

High Doctrine

by C.H. Spurgeon

The sermon emphasizes that all things in the Christian life are of God, and that man's free will plays no role in salvation or spiritual growth.

Duration: 43:32

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 20:24, Romans 8:28, 2 Corinthians 5:18, Ephesians 2:8, James 1:17, Revelation 1:8

Topics: "Sovereignty Of God", "Divine Providence"

Description

The sermon transcript is a summary of the preaching of Reverend C.H. Spurgeon on the topic of salvation being of God's will and not man's free will. He emphasizes that all things, including every mercy and blessing, are entirely from God. The sermon highlights the dedication and sacrifice of missionaries who leave their comforts and face persecution to spread the gospel. Spurgeon concludes by stating that everything good in believers, including their ability to suffer for Christ, is a result of God's work in them.

Transcript

High Doctrine, a sermon delivered on Sabbath morning, June 3rd, 1860, by the Reverend C. H. Spurgeon at Exeter Hall Strand. And all things are of God. Second Corinthians 518.

I would have you look on this text as being a summary of all the things which we have preached to you these years. It has been my endeavor, constantly and continually, to maintain that salvation is of God's good will, and not of man's free will. That man is nothing, and that Jesus Christ is both Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

And I think I may truly say, now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum. All things are of God. And oh, my brethren, what a large summary it is.

It contains words which grasp the compass of everything that your mind can think upon. All things. And it proclaims Him to whom all things owe their being, God.

Grasp this total if you are able. All things. What is here omitted? Surely whatsoever the Christian can desire is to be found in those words, all things.

But lest even that that should not be comprehensive enough, our summary contains a still greater word, one which is supreme over all, inasmuch as all things spring from His loins, and yet He remaineth still the same, as full as ever. All things are of God. If we be thirsty, here are streams that can never be exhausted.

If we be hungry, surely here is bread enough and to spare. If we be poor, here are treasures and riches that are utterly inexhaustible, for here we have all things, and all things in God. I shall hope this morning to do two things.

First, to lay down clearly and distinctly the doctrine of this sentence, and then secondly, to show the excellent practical tendency of each doctrine. To begin with, the doctrine itself. All things are of God.

In enlarging upon that doctrine, I shall have need to subdivide it, taking it first as to what, and then as to how, and then as to why. All things are of God. What is meant here by the term, all things? The reply is to be found in the context.

All things of the new creation are of God. It is not necessary for us to remind you that all the things of the old creation are of God. None but the infidel will ever for a moment affirm that there is anything which exists apart from the Creator.

We believe that He hath laid the beams of His chambers in the waters, He hath spread out the heavens like a tent to dwell in, the isles have been created by His hand, and the winds still are as they ever were under His guidance and control. Nothing is and nothing shall be but that which He ordains, determines, and supports. Concerning the matter of the new creation, it is wonderful that there ever should have been any controversy.

Do we call that man an infidel who should teach that some things of the old creation were of man? What name shall I give to the being who will dare to say that anything in the new creation of grace is of man? Surely, if the first be in heresy, the second must be in heresy equally damnable, and perhaps more so. For the one doth but teach the external works of God, while the other thrusts its sacrilegious hand into the eternal works of His grace, plucks the brightest jewel from His crown, and treads it in the dust. We hold, and ever must maintain, that all things, without exception, in the new creation are of God, and of God alone.

What things do you say again? We answer, all things that refer to the new nature, all things that refer to our new privileges and to our new actions. Whatsoever things refer to the new nature are of God. The personal desire after Christ which is found in the sinner's contrite heart is of God.

The first new hope which gilds the darkness of the poor benighted mind is of God. The first glimpse of new faith when that man turns his eye to the Saviour is of God. The first beginnings of divine love in the soul are of God.

Leave men to themselves, and the corruption of their nature may fester and rot and breed the fungus of a vile imagination. But the life of God never yet sprung naturally from a dead heart. Whatsoever thing is good in its beginning, as well as in its perfecting, cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Some seem to teach that man is to take the first step in salvation, and God will take the rest. No, sirs, if man can take the first, he can take the last, and take the whole. If man, dead in trespasses and sins, can quicken himself, he certainly can maintain the life of which he himself is the author.

If man, corrupt, debased, and cast away from God, can say, unawakened by grace, I will repent, I will change my ways and turn to God, and if he can carry out that resolution to himself and by his own unaided mind, then there is no room for God in salvation at all. Let man have the whole of it, and let him have all

the glory. But know thou, my hearer, if thou hast but one good thought in thy heart, it is of God, and if there be a something which says to thee, Arise, and go to thy father, that voice is God's voice.

