

CHRIST PRECIOUS TO BELIEVERS.

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**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.” — 1 Peter 2:7.

HERE we have no far-fetched statement: it belongs to every-day life. Those now present who believe can verify it on the spot: as believers, they can tell us whether the Lord Jesus is precious to them or not. We are not now about to consider an abstruse doctrine, or lose ourselves in a profound mystery of the faith; but we have before us an assertion which even a babe in Christ may put to the test. Yes, you who but last week confessed your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, can tell in your own souls whether he is precious to you or not.

If you can personally verify this sentence, it says a great deal for yourself. You need never raise the question as to whether you have the faith of God's elect, and are true believers in Jesus; for if Christ is precious to you, that question is answered once for all by this statement, which covers the whole ground — “Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.” The converse of the statement is equally true: you who find Christ precious have true faith in him. It is important, while looking at this word of the apostle Peter, that we should lay our hands upon our hearts, and ask — Do I know what this means? Is Jesus more to me than gold, or any other thing that can be desired? Can I truly say —

*“Yes, thou art precious to my soul,
My transport and my trust:
Jewels to thee are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dross”?*

If I can so testify, then I have proved my own possession of saving faith.

Dear friends, if we can verify this statement, it is not only satisfactory to ourselves, but it is glorifying to our Lord. Certain men are best respected where they are least known. Many a character needs distance to lend enchantment to the view; but our Lord is most precious to those who are best acquainted with him. Those who are actually trusting him, and thus putting him to the test, are those who have the highest opinion of him. If you would have the best estimate of the Lord Jesus, we refer you to those who have had transactions with him on the largest scale, to those who cast all their care upon him for time and eternity. Their proof of him is so satisfactory that he is more and more esteemed every day. He is far more precious to them than when they first heard of him, and every thought of him makes him dearer to their hearts. What a glorious friend is he who is most precious to those who receive most from him! Usually men feel sadness at an increase of obligation; but in this case, the more we are his debtors the more we rejoice to be so. Thousands here this morning can say, “I believe in him, and he is precious to me beyond all compare.” O my unbelieving hearer, is there no weight in this testimony? If those that believe in Christ uniformly declare that he becomes more and more delightful to them, should it not persuade you to trust him? If large numbers of Christians were met with who turned round, after a few years, and confessed that they had been deceived, and that, when the novelty was worn off, there was really nothing precious about the Lord Jesus, then unbelievers would be justified in their unbelief. But if it be not so, but the very reverse, what shall I say to you who will not consider the claims of Jesus? Why do you continue to refuse a Savior to whom so many bear witness? I can truly say, our witness is not forced, it is joyfully spontaneous, and we are glad to bear it on all occasions, and in any company. If we do so unanimously — and I am sure we do — you ought to be convinced of the truth of our statement; and if your judgment were not perverted by sin, you would be convinced, so that you would resolve to believe in Jesus, even as we believe. Do you despise our testimony — the testimony, in many instances, that of your own father, and mother, and friend? No, you are not so ungenerous as to call us all liars or fools. I pray

you, therefore, give practical weight to the evidence, by believing in Jesus, and he will be to you as precious as he is to us. This is but common-sense. May God give you grace enough to follow the dictates of ordinary prudence, for these would certainly lead you to do what others have found to be so great a blessing to them.

Coming at once to the text, we shall consider *what Christ is to his people*; according to our text, he is “precious.” Secondly, consider *what it is in them which makes them so greatly to value their Lord*: “Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.” It is their faith which apprehends the preciousness of Christ, and without it Jesus would never be precious in their eyes. Thirdly, consider *what they receive from him*. This thought arises out of another translation of the text, more strictly accurate than the one we use: “Unto you therefore which believe he is honor.” The Lord Jesus sheds honor and glory upon those who believe in him. May that honor be ours! Oh, for the aid of the Holy Spirit in this promising meditation!

I. First, consider WHAT CHRIST IS TO HIS PEOPLE. We read in our own Version, “Unto you therefore which believe he is precious”; yet the word is not an adjective, but a noun. Hence the Revised Version reads the text, “For you therefore which believe is the preciousness.” His very self is preciousness itself. He is the essence, the substance, the sum of all preciousness. Every believer will subscribe to this; many things are more or less precious; but the Lord Jesus is preciousness itself, outsoaring all degrees of comparison.

