intelligence, or any greater Being, to choose Heaven or hell for us. It is left to our own free-will, and we have enough wisdom given us, sufficiently correct means to judge for ourselves,” and therefore, as he very logically inferred, there was no necessity for Jesus Christ, or anyone, to make a choice for us. We could choose the inheritance for ourselves without any assistance. “Ah!” I thought, “but, my good brother, it may be very true that we *could*, but I think we should want something more than common sense before we *should* choose aright.”

First, let me ask, must we not all of us admit an over-ruling Providence, and the appointment of Jehovah’s hand, as to the means whereby we came into this world? Those men who think that, afterwards, we are left to our own free-will to choose this one or the other to direct our steps, must admit that our entrance into the world was not of our

own will, but that God had then to choose for us. What circumstances were those in our power which led us to elect certain persons to be our parents? Had we anything to do with it? Did not God Himself appoint our parents, native place, and friends? Could He not have caused me to be born with the skin of the Hottentot, brought forth by a filthy mother who would nurse me in her “kraal,” and teach me to bow down to Pagan gods, quite as easily as to have given me a pious mother, who would each morning and night bend her knee in prayer on my behalf? Or, might He not, if He had pleased, have given me some profligate to have been my parent, from whose lips I might have early heard fearful, filthy, and obscene language? Might He not have placed me where I should have had a drunken father, who would have immured me in a very dungeon of ignorance, and brought me up in the chains of crime? Was it not God’s Providence that I had so happy a lot, that both my parents were His children, and endeavoured to train me up in the fear of the Lord?

John Newton used to tell a whimsical story, and laugh at it, too, of a good woman who said, in order to prove the doctrine of election, “Ah! sir, the Lord must have loved me before I was born, or else He would not have seen anything in me to love afterwards.” I am sure it is true in my case; I believe the doctrine of election, because I am quite certain that, if God had not chosen me, I should never have chosen Him; and I am sure He chose me before I was born, or else He never would have chosen me afterwards; and He must have elected me for reasons unknown to me, for I never could find any reason in myself why He should have looked upon me with special love. So I am forced to accept that great Biblical doctrine. I recollect an Arminian brother telling me that he had read the Scriptures through a score or more times, and could never find the doctrine of election in them. He added that he was sure he would have done so if it had been there, for he read the Word on his knees. I said to him, “I think you read the Bible in a very uncomfortable posture, and if you had read it

in your easy chair, you would have been more likely to understand it. Pray, by all means, and the more, the better, but it is a piece of superstition to think there is anything in the posture in which a man puts himself for reading; and as to reading through the Bible twenty times without having found anything about the doctrine of election, the wonder is that you found anything at all: you must have galloped through it at such a rate that you were not likely to have any intelligible idea of the meaning of the Scriptures.”

If it would be marvelous to see one river leap up from the earth full-grown, what would it be to gaze upon a vast spring from which all the rivers of the earth should at once come bubbling up, a million of them born at a birth? What a vision would it be! Who can conceive it. And yet the love of God is that fountain, from which all the rivers of mercy, which have ever gladdened our race—all the rivers of grace in time, and of glory hereafter—take their rise. My soul, stand thou at that sacred fountain-head, and adore and magnify, for ever and ever, God, even our Father, who hath loved us! In the very beginning, when this great universe lay in the mind of God, like unborn forests in the acorn cup; long ere the echoes awoke the solitudes; before the mountains were brought forth; and long ere the light flashed through the sky, God loved His chosen creatures. Before there was any created being—when the ether was not fanned by an angel's wing, when space itself had not an existence, when there was nothing save God alone—even then, in that loneliness of Deity, and in that deep quiet and profundity, His bowels moved with love for His chosen. Their names were written on His heart, and then were they dear to His soul. Jesus loved His people before the foundation of the world—even from eternity! and when He called me by His grace, He said to me, “I have loved *thee* with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.”

