

THE PENTECOST

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THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF CHARLES SPURGEON



THE PENTECOST

We are doing something a little different with this issue. We are considering the life and ministry of a great Christian leader. When he was only ten years old, a missionary said of him that he would one day preach the gospel to thousands. Charles Haddon Spurgeon was raised to his calling by the hand of God. His story, his preaching and his writing remain an inspiration for thousands today.

Shawn Stevens



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THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF CHARLES SPURGEON

They called him the “prince of preachers.” Before Charles Haddon Spurgeon was twenty years of age, he had preached over 600 times. It was not uncommon for him to preach ten times in a week. When he first came to *The New Park Street Church* in 1854 it had a membership of 232. When he left his pastorate 38 years later, the church had increased to 5,311. On one occasion, Spurgeon addressed an audience of 23,654 without the use of a microphone. His printed public sermons contain 20 to 25 million words and fill 63 volumes. They, and Spurgeon's other writings, comprise the largest body of Christian teaching from any one person in the history of Christianity. Over the course of his lifetime, he is believed to have preached to 10 million people.¹

Who was this amazing preacher? Why did crowds flock to hear him speak? Spurgeon was born in 1834 in Kelvedon, Essex, England. His father and grandfather were Nonconformist ministers and Spurgeon had much exposure to Christianity as a child. At age six, he read *The Pilgrim's Progress*, loved it, and in the coming years read it over 100 times. As a child, and in adolescence, Spurgeon was very unhappy and despondent, frequently sinking into depression as he contemplated the reality of hell. He recognized his own spiritual emptiness and knew he was lost. One day, while walking to church in the middle of a snowstorm, the sixteen-year old Spurgeon stepped inside a Methodist chapel seeking shelter from the cold. Here he heard a minister crying out the scripture; “Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I *am* God, and *there is* no other.” (Isaiah 45.22). The minister kept

repeating the verse, and then pointed right at Spurgeon, remarking that Spurgeon looked miserable. He further exclaimed, “Look! Look, young man! Look now!”² At this moment, Spurgeon had a spiritual experience which would change him forever. He comments:

Then I had this vision - not a vision to my eyes, but to my heart. I saw what a Savior Christ was Now I can never tell you how it was, but I no sooner saw whom I was to believe than I also understood what it was to believe, and I did believe in one moment. And as the snow fell on my road home from the little house of prayer, I thought every snowflake talked with me and told of the pardon I had found, for I was white as the driven snow through the grace of God.³

When he arrived home, his mother, seeing his countenance, remarked that something wonderful must have happened to him. The young Spurgeon now began his spiritual walk and soon was baptized in water.

Spurgeon's spiritual walk blossomed into a spiritual ministry and the opportunity to pastor a church in the village of Waterbeach opened to him. He had no formal ministerial training and he was still a teenager, but this did not stop the zealous Spurgeon from engaging in pastoral work. His gifting to preach was very noticeable and he was invited to speak in many places throughout England. He settled in London and began conducting services in halls which were large enough to accommodate the crowds. In 1861, Spurgeon and his congregation moved into the new *Metropolitan Tabernacle*.

¹ Eric W. Hayden, “Did You Know? A Collection of True and Unusual Facts about Charles Haddon Spurgeon,” *Christian History*, Issue 29, Vol. X, No. 1 (1991): 2-3.

² Mary Ann Jeffreys, “Spurgeon's Conversion. The Story He Told over 280 Times in His Sermons,” *Christian History*, Issue 29, Vol. X, No. 1 (1991): 10.

³ Charles Spurgeon, quoted in Mary Ann Jeffreys, “Spurgeon's Conversion. The Story He Told over 280 Times in His Sermons,” *Christian History*, Issue 29, Vol. X, No. 1 (1991): 10.