If thy bowels begin to yearn towards the Father, whom thou hast angered and aggrieved, and if thy feet desire to leave the mountains of sin and vanity, and to tread the right road, it is a Father's hand that draws thee, it is a Savior's voice that sweetly impels thee to seek his face, for all things are of God. Everything, moreover, with regard to the new nature is of God, not merely as to its first implanting, but as to its subsequent outworking and full development. As the believer's strength, it is of God.

Does he stand, and if he kept from falling, his standing is of God. Is he preserved in the midst of temptation true to his covenant, and does he stand in the day of trial firm to his master, then his integrity is of God. There is nothing in him by nature apart from God which is not vile and deceitful.

In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. If there be anything good in my nature, if I have been transformed by the renewing of my mind, if I am regenerate, if I have passed from death unto life, if I have been taken out of the family of Satan and adopted into the family of God's dear Son, and if I am now no more an heir of wrath but a child of heaven, then all these things are of God, and in no sense and in no degree whatever are they of myself. And still further, as the new nature is of God, so the new privileges of the new nature are all of God, and what are these? Rich and precious assuredly they are.

There is pardon, the washing away of all my sins, and who shall say that is not of God? There is justification, the being robed about with a snow-white garment which shall make me meet to be the partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, and is not that of God? There is sanctification, which cuts out the very root of sin and treads the old Adam nature beneath the feet of the newborn babe in Christ, is not that of God? There is the privilege of adoption, which the Father has given to as many as believe on His only begotten Son, that they may have power to become the sons of God. O Lord, surely this adoption is of Thee. There is communion, by which through Christ Jesus we have access by one Spirit unto the Father, but whoever dared to think of communion apart from the unspeakable grace of the Most High? I am sure, my brethren, you who have traced the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of covenant mercies and covenant privileges have never yet met with the single privilege which was not of God.

You have walked the broad acres of God's rich grace, but you have not seen there a plant or a flower which was not of His sowing and of His rearing. When you have gone into the treasure house and have taken down those shoes of iron and that helmet of proof, that sword of steel, when you have laid hold upon that crown of eternal life that fadeth not away, you have been constrained joyfully to confess that all these things are of God. You cannot imagine such a thing as a single boon of grace, a single gift of mercy, which is of yourselves and not of God.

Once again, to conclude this summary, all the actions of the new nature are of God. See yonder missionary leaving house and home and all the comforts of his native land to go and do battle for Christ among a people who will scorn him, mistrust his motives, and repay his self-denial with persecution? Do you see him with his life in his hand, venturing even unto death? That man, oppressed with fever, incidental to the land in which he has come to live, as he lays on his bed with a melancholy interval for reflection, never repents of the step which he had taken. He recovers strength enough to crawl out beneath a tree, and there he stands.

And instead of recanting the vows he made of dedication to his master, he confirms them yet afresh by once again preaching the word. He continues to labor until worn out. He commits his body to the earth far

from his fatherland and the homestead of his native land, a witness against the unbelievers that God hath sent the gospel to them.

Shall we applaud the man? Shall we with clamorous songs sing his praise? Let us give him his meat of tribute. He hath done valiantly. But let us remember that everything in him that was good was of God.

He would have been idle and indifferent and careless to the souls of men. But had not God made him what he was, does the martyr burn at the stake? Does the confessor lie and rot in the dungeon? Does the heroic child of God do battle against the current of his times, and seem to stem the flood with his own strong arm? Are Christians prepared to suffer contumely and scorn and rebuke and reproof for Jesus' sake? Surely all these things are of God. Is there a Christian, magnificent, generous, thoughtful of the woes of others? Is there another mighty in prayer and diligent in service? Can you meet with a third who lives so near to Christ that his face seems to shine with the luster of Jesus' love? All these things are of God, set down no virtue to man.

Good things are exotics in the human heart. They are not like the weeds which spring up naturally in such poor soil as human hearts are made of. But they are rare choice flowers brought down of the spirit's hand from above, and then planted in this unkindly soil.

Oh, let us ever know that anything we can ever do or feel or think that is right is of God. My brethren, discard forever with detestation and abhorrence any doctrine which would lead you to think that any work or grace, anything just, pure, lovely, or of good report in man is of man himself. Depend upon it, though it come to you in the garb of earnestness and paint its cheeks and look fair enough to you.