Then, in the fulness of time, He purchased me with His blood; He

let His heart run out in one deep gaping wound for me long ere I loved Him. Yea, when He first came to me, did I not spurn Him? When He knocked at the door, and asked for entrance, did I not drive Him away, and do despite to His grace? Ah, I can remember that I full often did so until, at last, by the power of His effectual grace, He said, "I must, I will come in;" and then He turned my heart, and made me love Him. But even till now I should have resisted Him, had it not been for His grace. Well, then since He purchased me when I was dead in sins, does it not follow, as a consequence necessary and logical, that He must have loved me first? Did my Saviour die for me because I believed on Him? No; I was not then in existence; I had then no being. Could the Saviour, therefore, have died because I had faith, when I myself was not yet born? Could that have been possible? Could that have been the origin of the Saviour's love towards me? Oh! no; my Saviour died for me long before I believed. "But," says someone, "He foresaw that you would have faith; and, therefore, He loved you." What did He foresee about my faith? Did He foresee that I should get that faith myself, and that I should believe on Him of myself? No; Christ could not foresee that, because no Christian man will ever say that faith came of itself without the gift and without the working of the Holy Spirit. I have met with a great many believers, and talked with them about this matter; but I never knew one who could put his hand on his heart, and say, "I believed in Jesus without the assistance of the Holy Spirit."

I am bound to the doctrine of the depravity of the human heart, because I find myself depraved in heart, and have daily proofs that in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing. If God enters into covenant with unfallen man, man is so insignificant a creature that it must be an act of gracious condescension on the Lord's part; but if God enters into covenant with *sinful* man, he is then so offensive a creature that it must be, on God's part, an act of pure, free, rich, sovereign grace. When the

Lord entered into covenant with me, I am sure that it was all of grace, nothing else but grace. When I remember what a den of unclean beasts and birds my heart was, and how strong was my unrenewed will, how obstinate and rebellious against the sovereignty of the Divine rule, I always feel inclined to take the very lowest room in my Father's house, and when I enter Heaven, it will be to go among the less than the least of all saints, and with the chief of sinners.

The late lamented Mr. Denham has put, at the foot of his portrait, a most admirable text, "Salvation is of the Lord." That is just an epitome of Calvinism; it is the sum and substance of it. If anyone should ask me what I mean by a Calvinist, I should reply, "He is one who says, *Salvation is of the Lord.*" I cannot find in Scripture any other doctrine than this. It is the essence of the Bible. "He *only* is my rock and my salvation." Tell me anything contrary to this truth, and it will be a heresy; tell me a heresy, and I shall find its essence here, that it has departed from this great, this fundamental, this rock-truth, "God is my rock and my salvation." What is the heresy of Rome, but the addition of something to the perfect merits of Jesus Christ—the bringing in of the works of the flesh, to assist in our justification? And what is the heresy of Arminianism but the addition of something to the work of the Redeemer? Every heresy, if brought to the touchstone, will discover itself here. I have my own private opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else. I do not believe we can preach the gospel, if we do not preach justification by faith, without works; nor unless we preach the sovereignty of God in His dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable, conquering love of Jehovah; nor do I think we can preach the gospel, unless we base it upon the special and particular redemption of His elect and chosen people which

Christ wrought out upon the cross; nor can I comprehend a gospel which lets saints fall away after they are called, and suffers the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation after having once believed in Jesus. Such a gospel I abhor.

“If ever it should come to pass,
That sheep of Christ might fall away,
My fickle, feeble soul, alas!
Would fall a thousand times a day.”