THE DOWN GRADE CONTROVERSY: CRYING WOLF OR DEFENDING THE FAITH

The crowds came because Spurgeon's preaching was different from the mundane, superficial messages of many others. Spurgeon's sermons were graphic and alive with feeling. He preached salvation, calling sinners to come to Christ. Crowds were shaken up as, week in and week out, they heard Spurgeon thunder from his pulpit. He was known to say; "There is enough dust on some of your Bibles to write damnation with your fingers."⁴

Spurgeon's fiery preaching and his forthrightness created waves within many churches. In his later years, he became very distressed over the inroads that theological liberalism was making within his own denomination. He drew a lot of attention to this in his preaching and, even more so, in his decision to withdraw his membership.

Spurgeon died in 1892. Over three days, sixty thousand people came to the *Metropolitan Tabernacle* to pay their respects. A two-mile long funeral parade followed the hearse from the tabernacle to the cemetery at Upper Norwood and 100,000 people lined the route. Flags flew at half-mast and shops and pubs were closed.⁵ Spurgeon will always be remembered for his passion for truth and his passion for souls.

The party everywhere apparent has a faith fashioned for the present century - perhaps we ought rather to say, for the present month. The sixteenth century gospel it derides, and that, indeed, of every period except the present most enlightened era. It will have no creed because it can have none: it is continually on the move; it is not what it was yesterday, and it will not be to-morrow what it is to-day. Its shout is for 'liberty,' its delight is invention, its element is change. On the other hand, there still survive, amid the blaze of nineteenth century light, a few whom these superior persons call 'fossils': that is to say, there are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who consider that the true gospel is no new gospel, but is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. These do not believe in 'advanced views,' but judge that the view of truth which saved a soul in the second century will save a soul now, and that a form of teaching which was unknown till the last few years is of very dubious value, and is, in all probability, 'another gospel, which is not another.'⁶

Charles H. Spurgeon

In the nineteenth century, modernism and theological liberalism gained wide acceptance in England. Many ministers began to view fundamentalism as being narrow, irrelevant and unaccommodating. Reverend Charles H. Spurgeon reacted against this, calling it a downward trend, and warned his fellow Englishmen of the gravity of an apostasy of this kind.

The pervasive influence of modernism upon nineteenth-century thought can hardly be understated. It was an era of intellectualism and rationalism. The spirit of criticism expressed itself in education and in common life. Theological dogmas were scrutinized and discarded in the name of logic and reason. Inquiry into science was applauded. Reevaluation of social and religious values was thought to be an essential task in achieving the goal of greater individualism and humanism.^{7 8} Books, such as "Principles of Geology," "Antiquity of Man," and Charles Darwin's, "Origin of Species," were introducing and popularizing new ideas that proposed to explain the history of the natural world and the origins of life in ways that boldly challenged the claims of the Bible.^{9 10}

⁴ Charles Spurgeon, quoted in Mary Ann Jeffreys, "Sayings of Spurgeon : A Sampling of His Wisdom and Wit" *Christian History*, Issue 29, Vol. X, No. 1 (1991): 12.

⁵ Patricia Stallings Kruppa, "The Life & Times of Charles H. Spurgeon" *Christian History*, Issue 29, Vol. X, No. 1 (1991): 8.

The influence of modernism on nineteenth-century thought carried over into theological circles and gave rise to liberal theology in England. Modernism's attack on belief in the transcendent and supernatural cultivated the perfect atmosphere for modern biblical criticism to flourish. Emphasis was placed on reason and "everything had to be intellectualized and voided of its mystery."¹¹ This new age demanded theological fluidity¹² and a spirituality that was not confined within rigid lines.¹³ Liberal theology argued that theological positions must incorporate modern enlightenment.¹⁴ It embraced the modernist concept of humanism, claiming that God's highest self-expression was found in a human man, Christ.¹⁵ It felt that this kind of fluidity would bring a freshness to the study of the Bible, and also might help win back the modernist, educated community which was unsympathetic towards evangelicalism.¹⁶

One doctrinal tenet that liberal theology challenged and redefined was the inspiration of the Bible. The former position, that the Bible was the inspired and inerrant word of God, was first challenged by a compromised position which claimed that various biblical books had varying degrees of divine inspiration. This implied that Scripture was not necessarily true in all of its claims.¹⁷