It is the harlot of potpourri in another dress. For they let such doctrine be pushed to its fair conclusion, and you come at once to salvation by works. Ever stand by the good old Calvinistic banner, the banner which Augustine waved of old and which Paul handed down to us direct from our master Jesus, and hold and believe and affirm, never swerving from it, that all things in the new creation are of God.

But the second division of the doctrine was to be how. How and in what respect are all things of God? All things in the new creation are of God in the planning. God from before all worlds planned the new creation with as much exactitude and wisdom as he did the old.

There are some men who seem to think that God does his work bit by bit, altering and making additions as he goes on. They cannot believe that God had a plan. They believe that the most ordinary architect on earth has prefigured to himself some idea of what he meant to build, though it were but a mud cottage.

But the most high God who created the heavens and the earth, when he says, Behold, I make a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, hath no plan. But what is left to the caprice of manhood, he is to have no decrees, no purposes, no determinations. But men are to do as they will, and so virtually man is to usurp the place of God, and God is to become the dependent of man.

Nay, my brethren, in all the work of salvation, God is the sole and supreme designer. He planned the time and the manner how each of his people should be brought to himself. He did not leave the number of his saved ones to chance or to what was worse than chance to the depraved will of man.

He did not leave the choice of the persons to mere accident, but on the stones of the eternal breastplate of the great high priest he engraved the names of those he chose. He did not leave so much as one tent pin, one single line or yard of canvas to be afterwards arranged. The whole of the tabernacle was given by

pattern in the holy mount.

In the building of the temple of grace, every stone was squared and chiseled in the eternal decree, its place ordained and settled, nor shall that stone be dug from its quarry till the hour ordained. Nor shall it be placed in any other position than that which God, after the counsel of his own will, ordained. Everything in the new creation is of God in the planning.

Alas for us, however, if God had simply planned and left the execution to us, everything in the new creation is of God in the purchase and of God in the procuring. One price hath bought his people, that price the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, who contributed so much as a mite to that wealth of treasure which bought our souls. Did he not tread the winepress alone, had his people a part in enduring the load, the intolerable load of guilt that overwhelmed our suffering Lord, when he in his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree? What arm helped him, or what other foot but his tread the foeman down? Nay, O Lord, thou hast redeemed us by thy blood.

We have not contributed thereto. Thou art Alpha and Omega in this, and unto thee be all the honour. And as it was of God in the planning and of God in the purchasing, so it is all of God in the applying and bringing of it home to each individual conscience.

The cross of Christ is not put up there merely for every man to look at and then left to chance as to whether men will look or no. There stands the cross free to every soul that lives, but nevertheless God has determined that it shall not be neglected. There is a number that no man can number who shall by all constraining grace be brought to clasp that cross as the hope of their souls.

Jesus shall not die in vain, and that because God will make men willing in the day of his power. They are hardened. He can break their hearts.

They are stubborn. He can bend their knees. They will not come, but he can make them come.

He has a key that can wind up the human heart and make it run at his pleasure. Think not that man is an independent being so free that God cannot control him. That were to make man God, deify humanity and undeify the Godhead.

Man is free to be responsible, but he is not free from a perpetual bias and inclination to evil. But man is subject to the restraint or the constraint of God. If he doeth right, then it is God's constraint and not his free will.

When he doeth wrong, God hath left him to himself. But as sure as ever he doeth good, it is because a master hand hath got him now. Man by nature is as a wild horse dashing yonder to the precipice.

If he be restrained in his course and turn thitherward away from danger, it is because he hath a mighty rider and one that knows how to pull the bit and guide him as he pleases. And though he kick and plunge and long to turn away, his rider can pull him up upon his very haunches and turn him around and make him go as he wills and lead him as he pleases. In this matter is it true that all the bringing home of the gospel to the soul of man is of God.

Nor is this all. The works of the new creation are of God, not only in the planning, procuring and applying, but in the maintaining of them. Leave the Christian to himself to maintain the grace already begun, and he is gone.

The candle is a light, but the devil's breath would blow it out. The gas is burning. Cut the connection between it and the great gasometer, and the light is quenched.

The Christian lives, but it is because Christ lives and because he is one with Christ. O Lord, if thou should cease to send forth the streams of thy grace, thy glorious church with all her beauty must be as a fading flower. All her strength would be fainting weakness, and she herself, though she be as a tower in her glory, must crumble down to the very earth and lie with the base stones of the valley.