If one dear saint of God had perished, so might all; if one of the covenant ones be lost, so may all be; and then there is no gospel promise true, but the Bible is a lie, and there is nothing in it worth my acceptance. I will be an infidel at once when I can believe that a saint of God can ever fall finally. If God hath loved me once, then He will love me for ever. God has a master-mind; He arranged everything in His gigantic intellect long before He did it; and once having settled it, He never alters it, “This shall be done,” saith He, and the iron hand of destiny marks it down, and it is brought to pass. “This is My purpose,” and it stands, nor can earth or hell alter it. “This is My decree,” saith He, “promulgate it, ye holy angels; rend it down from the gate of Heaven, ye devils, if ye can; but ye cannot alter the decree, it shall stand for ever.” God altereth not His plans; why should He? He is Almighty, and therefore can perform His pleasure. Why should He? He is the All-wise, and therefore cannot have planned wrongly. Why should He? He is the everlasting God, and therefore cannot die before His plan is accomplished. Why should He change? Ye worthless atoms of earth, ephemera of a day, ye creeping insects upon this bay-leaf of existence, ye may change *your* plans, but He shall never, never change *His*. Has He told me that His plan is to save me? If so, I am for ever safe.

“My name from the palms of His hands
 Eternity will not erase;
 Impress'd on His heart it remains,
 In marks of indelible grace.”

I do not know how some people, who believe that a Christian can fall from grace, manage to be happy. It must be a very commendable thing in them to be able to get through a day without despair. If I did not believe the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, I think I should be of all men the most miserable, because I should lack any ground of comfort. I could not say, whatever state of heart I came into, that I should be like a well-spring of water, whose stream fails not; I should rather have to take the comparison of an intermittent spring, that might stop on a sudden, or a reservoir, which I had no reason to expect would always be full. I believe that the happiest of Christians and the truest of Christians are those who never dare to doubt God, but who take His Word simply as it stands, and believe it, and ask no questions, just feeling assured that if God has said it, it will be so. I bear my willing testimony that I have no reason, nor even the shadow of a reason, to doubt my Lord, and I challenge Heaven, and earth, and hell, to bring any proof that God is untrue. From the depths of hell I call the fiends, and from this earth I call the tried and afflicted believers, and to Heaven I appeal, and challenge the long experience of the blood-washed host, and there is not to be found in the three realms a single person who can bear witness to one fact which can disprove the faithfulness of God, or weaken His claim to be trusted by His servants. There are many things that may or may not happen, but this I know *shall* happen—

“He *shall* present my soul,
 Unblemish'd and complete,
 Before the glory of His face,
 With joys divinely great.”

All the purposes of man have been defeated, but not the purposes of God. The promises of man may be broken—many of them are made to be broken—but the promises of God shall all be fulfilled. He is a promise-maker, but He never was a promise-breaker; He is a promise-keeping God, and every one of His people shall prove it to be so. This is my grateful, personal confidence, “The Lord *will* perfect that which concerneth *me*”—unworthy *me*, lost and ruined *me*. He will yet save me; and—

“I, among the blood-wash’d throng,
Shall wave the palm, and wear the crown,
And shout loud victory.”

I go to a land which the plough of earth hath never upturned, where it is greener than earth's best pastures, and richer than her most abundant harvests ever saw. I go to a building of more gorgeous architecture than man hath ever builded; it is not of mortal design; it is “a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.” All I shall know and enjoy in Heaven, will be given to me by the Lord, and I shall say, when at last I appear before Him—

“Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days;
It lays in Heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise.”

I know there are some who think it necessary to their system of theology to limit the merit of the blood of Jesus: if my theological system needed such a limitation, I would cast it to the winds. I cannot, I dare not allow the thought to find a lodging in my mind, it seems so near akin to blasphemy. In Christ's finished work I see an ocean of merit; my plummet finds no bottom, my eye discovers no shore. There must be