How do believers show that Christ is thus precious to them? They do so by trusting everything to him. Every believer stays his hope solely upon the work of Jesus. With regard to the past, the present, and the future, he finds rest in Christ. The Lord Jesus is the casket into which we have put all our treasures, and we prize him accordingly. All our affection flows toward him as all our hope flows from him. Within his sacred name and person all our expectation is contained. He is all our salvation and all our desire. Despite the homely proverb, we have put all our eggs into this one basket: all our stores are in this one ship. We have no reserve: we have deposited with our Lord everything which concerns us, and we have no secondary trust wherewith to supplement his power or love. We have committed to him our all, and we know that he is able to keep that which we have committed to him till that day. As the Advocate who alone pleads the

causes of our soul before the living God, our Lord is most precious to us. Our implicit faith in him proves our high estimate of him.

To believers the Lord Jesus is evidently very precious, because they would give up all that they have sooner than lose him. Martyrs and confessors have actually given up all for Jesus times without number: history bears this witness abundantly. Tens of thousands have renounced property, liberty, and life, sooner than deny Christ. To this day we have among us those who dare to go forth into the fever country for his name's sake, not counting their lives dear unto them that they might spread abroad his gospel. I hope that we also could part with everything sooner than separate from our Lord. We would, like the holy children, if the choice lay between apostasy and the fiery furnace, reply, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter." Let all things go, but we must hold fast our Lord. Brother, could you give up your Savior? Very dear to you are your children, and your wife, and your friend; but if it really came to the point to give these up or the Lord Jesus, I am sure you could not hesitate. It is a desirable thing to be esteemed and respected by one's fellows; but when it comes to this, that for the truth's sake one must be an outcast, and become the butt of enmity, there must be no question. Popularity and friendship must at once be sacrificed. Believer, you would far sooner take up your cross, and go with Jesus, than take up your crown, and go away from him. Is it not so? We must not speak too confidently, and declare that we would never deny him; but yet he knows all things, and he knows that we love him so truly that for his sake we could suffer the loss of all things, and count them but dung, that we might win Christ, and be found in him. This proves that our Lord is precious, since all else may go to the bottom so long as we can keep our hold on the Well-beloved.

Saints also find their all in him. He is not one delight, but all manner of delights to them. All that they can want, or wish, or conceive, they find in him. To the believer "Christ is all." His desires go not beyond the landmarks of his all-sufficiency. When saints have outward good, they enjoy Jesus in it; and when outward good is gone, they find it in him. That which to a man is all things is in the most emphatic sense "precious"; and Christ is that to every believing soul.

So precious is Jesus to believers that they cannot speak well enough of him. Could you, at your very best, exalt the Lord Jesus so gloriously as to satisfy yourself? I make free confession, that I never preached a sermon

about my Lord which came anywhere near my ideal of his merits. I am always dissatisfied whom I have done my very best. I have often wished that I could rush back to the pulpit, and try to preach him better; but I am kept back from such an attempt by the fear that probably I might fail even more conspicuously. He is so glorious as to be glory itself. Who can describe the sun? He is so sweet in our apprehension that we cannot convey that apprehension to another by such feeble expressions as words. Our thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ are far, far below his worth; but even those thoughts we cannot communicate to another, for they break the backs of words. Language staggers under the weight of holy emotion which comes upon us in connection with the Lord Jesus. We can never say enough of God's unspeakable gift. On any other subject there is danger of exaggeration, but it is impossible here. If thou findest honey, it is well to eat cautiously of it, for it may pall upon thee; but when thou findest Christ, take all in thou canst, and pray for an enlarged capacity, for he will never cloy. When thou beginnest to talk of what thou hast tasted and handled concerning Jesus, speak with an open mouth, and give thy tongue unbounded liberty. Thou needest now no bridle for thy lips. Rather let a live coal from off the altar burn every bond, and set thee free to speak at large of him who is still as far beyond thee as the heavens are above the earth.