All is of grace then, and all of God in the maintaining, and still more must it be all of grace in the completing. When you and I shall go up the celestial hills to the gates of paradise, those last steps shall be of God as much as the first steps. And when we shall stand upon the golden streets and wear the white robe, I am sure we shall not have a word to say about free will or about self, but our cry will be unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, unto him be all the glory for ever.

Men may hold what doctrine they like on earth. They cannot hold any doctrine in heaven but that of free, rich, and sovereign grace. The song never was divided yet, and it never will be.

There shall be no selfishness to mar its melody, but every heart shall send forth the same melodious notes of music, and every tongue shall mingle in the same undivided song. Thou hast done it, O Lord, thou hast done it. Grace, O the work, shall crown through everlasting days.

It lays in heaven the topmost stone and well deserves the praise. My third point upon this doctrine was to be the why. Why is it that all things are of God? How can we clearly see this? I shall use no arguments, but such as would be manifest and palpable to us all.

Everything in grace must be of God, because we are quite clear there cannot be anything of man. Man is in such a position that there can be nothing of him. Lazarus was laying a corpse in his tomb.

He comes forth quickened. The grave clothes are taken from him. He lives, he breathes.

Do you tell me that his resurrection was in part owing to himself? Well, sir, your mind must be strangely deluded indeed. What could that dead man do towards his own resurrection? Surely it must be a fact in philosophy which might strike every rational man that that which does not exist cannot put itself into existence. And so my new nature, which did not exist before God gave it to me, could not bring itself into being.

And yet you say a dead man makes himself alive or at least does something towards it. Oh, sir, you cannot mean it. You cannot mean it.

To reason with you, you were ridiculous. You must feel that if a man be dead, there is nothing he can do. It must be a work of some superior power that can give him life.

And so with a sinner dead in sin, what can that sinner do unless the Scripture be an exaggeration? Unless you are prepared to cast overboard that passage where we are spoken of as being dead in trespasses and sins, I cannot see how you can dream that a man is capable of doing anything in the work of grace. He may work when God sets him working, and he will. He may move when God gives him power to move, and move he will then with joyful alacrity.

But till then, how helpless, guilty nature lies, unconscious of her load, the heart unchanged can never rise to happiness and God. Till the stone shall of itself fly upwards towards the sun, till the sea shall of itself beget fire, and until fire shall by its own nature distill the shower from its own bowels, then and not till then shall depraved humanity breed goodness within itself. It must be grace.

It must be grace alone. Let me give you another reason why we are quite sure that all things in the work of grace are of God. It is expressly told us that every good gift and every perfect gift cometh from above.

Now that word every is very comprehensive. It does not exclude a single case. Is there any good gift? I am not told that some good gifts and some perfect gifts are from above, but every one, and I am quite sure this rule must apply to any good gift you have, any good gift in fact that is in the heart of any man living upon the face of the earth.

God were only in part the father of light if there were light streaming from somewhere else. God were only in part the world's benefactor if there were other fountains out of which the world could draw and other helpers who could raise up souls to heaven. Yet again, we are quite certain that all things are of God because all the glory is God's.

Now if all the glory be God's, it stands to reason that the work must have been his. For where the work is, there must be the merit. If man hath done it, man can claim the honor.

If I have been my own savior, I will claim the honor and the dignity, and nothing but superior force can wrest from me the glory which I deserve. But if God hath done it, and if I must feel that I have been passive in his hands until he made me active, then must I lay all my honors at his feet and crown him Lord of all. I am quite certain we do not differ here about God's having all the honor, and yet if we should differ about his doing all the work, we might have fair ground on which to dispute his right to take all the glory.

O men and brethren, if I want argument, your own experience shall bear witness. You as Christians are compelled to feel thou best wrought all our works in us. You can say we are his workmanship, created of God in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Set it down then for a certainty. I have tried to explain it as best I can. All things are of God.

Grasp every mercy of the covenant and every blessing of grace, but say that all things in all senses are wholly and entirely of God, the great giver of all. And now I am proposing in the second part of my subject briefly to show the excellent tendencies of this doctrine. There is one thing about the doctrines of the gospel which, to my mind, always commends them.

They always enlist the attention of men and rouse them to think. If you hear a sermon in which God's grace is magnified, you are perhaps offended. You are angry because the doctrinal sentiments are not in keeping with your own carnal pride.

For you to be angry is one of the healthiest things that can happen to you. Do not imagine that the sermon has been wasted when it has made you vexed. Conceive not that it has been lost upon you when it has made you angry with it.