sufficient efficacy in the blood of Christ, if God had so willed it, to have saved not only all in this world, but all in ten thousand worlds, had they transgressed their Maker's law. Once admit infinity into the matter, and limit is out of the question. Having a Divine Person for an offering, it is not consistent to conceive of limited value; bound and measure are terms inapplicable to the Divine sacrifice. The intent of the Divine purpose fixes the *application* of the infinite offering, but does not change it into a finite work. Think of the numbers upon whom God has bestowed His grace already. Think of the countless hosts in Heaven: if thou wert introduced there to-day, thou wouldst find it as easy to tell the stars, or the sands of the sea, as to count the multitudes that are before the throne even now. They have come from the East, and from the West, from the North, and from the South, and they are sitting down with Abraham, and with Isaac, and with Jacob in the Kingdom of God; and beside those in Heaven, think of the saved ones on earth. Blessed be God, His elect on earth are to be counted by millions, I believe, and the days are coming, brighter days than these, when there shall be multitudes upon multitudes brought to know the Saviour, and to rejoice in Him. The Father's love is not for a few only, but for an exceeding great company. "A great multitude, which no man could number," will be found in Heaven. A man can reckon up to very high figures; set to work your Newtons, your mightiest calculators, and they can count great numbers, but God and God alone can tell the multitude of His redeemed. I believe there will be more in Heaven than in hell. If anyone asks me why I think so, I answer, because Christ, in everything, is to "have the pre-eminence," and I cannot conceive how He could have the pre-eminence if there are to be more in the dominions of Satan than in Paradise. Moreover, I have never read that there is to be in hell a great multitude, which no man could number. I rejoice to know that the souls of all infants, as soon as they die, speed their way to Paradise. Think what a multitude there is of them! Then there are already

in Heaven unnumbered myriads of the spirits of just men made perfect—the redeemed of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues up till now; and there are better times coming, when the religion of Christ shall be universal; when—

“He shall reign from pole to pole,
With illimitable sway;”

when whole kingdoms shall bow down before Him, and nations shall be born in a day, and in the thousand years of the great millennial state there will be enough saved to make up all the deficiencies of the thousands of years that have gone before. Christ shall be Master everywhere, and His praise shall be sounded in every land. Christ shall have the pre-eminence at last; His train shall be far larger than that which shall attend the chariot of the grim monarch of hell.

Some persons love the doctrine of universal atonement because they say, “It is so beautiful. It is a lovely idea that Christ should have died for all men; it commends itself,” they say, “to the instincts of humanity; there is something in it full of joy and beauty.” I admit there is, but beauty may be often associated with falsehood. There is much which I might admire in the theory of universal redemption, but I will just show what the supposition necessarily involves. If Christ on His cross intended to save every man, then He intended to save those who were lost before He died. If the doctrine be true, that He died for all men, then He died for some who were in hell before He came into this world, for doubtless there were even then myriads there who had been cast away because of their sins. Once again, if it was Christ's intention to save all men, how deplorably has He been disappointed, for we have His own testimony that there is a lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, and into that pit of woe have been cast some of the very persons who, according to the theory of universal redemption, were bought with His blood. That seems

to me a conception a thousand times more repulsive than any of those consequences which are said to be associated with the Calvinistic and Christian doctrine of special and particular redemption. To think that my Saviour died for men who were or are in hell, seems a supposition too horrible for me to entertain. To imagine for a moment that He was the Substitute for all the sons of men, and that God, having first punished the Substitute, afterwards punished the sinners themselves, seems to conflict with all my ideas of Divine justice. That Christ should offer an atonement and satisfaction for the sins of all men, and that afterwards some of those very men should be punished for the sins for which Christ had already atoned, appears to me to be the most monstrous iniquity that could ever have been imputed to Saturn, to Janus, to the goddess of the Thugs, or to the most diabolical heathen deities. God forbid that we should ever think thus of Jehovah, the just and wise and good!