Saints show that in their estimation Christ is precious, for they can never do enough for him. It is not all talk: they are glad also to labor for him who died for them. Though they grow weary in his work, they never grow weary of it. Have we not heard them sigh for a thousand tongues, that they might sing the dear Redeemer's praises as they should be sung? Do they not often wish that they had ten thousand hands, yea, ten thousand bodies, that they might be in a thousand places at once, seeking to glorify their Well-beloved? If they could have their utmost wish as to his glory, and lay down all at his feet, even then they would be dissatisfied, and feel themselves to be infinite debtors to their loving Lord. Oh, that we could crown him with infinite glory! Oh, that we could set him on a glorious high throne among men, where every soul could see him, love him, and adore him! What great things saints have tried to do for Christ! yet never one of them has expressed any satisfaction with what he has done; but all have mourned over their shortcomings, and wished that they could devise a tribute more equal to his deserts.

Saints show how precious Christ is to them, in that he is their heaven. Have you never heard them, whom dying, talk about their joy in the prospect of being with Christ? They have not so much rejoiced because they were escaping the woes of this mortal life, nor even because they would rest from their toils, but because they would behold the Lord. Often have we seen the eye sparkle, as the dying believer said, “I shall see the King in his beauty before many hours have passed.” When saints quit the world, their last thought is that they shall be with their Redeemer; and when they enter heaven, their first thought is to behold his glory. To believers Jesus is heaven. The Lamb is the light, the life, the substance of heavenly bliss.

*“Not all the harps above
Could make a heavenly place,
If God his residence remove,
Or but conceal his face.”*

We long to be with Christ. Many of us could say with David, “Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire.” Christ is to us the covenant, and in him we find the foundation of our first hope, and the topstone of our highest joy. Is he not, indeed, precious to us?

If you are not satisfied with these proofs that Christ is precious to believers, I would invite you, my dear brother and sister, to add another yourself. Let every one of us do something fresh by which to prove the believer’s love to Christ. Let us not be satisfied with proof already given. Let us invent a new love-token. Let us sing unto the Lord a new song. Let not this cold world dare to doubt that unto believers Christ is precious: let us force the scoffers to believe that we are in earnest.

In thinking Christ to be precious, the saints are forming a just estimate of him. “He is precious.” For a thing to be rightly called precious, it should have three qualities: it should be rare, it should have an intrinsic value of its own, and it should possess useful and important properties. All those three things meet in our adorable Lord, and make him precious to discerning minds. As for rarity: talk not of the rarity of gold or of gems — he is the only one: he is absolutely unique. Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid. He is the one sacrifice for sin. Not the infinite God, nor all the wealth of heaven, could supply another like him. As God and man,

he alone combines the two natures in one person. “There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” If we can never find another like him, after searching all the ages through, we may well call him precious. It is also most clear that he is intrinsically valuable — who shall estimate his worth? I should darken counsel by words without knowledge if I were to attempt in detail to tell you what he is. Only dwell on the simple fact, that while he is God over all, and has thus the fullness of the Godhead, he is also man, true man of the substance of his mother, and so has all the adaptation of perfect manhood. “Consider how great this man was.” Not even heaven itself can be compared with Christ Jesus. He is incomparably, immeasurably, inconceivably precious. As for useful qualities, where else shall we find such a variety of uses in one place? He is eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, feet to the lame, healing to the sick, freedom to the slave, joy to the mourner, and life to the dead. Think of his life, and how it gives life to the believer! Think of his death, and how it redeems from hell all those who trust in him! Think of his resurrection, and how it justifies believers; and of his second coming, and how it delights our hearts! Think of our Lord in all his offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King! Think of him in all his relationships, as husband, brother, friend! Think of him under all the types and figures with which Scripture delights to set him forth! Think of him in all positions and conditions, think of him as you will, and as you can; but in every one of these, he has a blessed use for the supply of some terrible need which afflicts his redeemed. He is set for the removal of your condemnation, the pardon of your sin, the justification of your person, the changing of your nature, the presentation of your offerings, the preservation of your graces, the perfecting of your holiness, and for all other good and necessary purposes. All good things meet in him, and meet in him in profusion, even to superabundance; wherefore, he is precious indeed!

The saints form their estimate of him upon Scriptural principles. They are not so fanatical as to be carried away by mere passion; they can be brought to book, and they can give a reason for their estimate. The text puts it, “Unto you *therefore* which believe he is precious.” We have a “therefore” for our valuation of Christ: we have reckoned and calculated, and have reason on our side, though we count him to be the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. We can justify our highest estimate of our dear Lord and Savior.