Perhaps there was but that joint of harness through which the arrow could reach you, namely your own anger against the truth. I have known many who have frankly confessed that after they have been to this place, they felt disturbed. They could not sleep.

They hated the preacher and they hated the subject, yet in about a month's time they felt they must come again. They disliked it so much they were compelled to hear again of this matter. They could not quite see it, in fact, they would not.

They would still hold to their own opinion. But they said within themselves, I never thought so much about religion in all my life. There is something in these doctrines that drives right into the soul of a man.

Other forms of doctrine run off like oil down a slab of marble, but this chisels them, cuts into the very quick. They cannot help feeling there is something here which if they kick against it has nevertheless force and they must ask themselves, is the thing true or not? They cannot be content with huffing it and making themselves easy. It takes hold of their thinking powers and wakes them up to inquiry whether these things are so or not.

And it is remarkable that wherever the doctrine that salvation is of God and God alone has been revived, it has always happened that God has sent a revival of true religion. To give you a practical illustration, on the continent I have been informed by many who had good reason to judge that the Lutheran church is to a very great extent fallen from its faith and becoming unitarian and neological and the like. But the Calvinistic church is never.

There they stand just the same. There is a salt in these doctrines which preserves truth. There is a savouriness and pungency about them which keeps the constitution of men right.

It is a great big sheet anchor. It may seem cumbrous and in these modern times it may be said to be rather rusty, but in days of storm that great big bower anchor will have to be thrown out into the sea again. The more I preach, the more am I concerned not to give a double testimony about this matter, but to lay it down clearly and distinctly that salvation is of God, that all things in fact in the new creation of grace are of God and God alone.

And oh, what enthusiasm these truths will stir up in the minds of those who believe them. I have heard them preached by simple, uneducated, unlearned men and the congregations have been bathed in tears. There has been no stolidness upon the countenances of the ears.

They have heard as if they were hearing the very word of God and felt the power of it. I have preached during this week in the simplest manner I could these truths to somewhere about 20 or 30,000 Welsh people in one congregation and such a sight I never saw when all is one man. They kept crying out, amen, amen, the whole sermon through carried away with enthusiasm because they heard again the good old truths that Christmas Evans used to thunder out to them in which the Welsh still hold intact, even though the English may choose to reject and scorn them.

There is something in them that would nerve men on to do mighty deeds. Cromwell's sword was so sharp and his arm so strong because he knew the Lord of hosts and trusted in his mighty power and believed in God's overcoming grace. This made the iron sides invincible.

There were never such men as they. The Calvinist's arm is always strong. He that is of God and knows not man, he who looks to God's purpose and grace and gives him all the glory is not a man to bow before a tyrant or to kick the feet of any being.

He knows himself chosen of God and he stands upright and yet while standing he is full of fire of an enthusiasm that makes him work and compels him to serve the cause of God and true. That, however,

perhaps is but by and by. I have other tendencies to mention concerning this doctrine.

The fact that conversion and salvation are of God is a humbling truth. It is because of its humbling character that men do not like it. To be told that God must save me if I am saved and that I am in his hands as clay is in the hands of the potter, I do not like it, saith one.

Well, I thought you would not. Whoever dreamed you would. If you had liked it, perhaps it had not been true.

Your not liking it is an indirect evidence of its truthfulness. To be told that he must work all my works in me, who can bring me so low as that? Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? The law of works? No, but by the law of grace.

Grace puts its hand on their boasting mouth and shuts it once for all and then takes its hand off from the mouth. That mouth now does not fear to speak to man, though it trembles at the very thought of taking any honor and glory from God. I must say, I am compelled to say that the doctrine which leaves salvation to the creature and tells him that it depends upon himself is the exaltation of the flesh and the dishonoring of God.

But that which puts in God's hand man, fallen man, and tells man that though he has destroyed himself, yet his salvation must be of God, that doctrine humbles man in the very dust, and then he is just in the right place to receive the grace and mercy of God. It is a humbling doctrine. Again, this doctrine gives the death blow to all self-sufficiency.

What the Arminian wants to do is to arouse man's activity. What we want to do is to kill it once for all, to show him that he is lost and ruined, and that his activities are not now at all equal to the work of conversion, that he must look upward. They seek to make the man stand up.

We seek to bring him down, to make him feel that there he lies in the hand of God, and that his business is to submit himself to God and cry aloud, Lord, save, or we perish. We hold that man is never so near grace as when he begins to feel that he can do nothing at all. When he says, I can pray, I can believe, I can do this, and I can do the other, marks of self-sufficiency and arrogance are on his brow.