There is no soul living who holds more firmly to the doctrines of grace than I do, and if any man asks me whether I am ashamed to be called a Calvinist, I answer—I wish to be called nothing but a Christian; but if you ask me, do I hold the doctrinal views which were held by John Calvin, I reply, I do in the main hold them, and rejoice to avow it. But far be it from me even to imagine that Zion contains none but Calvinistic Christians within her walls, or that there are none saved who do not hold our views. Most atrocious things have been spoken about the character and spiritual condition of John Wesley, the modern prince of Arminians. I can only say concerning him that, while I detest many of the doctrines which he preached, yet for the man himself I have a reverence second to no Wesleyan; and if there were wanted two apostles to be added to the number of the twelve, I do not believe that there could be found two men more fit to be so added than George Whitefield and John Wesley. The character of John Wesley stands beyond all imputation for self-sacrifice, zeal, holiness, and communion with God; he lived far above the ordinary

level of common Christians, and was one “of whom the world was not worthy.” I believe there are multitudes of men who cannot see these truths, or, at least, cannot see them in the way in which we put them, who nevertheless have received Christ as their Saviour, and are as dear to the heart of the God of grace as the soundest Calvinist in or out of Heaven.

I do not think I differ from any of my Hyper-Calvinistic brethren in what I do believe, but I differ from them in what they do not believe. I do not hold any less than they do, but I hold a little more, and, I think, a little more of the truth revealed in the Scriptures. Not only are there a few cardinal doctrines, by which we can steer our ship North, South, East, or West, but as we study the Word, we shall begin to learn something about the North-west and North-east, and all else that lies between the four cardinal points. The system of truth revealed in the Scriptures is not simply one straight line, but two; and no man will ever get a right view of the gospel until he knows how to look at the two lines at once. For instance, I read in one Book of the Bible, “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Yet I am taught, in another part of the same inspired Word, that “it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.” I see, in one place, God in providence presiding over all, and yet I see, and I cannot help seeing, that man acts as he pleases, and that God has left his actions, in a great measure, to his own free-will. Now, if I were to declare that man was so free to act that there was no control of God over his actions, I should be driven very near to atheism; and if, on the other hand, I should declare that God so over-rules all things that man is not free enough to be responsible, I should be driven at once into Antinomianism or fatalism. That God predestines, and yet that man is responsible, are two facts that few can see clearly. They are believed to be inconsistent and contradictory to each other. If, then, I find taught in one

part of the Bible that everything is fore-ordained, *that is true*; and if I find, in another Scripture, that man is responsible for all his actions, *that is true*; and it is only my folly that leads me to imagine that these two truths can ever contradict each other. I do not believe they can ever be welded into one upon any earthly anvil, but they certainly shall be one in eternity. They are two lines that are so nearly parallel, that the human mind which pursues them farthest will never discover that they converge, but they do converge, and they will meet somewhere in eternity, close to the throne of God, whence all truth doth spring.

It is often said that the doctrines we believe have a tendency to lead us to sin. I have heard it asserted most positively, that those high doctrines which we love, and which we find in the Scriptures, are licentious ones. I do not know who will have the hardihood to make that assertion, when they consider that the holiest of men have been believers in them. I ask the man who dares to say that Calvinism is a licentious religion, what he thinks of the character of Augustine, or Calvin, or Whitefield, who in successive ages were the great exponents of the system of grace; or what will he say of the Puritans, whose works are full of them? Had a man been an Arminian in those days, he would have been accounted the vilest heretic breathing, but now *we* are looked upon as the heretics, and they as the orthodox. *We* have gone back to the old school; *we* can trace our descent from the apostles. It is that vein of free-grace, running through the sermonizing of Baptists, which has saved us as a denomination. Were it not for that, we should not stand where we are today. We can run a golden line up to Jesus Christ Himself, through a holy succession of mighty fathers, who all held these glorious truths; and we can ask concerning them, "Where will you find holier and better men in the world?" No doctrine is so calculated to preserve a man from sin as the doctrine of the grace of God. Those who have called it "a licentious doctrine" did not know anything at all about it. Poor ignorant things, they

little knew that their own vile stuff was the most licentious doctrine under Heaven. If they knew the grace of God in truth, they would soon see that there was no preservative from lying like a knowledge that we are elect of God from the foundation of the world. There is nothing like a belief in my eternal perseverance, and the immutability of my Father's affection, which can keep me near to Him from a motive of simple gratitude. Nothing makes a man so virtuous as belief of the truth. A lying doctrine will soon beget a lying practice. A man cannot have an erroneous belief without by-and-by having an erroneous life. I believe the one thing naturally begets the other. Of all men, those have the most disinterested piety, the sublimest reverence, the most ardent devotion, who believe that they are saved by grace, without works, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. Christians should take heed, and see that it always is so, lest by any means Christ should be crucified afresh, and put to an open shame.