Observe the run of the context. Our Lord Jesus is very precious to us as “a living stone.” As a foundation he is firm as a stone; but in addition, he has life, and this life he communicates, so that we also become living stones, and are joined to him in living, loving, lasting union. A stone alive, and imparting life to other stones which are built upon it, is indeed a precious thing in a spiritual house which is to be inhabited of God. This gives a character to the whole structure. Our Lord is, in fact, the source of all the life which fits the church to be a temple for the living God. We see that Christ in the church is the center and crown of it: he is as precious to it as the head is to the body. Without Christ we are useless stones, over which men stumble, and dead stones without feeling or power; but in him, being quickened with a heavenly life, we are builded together into a habitation of God through the Spirit. Solomon’s temple was a mere thing of earth as compared with the spiritual house which God constructs out of those who are made alive by contact with the living stone.

I may add that our Lord is all the more precious to us because he was “disallowed indeed of men.” Never is Christ dearer to the believer than when he sees him to be despised and rejected of men. We do not follow the fashion; we know not the broad road and its crowds; and hence the Lord Jesus is immeasurably glorious to us when we see that the world knew him not. Did they call the Master of the house Beelzebub? then we the more heartily salute him as Lord and God. Did they charge him with drunkenness, madness, and with being a friend of publicans and sinners? We bow at his feet with all the lowlier reverence and love. Did they spit upon him? Did they scourge him? Did they blindfold him, and then mock him? Ah! then he is to our souls all the worthier of adoration. Crown ye the Crucified! As the sun at noonday is he when nailed to the cross and reviled by the ribald crowd. Now is he glorious in our eyes, while scribes and Pharisees make jests around him, and he dies in agony. Worship him, all ye glorified ones! Yet we feel as if worship fit for him upon the throne did not reach the height of his desert when we see him on the accursed tree. Here would our reverence sink lower than ever, and our praise would rise above angelic adoration. Precious is our Lord Christ as we see him going up to the tree, bearing our sins in his own body. Precious is he when forsaken of God, and discharging all our debt by his dread sacrifice. Unto you that believe he is all the more precious because he is still disallowed of men.

He becomes inconceivably precious to us whom we read the next words, and view him as “chosen of God.” God has chosen the man Christ Jesus to

be our Savior. Upon whom also could the divine election have fallen? But he saith, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people." The choice of Jehovah must be divinely wise. Infinitely prudent is the choice of him whom he hath exalted to be a Prince and a Savior. O glorious Christ, chosen of God, well mayest thou be chosen of us! If thy Father's heart is set on thee, well may ours be! To us thou art precious.

Note well that the apostle calls him "precious," that is, precious to God. We feel abundantly justified in our high esteem of our Lord, since he is so dear to the Father. He never looks with such delight on any as he does upon his own Son. Three times he spoke it out in words: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Father finds full rest in his Only-begotten. God finds in him union and communion, as in "one brought up with him," who was "daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." The Father finds infinite delight in his well-beloved Son, and shall not we be directed by his wisdom to do the same? Since God accounts him elect and precious, we, too, will choose him, and reckon him to be most precious to our hearts.

Moreover, we prize our Lord Jesus as our foundation. Jehovah saith, "Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone." This foundation is not of our inventing, but of God's laying. What a privilege to have a foundation of the Lord's own laying! It is and must be the best, the surest, the most abiding, the most precious foundation. We value in a building a sound basis, and therefore we count our Lord most precious, because nothing that rests upon him can fail or fall.

Thus have I shown you that we run on good lines whom Christ is precious to us. We are not here acting upon our own independent judgment, nor following a freak of fancy. If Christ be precious to us, we have God himself at the back of our judgment, and we are sure we do not err. Besides, we have this witness of the Spirit, that since we are pleased with Jesus, the Father is pleased with us. The Father is not only well pleased with Christ, but well pleased in Christ, and therefore he is well pleased with all who are in him. He is so sweet that he sweetens all who come to God by him. Precious Christ! Precious Christ!

