

Men of Revival: C. H. Spurgeon

by E.A. Johnston

E.A. Johnston explores the life and ministry of C. H. Spurgeon, highlighting his impact on revival and the importance of suffering and prayer in his journey of faith.

Duration: 17:04

Scripture: Numbers 21:8-9, Isaiah 45:22, Matthew 26:36-39, Luke 23:33-34, Acts 1:9-11, Hebrews 1:3

Topics: "Biography"

Description

In this sermon, a student at Spurgeon's College delivers a powerful message on the armor of God from Ephesians chapter six. The student's eloquence and passion in describing each piece of armor is so vivid that the audience can almost hear the sound of the armor being put on. The sermon culminates with the student proclaiming that with the shield of faith and the sword of the spirit, the devil has no power over believers. This revelation leads the great preacher Charles Spurgeon to understand the simplicity of salvation through faith in Christ alone, likening it to the story of the brazen serpent in the Old Testament.

Transcript

We are in our series on Revival Man and today our subject is Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon was a man mightily used of God and a prince of preachers. His sermons are still being read today and his influence is still felt even though he died in 1892.

When he died over a hundred thousand mourners fouled by his casket as he lay in state at his beloved Metropolitan Tabernacle in London. We can learn much from the study of the life and ministry of C. H. Spurgeon for he was an instrument of revival in the hand of God. Spurgeon often preached to ten thousand at a time and God saved tens of thousands under Spurgeon's anointed preaching.

I would like to begin our study with the conversion story of young Charles Spurgeon. Charles Spurgeon was 16 years old and he went all over London seeking out the best known preachers of his day in the hopes of hearing how to come to Christ savingly but he searched in vain. No one could help him.

He said of these preachers these good men all preach truths suited to many in their congregations who were spiritually minded people but what I wanted to know was how can I get my sins forgiven and they never told me that. You see Spurgeon needed to have that question how answered how he could come to Christ well he found out how one day while he was caught in a snowstorm in the town of Colchester England and he sought shelter in the first church he found which was a primitive Methodist chapel. Once

inside he realized that the pastor of that small congregation was hindered by the storm and another man was in the pulpit a plain uneducated cobbler was doing his best to present the gospel that morning.

His text was from Isaiah 45 22. Look unto me and be saved all the ends of the earth Spurgeon said of that day that it was the preach word that saved me and as young Spurgeon sat listening to that uneducated man present the gospel God did a work in his heart as he listened to the following sermon listen to what Spurgeon said of this time. The text says look unto me then the good man followed up his text in this way look unto me I am sweating great drops of blood look unto me I am hanging on the cross look unto me I am dead and buried look unto me I rise again look unto me I sent to heaven look unto me I'm sitting at the father's right hand oh poor sinner look unto me look unto me then the man pointed to Spurgeon and shouted young man look to Jesus Christ look look look you have nothing to do but to look and live then the great Spurgeon realized the how of how to come to Christ he said I saw at once the way of salvation I was possessed with that one thought like as when the brazen serpent was lifted up the people only looked and were healed so it was with me I had been waiting to do 50 things but when I heard that word look what a it seemed to me oh I looked until I almost have looked my eyes away there and then the cloud was gone the darkness had rolled away and that moment I saw the sun and I could have risen that instant and sung with the most enthusiastic of them of the precious blood of Christ and the simple faith which looks alone to him oh that somebody had told me this before trust Christ and you shall be saved and that is how Spurgeon came to Christ friends the life of Spurgeon is a delight to study for his life and ministry is full of examples on how to live for Christ faithfully and be used of God mightily some of you may not know this but Spurgeon was never ordained to the ministry he didn't believe in ordination he said that ordination and his thinking was empty hands being placed on empty heads he always said that he was ordained by Christ and that was good enough for him a few years back I went to London to the Metropolitan Tabernacle for Sunday service and after the service I was escorted by a minister of the church to the pastor study there on the wall hangs the full-length portrait of Spurgeon and there is also the very desk that he preached from across the room on the opposite wall hangs an old portrait of Spurgeon's predecessor Dr.

John Gill and the face of Gill is startling because he looks as if he's just smelled something awful he has the most disgusting look on his face well the minister of the church told me the following amusing story he said that Spurgeon would greet visitors to his study with the following comment as he pointed to the portrait of John Gill here now gentlemen is dear Dr.