In my early Christian days, I remember seeing a man about to enter a place of worldly amusement. Though he was a professing Christian, he was going to spend the evening in a dancing booth at the village fair, drinking and acting as other men did. I called out to him, just as he was at the entrance, "What doest thou there. Elijah?" "Why do you ask me such a question as that?" said he. I asked again, "What doest thou there Elijah? Art *thou* going in *there*?" "Yes," he replied, with some sort of blush, "I am, but I can do so with impunity; I am a child of God, and I can go where I like, and yet be sage." "I could not," said I; "if I went there, I know I should commit sin. It is a place of danger, and I could not go there without great risk of sinning against God." "Ah!" said he, "I could; I have been before, and I have had some sweet thoughts there. I find it enlarges the intellect. You are narrow-minded; you do not appreciate these good things. It is a rich treat, I assure you; I would go if I were you." "No," I said, "it would be dangerous for me; from what I hear, the name

of Jesus is profaned there; and there is much said that is altogether contrary to the religion I believe. The persons who attend there are none of the best, and will surely be said that birds of a feather flock together.” “Ah, well!” he replied, “perhaps you young men had better keep away; I am a strong man, I can go;” and off he went to the place of amusement. My soul revolted from the man ever afterwards, for I felt that no child of God would ever be so wicked as to take poison in the faith that his Father would give him the antidote, or thrust himself into the fire, in the hope that he should not be burned. That man was an apple of Sodom, and I guessed that there was something rotten at the core; and I found by experience that it was so, for he was a downright sensualist even then. He wore a mask, for he was a hypocrite, and had none of the grace of God in his heart.

(This is evidently the man mentioned in the Diary, on page 146, and is quite a different person from “Old Roads” —see pages 23 and 24, —wo was rebuked by “the child” for frequenting the Stambourne public-house, and who, through that rebuke, was restored to a consistent Christian life.)²

² These were the last two paragraphs included in Chapter 16 of Volume I in Mr. Spurgeon’s autobiography. See Appendix II and Appendix III to read “page 146” and “pages 23 and 24” respectively.

APPENDIX I

[Mr. Spurgeon's letter, pg. 121]

“Newmarket,
“April 6th, 1850.

“My Dear Father,”

“You will be please to hear that last Thursday night, I was admitted as a member. Oh, that I may henceforth live more for the glory of Him, by whom I feel assured that I shall be everlastingly saved! Owing to my scruples on account of baptism, I did not sit down at the Lord's table, and cannot in conscience do so until I am baptized. To one who does not see the necessity of baptism, it is perfectly right and proper to partake of this blessed privilege; but were *I* to do so, I conceive would be to tumble over the wall, since I feel persuaded it is Christ's appointed way of professing Him. I am sure this is the only view which I have of baptism. I detest the idea that I can do a single thing towards my own salvation. I trust that I feel sufficiently the corruption of my heart to know that, instead of doing one iota to forward my own salvation, my old corrupt heart would impede it, were it not that my Redeemer is mighty, and works as He pleases.