II. Secondly, consider WHAT IT IS IN THE SAINTS WHICH MAKES THEM PRIZE CHRIST AT THIS RATE. It is their faith. "Unto you therefore *which*

believe he is precious.” To carnal sense and reason, Jesus is far from precious. To human wisdom Christ is not precious; see how men tug and labor to get rid of his Deity, and to trample on his precious blood. What labored learning is brought forth to drain inspiration out of his book, and steal satisfaction out of his blood! but “Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.” Faith calls him precious, when others esteem him “a root out of a dry ground.”

Note well, that *to faith the promises concerning Christ are made*. If you will read Psalm 118., to which Peter refers, you will find that the Psalmist who rejoiced to see him made the headstone of the corner was a believer; for he says, “I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.” The whole psalm runs in that way. As for the passage quoted from Isaiah 28:16, it finishes thus, “He that believeth shall not make haste,” or, “shall not be confounded.” In both cases the preciousness of Christ is connected in the Scriptures with a believing people. The Bible never expects that without faith men will glorify Christ.

For, dear brethren, *it is by faith that the value of Christ is perceived*. You cannot see Christ by mere reason, for the natural man is blind to the things of the Spirit. You may study the evangelists themselves, but you will never get to see the real Christ, who is precious to believers, except by a personal act of faith in him. The Holy Spirit has removed the scales from the eyes of the man that believeth. If thou trustest the Savior as a sinner must trust him, thou knowest more of him by that act of faith than all the schools could have taught thee. An ounce of faith is better than a ton of learning. Better be Christ’s patient than a doctor of divinity: for his cure will teach thee more than all thy studies. More is to be learned in the closet by penitent faith than in the university by persevering research. If we look to him whom God has lifted up, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, we shall know more of him than if we closed our eyes and spent a century in meditation.

By faith, again, the Lord Jesus is appropriated. In possession lies much of preciousness. Is the Koh-i-Noor a precious thing to me? Well, it is precious in itself; but I cannot say that it is precious to me; for I do not even know where it is, nor do I give it more thought than if it were a bit of glass. When a thing belongs to you, it has a value to you, and you make a full estimate of it. Now, no man possesses Christ except he believes in him. O unbeliever, thou hast nothing to do with Jesus if thou wilt not trust in him!

Though he be a priceless boon, he is nothing to thee if thou dost not rest in him! What hast thou to do to speak about him? Thou art without Christ if thou art without faith. Faith is the hand that grasps him the mouth that feeds upon him, and therefore by faith he is precious.

By faith the Lord Jesus is more and more tasted and proved, and become more and more precious. In proportion as we test our Lord, he will rise in our esteem. If it so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, he is precious to you; but if so be you have more than tasted, and have gone on to feed upon him, you have found him to be marrow and fatness to your soul, and he is more precious than ever to you. The more afflictions a believer endures, the more does he discover of the sustaining power of Christ, and therefore the more precious Christ becomes to him. You that have been caught in a storm at sea and have seen him come to you walking on the water, and have heard him rebuke the winds and the waves, you prize him beyond all price. In the great deeps of tribulation we find many a pearl of the knowledge of Christ. To us our Lord is as gold tried in the fire. Our knowledge is neither theoretical nor traditional; we have seen him ourselves, and he is precious to us.

Our sense of Christ's preciousness, as I have said before, is a proof of our possessing the faith of God's elect; and this ought to be a great comfort to any of you who are in the habit of looking within. If you enquire within yourselves, "Is my faith wrought in my soul by the Holy Spirit?" you may have a sure test. Does it magnify Christ? If it makes Christ inexpressibly dear to you, it is the faith of God's elect. May God grant you to have more of it!

Christ becomes growingly precious to us as our faith grows. If you have faith in Christ, but do not exercise it every day, he will not be very precious to you. But if your faith keeps her eye fixed on him, she will more and more clearly perceive his beauties. If your soul is driven to Jesus again and again, if your faith anchors in him continually, then he will be indeed more and more precious to you. Everything depends upon faith. If thou doubtst Christ, he has gone down fifty per cent. in thine esteem. Every doubt is a Christ crucifier. Every time you give way to scepticism and critical questioning you lose a sip of sweetness. The dog that barks loses the bone, and the Christian that disputes loses spiritual food. In proportion as you believe with a faith which is childlike, clear, simple, strong, unbroken, in that proportion will Christ be dearer and dearer to you. I recommend you