Gill see how the dear man looks he looks as if an Arminian has just entered the room Spurgeon was well known for his facile wit some of his remarks are legendary once while he was vacationing in Minton France his favorite winter retreat he stumbled and fell down a marble staircase doing a double somersault knocking out his front teeth and in the process the change from his trousers fell into his boot as he regained consciousness at the bottom of the stairs and upon realizing what had befallen him he remarked painless dentistry with money to boot he was a character Spurgeon had a college for training pastors and in his day it was called the pastor's college today it's called Spurgeon's college but every Thursday afternoon he would host an impromptu preaching session for the students he

would make one of the students get up and preach before the class while he sat in attendance one time a very eloquent student was preaching on Ephesians chapter 6 on the armor of God and his oratory was so great that as this student related about the Christian's armor you could almost hear the click and the clank as each piece of armor was put on finally he faced his audience with the shield of faith in one hand and the sword of the spirit in the other and shouted now where is the devil in the back of sat the great Spurgeon who cupped a chubby hand to his mouth and shouted back he's inside the armor while eating lunch with

the congregation in the basement of that church I was struck with the following story in that very basement it's the only part of the original church which survived

bombing from World War II in that basement would be 300 Spurgeon's choicest men who always missed his sermon because they would gather in the basement every time the good man preached and spent the entire time of the service on their knees crying out to God in prayer Spurgeon had 300 deacons praying to God the whole time he preached it's no wonder his preaching was so well attended with success Spurgeon knew the importance of prayer and an anointed ministry Charles Spurgeon suffered from depression and poor health he often referred to his depression as the black dog it is hard for us to imagine how much this great man suffered for God I have a photo of Spurgeon where the great British preacher is sitting at his desk with quill pen in one hand and the other hand resting beneath his bearded

chin Spurgeon's eyes are framed by deep circles of wear and fatigue the dark circles beneath his eyes are so prominent in this photograph that they look as though they were made by a black magic marker Spurgeon's face reveals a great atlas like weight upon him a weariness and burden is written all over his tired face he sits there regally like a tragic king whose kingdom is heavy upon his shoulders he is marred by life and Christian service his painfully sad eyes betray a deep manic depression he sits there absorbed in his work yet detached perhaps his mind is often a more pleasant locale like mint in France his beloved winter retreat he sits there as an object of pity yet how can this be he is the great Spurgeon but he looks like a worn out old man yet he is just 56 he carries the weight

of the metropolitan tabernacle the pastor's college his orphanage and his theological battles with his peers the burden and care the ministry mark his once cheery countenance he is not the jovial Spurgeon here but one who is acquainted with grief but as you look at this photograph Spurgeon's face reveals another visage staring out from behind the human form the face of Christ peers out beautifully behind Spurgeon's sagging face the man of sorrows is there with him comforting him encouraging him on in the work of the kingdom for to be Christlike is not to receive awards or accolades or applause rather it is to be deeply familiar with great suffering to be Christlike is to know what it means to be misunderstood an object of ridicule and a target for enemies to be Christlike is to

experientially know reproach rejection and even abandonment of close friends our Lord Jesus hung publicly in naked humility on a bloody tree he was ridiculed scorned spat upon rejected by his own people and nailed to an ignoble cross like a common criminal he bore reproach the great weight upon Christ on the cross would have been too unbearable for us where he bore the sins of the world and he suffered the turned face of the father who cannot look upon sin the photo of Spurgeon reveals just how Christlike he really was listen friends when you study men whom God has used there is often a common denominator between those rare individuals mightily used of God and that common denominator is that each person used greatly at God has greatly suffered for him Spurgeon lived in a place of

suffering and in this regard he was much like the great George Whitfield whom he admired so when we look at the lives of revival men it is easy to focus just on their successes and say to ourselves oh I wish I could be used to God just like that but we miss the other side of the coin the deeper aspect of their usefulness which is often great suffering are we willing to walk with God like that are we willing to be instruments of suffering for him are we willing to live in an atmosphere of suffering so that Christ can be made manifest in our lives God seems pleased to use men and women whose lives are broken alabaster boxes the aroma of their lives of brokenness and prayer ascent to heaven with a sweet fragrance men like Spurgeon need to be studied as there is much to learn from their walk

with God and their service to the kingdom Spurgeon always remained a humble man who knew he was only as good as the time he spent on his knees in prayer there is a story about Spurgeon which I would like to close with as he lay dying in a hotel in France his aide and close friend Joseph Harold related the following story Joseph Harold said that as Spurgeon lay dying Harold was standing in the passage of the Hotel Beau Rivage at Minton he looked out the window toward the hillside beyond and he was astonished at what he saw to his dying day he claimed that there beyond the window under a cloudless sky he saw a company of angels hovering outside looking as though they were waiting for someone they did not have long to wait Spurgeon died shortly thereafter the news of Spurgeon's death was

telegraphed around the world and it was front page news in all the papers he was one of the most famous men of his generation the prince of preachers was laid to rest back in London in West Norwood Cemetery in fact the old gateway through which Spurgeon's casket passed is still in use today and three years after his death over 60 million copies of his weekly sermons were still being sold around the world many have been saved through the reading of one of his sermons as he said it was the preached word would save me well friends I hope the story of the great Charles Spurgeon has stirred your heart as it has mine we can learn much from studying men of revival and by studying them we can learn better how to pray to God for revival in our day the next message in our series will be Mordecai

Ham until then

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