“Since last Thursday, I have been unwell in body, but I may say that my soul has been almost in Heaven. I have been able to see my title clear, and to know and believe that, sooner than one of God's little ones shall perish, God Himself will *cease to be*, Satan will conquer the King of kings, and Jesus will no longer be the Saviour of the elect. Doubts and fears may soon assail me, but I will not dread to have another visit of grace, and be always doubting from now until the day of my death, yet ‘the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His.’ I see now the secret, how it was that you were enabled to bear up under all your late trials. This faith is far more than any of us deserve; all beyond hell is mercy, but this is a mighty one. Were it not all of sovereign, electing, almighty grace, I, for one, could never hope to be saved. God says, ‘*You shall,*’ and not all the devils in hell, let loose upon a real Christian, can stop the workings of God's sovereign grace, for in due time the Christian cries, ‘*I will.*’ Oh, how little love have I for One who has thus promised to save me by so great a salvation, and who will certainly perform His promise!

“I trust that the Lord is working among my tract people, and blessing my little effort. I have had most interesting and encouraging conversation with many of them. Oh, that I could see but one sinner constrained to come to Jesus! How I long for the time when it may please God to make me, like you, my Father, a successful preacher of the gospel! I almost envy of you your exalted privilege. May the dew of Hermon and the increase of the Spirit rest upon your labours! Your unworthy son tries to pray for you and his Mother, that grace and peace may be...”

[Mr. Spurgeon's Diary, pg. 129]

Saved men and women date from the dawn of their true life; not from their first birthday, but from the day wherein they were born again. Their calendar has been altered and amended by a deed of Divine grace. —C.H.S.

THE DIARY

1850.

Born,	January	6, 1850.
Admitted to Fellowship,	April	4.
Baptized,	May	3.
Communed first,	May	5.
Commenced as S.S. Teacher		”
Joined Church at Cambridge	Oct.	2.

CONSECRATION

O great and unsearchable God, who knowest my heart and triest all my ways; with a humble dependence upon the support of Thy Holy Spirit, I yield up myself to Thee; as Thy own reasonable sacrifice, I return to Thee Thine own. I would be for ever, unreservedly, perpetually Thine; whilst I am on earth, I would serve Thee; and may I enjoy Thee and praise Thee for ever! Amen.

Feb. 1, 1850.

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON.

1850,—A BLESSED YEAR OF JUBILEE

April 6.—I have had a blessed day of refreshing from the Lord, and from the glory of His face. Went round my Station District, and had a talk with several people. I trust the Lord is working here. Had some serious thoughts about baptism. “The Lord is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.”

April 7.—Not well; the body bears the soul down. Heard Mr. S. from Gen. xxii. 8; could not take it in to heart, headache would not let me. Arminianism does not suit me now. If I were long to be so heavy as I now am, I could scarcely live. Evening, could not attend to the sermon was happier without it. I feasted all the time on—

“When I soar to worlds unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages! Cleft from me,
I *shall* hide myself in Thee.”

APPENDIX II

[Mr. Spurgeon's Diary, pg. 146]

Fair Day.— Spoke to Mr. R. How can a child of God go there? “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” Forgive him, Lord, for so forgetting his high calling! I, too, should be there, but for the grace of God. I have the seeds of all evil in my own heart; pride is yet my darling sin, I cannot shake it off. Awake, O my Lord, against the mighty, for I shall die by his hand if Thou do not help me, and lead me on to triumph! Leave me, ye vain thoughts! I have nothing but what I have received; it is the Lord's goodness that I even have my reason.

How could I live without prayer when troubles come? How blessed to carry them to the throne! I will now say that the Lord heareth prayer, for He hath removed from me that which I feared. But, oh! Could I feel the presence of the Lord as in days gone by, how joyful! Could I enjoy His face, and feast upon His love, then would it be a sort of Heaven below the skies. Yes, Thou art mine, my Saviour and my King; I am bound to Thee by love, by Thine own dying love, not mine! Fairest of beings, best-beloved, come, let me yet see Thy smiling face!

APPENDIX III

[Mr. Spurgeon's Autobiography, pgs. 23, 24]

(The following incident in Mr. Spurgeon's childhood's days is here given as it was related by his "Aunt Ann" on the occasion when he visited Stambourne in the summer of 1887.