to keep the door of your mind on the chain in these days; for those tramps and vagrants called doubts are prowling about in every quarter, and they may knock at your door with vile intent. The first thing they say, when they are at a good man's door, is, "I am an honest doubt." That which so loudly calls itself honest, has good need to fabricate for itself a character. The most honest doubt is a great thief; but the most of doubts are as dishonest as common housebreakers. Keep doubt out of the soul, or you will make small progress in the discovery of the preciousness of Christ. Never entertain a thought that is derogatory to Christ's person, or to his atoning sacrifice. Reckon that opinion to be your enemy which is the enemy of the cross of Christ. Do not suffer your faith to diminish even in the least degree. Believe in Christ heartily and unsuspectingly! If you have a doubt as to whether you are a saint, you can have no question that you are a sinner: come to Christ as a sinner, and put your trust in him as your Savior. It is wonderful how a renewed confidence in Christ's saving grace will bring back all your joy and delight in him, and sometimes do it at once. "Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib." When I was dull and dead, on a sudden I touched his garment by faith, and my life was renewed in me, even to leaping and rejoicing. God grant you, dear brethren, by faith to know the preciousness of Christ; for only to you that believe is he precious! To you that doubt, to you that mistrust, to you that suspect, to you that live in the land of hesitation, he is without form or comeliness; but to you that believe without stint, he is precious beyond all price.

III. Now I come to the last point. Briefly consider WHAT BELIEVERS RECEIVE FROM HIM. Take the exact translation — "Unto you that believe he is honor." Honor! Can honor ever belong to a sinner like me? Worthless, base, only fit to be cast away, can I have honor? Listen! "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." A woman had been a harlot, but she believed in Jesus, and she was so honorable that she was allowed to wash his feet with tears, and wipe them with the hairs of her head. Thus was she a handmaid in the courts of our God. A man had been a thief; but he believed while dying, and lo, he was the first person that Jesus received when he came into his kingdom — he was so honorable. The Lord changes the rank when he forgives the sin. Thou art dishonorable no longer if thou believest in Jesus. Thou art honorable before God now that he has become thy salvation. Yesterday thou didst feed the

swine; to-day thou art joyfully welcomed to thy Father's house. Listen to that music and dancing, it is all for thee! See the fatted calf killed and roasting at the fire; it is for thee! For thee the shoes upon thy feet, and the ring that decks thy finger. Thy Father gives himself to thee by those fond kisses which he lavishes upon thee. Oh yes, Christ is honor to his people: his redemption makes that precious which seemed to have no value before.

Further, let me notice that *it is a high honor to be associated with the Lord Jesus*. When a valiant man has achieved a great victory everybody likes to claim some connection with him. The few persons still alive who were at the battle of Waterloo are proud of the fact. And no wonder! Though only a drummer boy at the time, the old man is proud to tell that he was there when his countrymen broke the tyrant's power. Men even carry to the extreme of folly any slight connection with the great, like the man who boasted that the king had spoken to him, when it turned out that all his majesty said was, "Get out of the way!" We have real honor in being associated with our Lord Christ in any capacity. It is an honor to have washed the feet of his servants, or to have given a cup of cold water to one of his disciples. Simple trust and grateful service make a link more precious than gold. Did men laugh at you for Christ's sake? That honors you with him. Did you suffer reproach for Christ's truth? It is well: thus are you bound up in the bundle of life with him whom you love. The day shall come when it shall be thought to be the highest honor that ever was to have been denounced us a bigot and cast out as a troubler, for the sake of Christ and his gospel. How pleased was John the Baptist to be connected with Jesus, though he said, "the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose"! How glad was Paul to be subservient to his Lord! He calls himself Christ's bond-servant. We read it "servant" in our softened version, but Paul was charmed to feel that he had been bought with Christ's blood, and was therefore as much his property as a man thought a slave to be when he had paid his price. Oh, to be as the dust of our Lord's feet! Even this were honor! To be his menial servant is better than to rule all the Russias. Some of us bless the Lord that we are associated with his old-fashioned cross, his time-worn truth, his despised atonement, his antiquated Bible. I protest I bind this as a chaplet about my brow. Jesus, the Substitute, is my honor, and the doctrines of grace are my glory.