But when he comes to his knees and cries, oh, for this no strength have I, my strength is at thy feet to lie, then we think that God has blessed him and that the work of grace is in his soul. Oh, sinner, I think not that thy own unaided arm can get the victory. Cry unto God and beg him to take your soul in hand, for you cannot be saved unless he doth it for you.

Bless him for the promise which says, him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. Oh, cry to him, Lord, draw me by thy grace that I may run after thee, work all my works in me, and bring me to thyself and save me. Not to yourself do we bid you look, nor to your prayers, nor to your faith, but to Christ and to his cross and to that God who is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him.

And there is in this doctrine some consolation for the troubled heart. If all things be of God, my soul, let not thy spirit be ruffled and affrighted by the tempest. All things are of God.

If there were one thing of me, I were a lost man. If I were about to build a great bridge and would let me have the placing of one stone, you shall build it as you please, and it will fall. Let me have the management of the keystone, and I will undertake that it shall not stand.

So if in the work of salvation there is one thing left dependent upon myself, it must all fall. But if everything be guaranteed and settled by eternal wills and shalls, then it stands fast and rests secure. O joyous thought to the Christian! His soul is safe.

He has given himself up into Christ's hand to be kept, and now the keeping rests with Christ. He has surrendered himself to his Lord and Master to be preserved, and now he knows that come what may, Christ is his buckler and his shield, and nothing will hurt him, because Jesus keeps daily watch and ward, and will preserve him safely to the end. I do not know where our Arminian brethren get their consolation from.

I know if I believe their doctrine I should be driven to distraction, but believing as I do that those whom God begins to save he will completely save, and that there is not a single stone in the entire building that can ever fail or give away, my soul can sing this covenant stands secure, though earth's old columns bow, the strong, the feeble and the weak are one in Jesus now. I have one more thing to say about this doctrine. It encourages the sinner.

Sinner, sinner, come to Jesus, for all things are of God. You are naked. The robe in which you shall be dressed is of God.

You are filthy. The washing is of God. Come and be washed, but you are unworthy.

Your worthiness must be of God. Come as you are, and he will cleanse you. You are guilty.

Your pardon is of God. Come to him, and his pardon shall be freely given. But you say you are hard-hearted.

A new heart is of God. Come to him. He will give you the heart of flesh and take away the heart of stone.

But you say I cannot pray as I would. True prayer is of God. He will pour out upon you the spirit of supplication.

But you say my very coming must be of God. Hey, blessed be God for that, and therefore, if now you feel something saying to you, let me go and trust in Christ. That is of God.

Oh, come with cheerfulness. There is nothing wanted of you. Everything is of God.

Is your heart barren? Fruitfulness is of God. Is your heart stubborn? Obedience is of God. Can you not repent? He is exalted on high to give you repentance.

Repentance is of God. Do you say I cannot believe? Faith is of God. It is one of his unspeakable gifts.

But do you say I am afraid I shall not be able to persevere? Perseverance is of God. All you are bidden to do is simply to be a receiver. Come with your empty pitcher and hold it now to the flowing fountain.

Come with your empty lap and receive the golden store. Come with a hungry mouth to feed and with thirsty lips to drink. You are asked to do nothing.

You are asked to be nothing. Cease from thyself, O man, and begin with God. Leave off now to do and feel and be and come and trust in him who did and was and felt for you.

And then afterwards, being saved, you shall begin to be and to feel and to act through a new energy leading to a new life. To live to Christ, you must first die to yourself. Every hope of mortal nature must be killed before you can receive a divine hope within you.

Come bruised and mangled, crushed and broken. Come and take Christ to be your all in all. And if thou canst not stretch out thine hand of thyself, as indeed thou canst not, I speak in my master's name, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, by his spirit's power, believe.

It is the duty of God's servants not only to exhort, but with divine authority to command. Man with the withered hand, in the name of Jesus, stretch out thine hand. Thou who hast never believed or repented, God commandeth all men everywhere to repent.

Dost thou receive the command? The power goes with it. Art thou willing to obey it? That will is God's gift. The power is with the will.

Believe Christ. Trust Christ. Take him to be everything and you are saved.

Your sins are washed away. You are an heir of paradise. You may rejoice.

Clap your wings, ye angels. Tune your harps anew, ye seraphs, ye redeemed. Louder, louder, let your strains of music rise toward heaven, O ye cherubim and seraphim.

Sing loud unto his name, of whom and to whom and by whom are all things, unto whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/13/SID13285.mp3>
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