One of the members of the church at Stambourne, named Roads, was in the habit of frequenting the public-house to have his "drop of beer", and smoke his pipe, greatly to the grief of his godly pastor, who often heaved a sigh at the thought of his unhappy member's inconsistent conduct. Little Charles had doubtless noticed his grandfather's grief on this account, and laid it to heart. One day he suddenly exclaimed, in the hearing of the good old gentleman, "I'll kill old Roads, that I will!" "Hush, hush! my dear," said the good pastor, "you mustn't talk so; it's very wrong, you know, and you'll get taken up by the police, if you do anything wrong." "I shall not do anything bad; but I'll kill him though, that I will." Well, the good grandfather was puzzled, but yet perfectly sure that the child would not do anything which he knew to be wrong, so he let it pass with some half-mental remark about "that strange child." Shortly after, however, the above conversation was brought to his mind by the child coming in and saying, "I've killed old Roads; he'll never grieve my dear grandpa any more." "My dear child," said the good man, "what have you done? Where have you been?" "I haven't been doing any harm, grandpa," said the child; "I've been about the Lord's work, that's all."

Nothing more could be elicited from little Charles; but before long, the mystery was cleared up. "Old Roads" called to see his pastor, and, with downcast looks and evident sorrow of heart, narrated the story of how he had been killed, somewhat in this fashion:—"I'm very sorry indeed, my dear pastor, to have caused you such grief and trouble. It was very wrong, I know; but I always loved you, and wouldn't have done it if I'd only thought." Encouraged by the good pastor's kindly Christian words, he went on with his story. "I was a-sitting in the public just having my pipe and mug of beer, when that child comes in,—to think an old man like me should be took to task, and reproved by a bit of a child like that! Well, he points at me with his finger, just so, and says, 'What doest thou

here, Elijah? Sitting with the ungodly; and you a member of a church, and breaking your pastor's heart. I'm ashamed of you! I wouldn't break my pastor's heart, I'm sure.' And then he walks away. Well, I did feel angry; but I knew it was all true, and I was guilty; so I put down my pipe, and did not touch my beer, but hurried away to a lonely spot, and cast myself down before the Lord, confessing my sin and begging for forgiveness. And I do know and believe the Lord in mercy pardoned me; and now I've come to ask you to forgive me; and I'll never grieve you any more, my dear pastor." It need not be said that the penitent was freely forgiven, and owned a brother in the Lord, and the Lord was praised for the wonderful way in which it had all come about.)

(The genuineness of the backslider's restoration is evident from the testimony of Mr. Houchin, the minister at Stambourne who succeeded Mr. Spurgeon's grandfather, and who has also ascertained from official records the correct way of spelling "Old Roads" name. Mr. Houchin writes:—

"Thomas Roads was one of the old men of the table-pew, —an active, lively, little man, but quite illiterate, —not much above a labourer, but he kept a pony and cart, and did a little buying and selling on his own account..... I found him especially in the prayer-meetings and among the young people, opening his house for Christian conversation and prayer. He only lived about four years of my time, and was sustained with a cheerful confidence to the end. When near death, on my taking up the Bible to read and pray with him, he said, 'I have counted the leaves, sir.' I said, 'Why! What did you do that for?' and he replied, 'I never could read a word of it, and thought I would know how many leaves there were.' This was very pathetic, and revealed much. We had a good hope of him, and missed him greatly.")

APPENDIX IV

[Title Page of our resource, Mr. Spurgeon's Autobiography]

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
CHARLES H. SPURGEON

COMPILED FROM
HIS DIARY, LETTERS, AND RECORDS

BY
HIS WIFE
AND
HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY

"The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with Me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity."—MALACHI II. 6

VOL. I. 1834-1854

CURTS & JENNINGS
CINCINNATI CHICAGO ST. LOUIS
1898



Yours in Christ Jesus
C. H. Spurgeon