Again, *it is a great honor to be built on him as a sure foundation*. If you read the passage in Isaiah 28: you will see that those who made lies their refuge were trodden down, but not those who rested on the sure

foundation; for of them it is written, “He that believeth shall not make haste.” Because he had built upon Christ, the builder enjoyed an honorable rest. I do not know how I should feel if I had had to think out a way of salvation for myself: but I find it happy work to accept what God has clearly revealed in his Word. A minister once said to me, “It must be very easy for you to preach.” I said, “Do you think so? I do not look at it as a light affair.” “Yes,” he said; “it is easy, because you hold a fixed and definite set of truths, upon which you dwell from year to year.” I did not see how this made it easy to preach, but I did see how it made my heart easy, and I said, “Yes, that is true. I keep to one fixed line of truth.” “That is not my case,” said he; “I revise my creed from week to week. It is with me constant change and progress.” I did not say much, but I thought the more. If the foundation is constantly being altered, the building will be rather shaky. Surely, if the basis be not settled, we shall, in our work, show a good deal of jerry-building! It is a precious thing to my heart to feel sure about the verities of God — the surely-revealed facts of Scripture. Having once made Christ my foundation, I shall take a leaf out of the book of the Puritans of Massachusetts. I have heard that in their early days their counsellors agreed “that the State of Massachusetts should be governed by the laws of God, till they had time to make better ones.” So will I rest on Christ alone till I can find a better resting-place. When we find that God has laid another foundation, we will look at it. When we discover a foundation more suitable for sinners than the sinner’s Savior, we will consider it; but not till then.

Beloved, it is an honor to believe the doctrines taught by Christ and his apostles. It is an honor to be on the same lines of truth as the Holy Ghost. It is an honor to believe what the lips of Jesus taught. I had sooner be a fool with Christ than a wise man with the philosophers. The day shall come when he that cleaves most to the gospel of God shall be the most honored man.

It is an honor to do as Christ bade us in his precepts. Holiness is the truest royalty. It is never a disgrace to any man to be baptized into his name, or to come to his table, and break bread in remembrance of him. The Virgin’s advice is sound — “Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.” Obedience to Jesus is no discredit to any man. It is an honor to “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” Take this as a sure word — sin is disgrace, but holiness is honor.

It will be our great honor to see our Lord glorified. That one hundred and eighteenth Psalm depicts the exultation of the saints in the day when Christ shall appear in his glory. See how it runs. "I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." It is a very jubilant psalm. All the adversaries of the believer have been destroyed like swarms of bees, and burned up like heaps of thorns; but the believer is safe; and more, he is glorified as he sees his despised and rejected Lord made head over all things to his church. What an honor to have been with him in his humiliation! How glorious to rehearse the story! The Lord laid Christ as the foundation though the heathen raged. The walls have risen despite the foe. The corner stone is in its place, though the builders refused it. Glory! Glory! He whom we love has come to his own, although the kings stood up and the rulers took counsel together against him. Now, it is no more! Crucify him! crucify him!" but "Crown him! Crown him!" Now he is no more the servant of servants, but King of kings and Lord of lords. Hallelujah! Like bursts of great artillery the praises of men and angels break forth again and again for him. Hallelujah! hallelujah! hallelujah! He must reign! he must reign! The Father wills it, and reign he shall, all enemies being put under his feet. In that day, to you that believe, he will be an honor. You shall be his honored attendants when he mounts the throne. Surely, the angels will set great store by every one of you that believed in Christ in the day of his scorning: they will carry you as trophies through the golden streets. Here is a man that believed in Jesus when the world despised him. Though he was poor and obscure he dared to own his Lord and stand up for his truth. Happy man to have been able to give such a proof of loyalty! He was a common soldier in the barracks, and he was the butt of many a coarse joke; but he believed in Jesus! Honour to him! She was a humble workwoman, and all the girls in the warehouse ridiculed her for being a Christian. Honour to her! Honour to all who bore dishonor for Christ.

Before you go away I would beg you to consider how you stand in this matter. Do you believe in Jesus? If you do believe, be afraid of nothing. Come forward and confess that sacred name. Own that you are a follower of the Lamb; and then, in the day when he distributes crowns and thrones, he will have a crown and a throne for you. You at the resurrection shall wake up in him to glory and immortality.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON — 1 Peter 2.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK” — 786, 817, 819.