Not only did liberal theology challenge and redefine the inspiration of the Bible, it also promoted a new form of interpreting the Bible. It argued that spiritual truths were conveyed allegorically and poetically, and that this should be the governing rule used when interpreting the Bible. Such a governing rule dismissed a literal interpretation of such things as the creation narrative and miracles.¹⁸

As well as challenging miracles, theological liberalism challenged the doctrine of the atonement. The evangelical position that the death of Christ was a substitutionary sacrifice on man's behalf which appeased the wrath of God became open for debate.¹⁹ The purpose for the death of Christ began to be viewed as simply an example of self-sacrifice for us to follow, rather than a price paid redemptively.²⁰

In a short period of time, theological liberalism became widely accepted in nineteenth-century England. Initially, many English theologians were influenced by liberal German theologians. The German professor, J.G. Eichhoran (1752-1827), seemed to be the first to use the expression, "higher criticism."²¹ Albrecht Ritschel (1822-1889) was another liberal German theologian. He rejected the doctrine of original sin²² and the juristic element in Christ's work.²³ He believed that the modern man wanted above all other things, to live according to reason, and that Christianity could aid and

strengthen him in this endeavor. He believed that Christianity was an outlook upon life and a morality, but not an immediate relationship with God.²⁴ Some have viewed him as the father of liberal theology.²⁵

While German liberal theology was being read in England, English liberal theologians were spreading their teaching as well. Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) began teaching that the virgin birth was false, that Christ was less than infallible, and that the teachings of the Apostle Paul were not to be given absolute authority. Edward Evanson (1731-1805) denied the apostolic authorship of the Gospel of John.²⁶ Thomas Belsham (1750-1829) began teaching that the Pentateuch had more than one author, and that the creation narratives were in contradiction with scientific knowledge.²⁷

⁶ Charles H. Spurgeon, "The Sword and the Trowel" Dec. 1888, The Down Grade Controversy (Pasadena: Pilgrim Publications, n.d.), 71.

⁷ Vernon F. Storr, The Development of English Theology in the Nineteenth Century 1800-1860 (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1913), 201.

⁸ Louis Drummond comments, "Moreover, as is so often the case, that general humanistic atmosphere soon infiltrated theological circles. It began to manifest itself as an emphasis on human development and far less on a God-centered approach to the realities of life as had prevailed for centuries." Louis A. Drummond, Spurgeon Prince of Preachers (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1992), 661.

⁹ H. A. Wilson, "Development of Evangelicalism", Liberal Evangelicalism (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1970), 19-20.

¹⁰ Louis A. Drummond comments, "... evolutionary theory began to take such a hold on the mindset of many Victorians that it resulted in a humanistic approach to all reality." Louis A. Drummond, Spurgeon Prince of Preachers (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1992), 661.

¹⁰ John Dickie, Fifty Years of British Theology (Edinburgh: Morrison and Gibb Ltd., 1937), 201.

¹² Alan P. F. Sell, Theology in Turmoil: The Roots, Course and Significance of the Conservative-Liberal Debate in Modern Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 88.

¹³ V. F. Storr, "The Bible and Its Values", Liberal Evangelicalism (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1970), 87.

¹⁴ H. A. Wilson, "Development of Evangelicalism", Liberal Evangelicalism (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1970), 26-27.

¹⁵ E. A. Burroughs, "Evangelicalism and Personality", Liberal Evangelicalism (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1970), 52-53.

¹⁶ Robert Anderson, The Bible and Modern Criticism (London: Pickering and Inglis, n.d.), 39.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 178-171.

¹⁸ V. F. Storr, "The Bible and Its Values", Liberal Evangelicalism (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1970), 83-85.

¹⁹ H. A. Wilson, "Development of Evangelicalism", Liberal Evangelicalism (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1970), 23-24.

²⁰ Alan P. F. Sell, Theology in Turmoil: The Roots, Course and Significance of the Conservative-Liberal Debate in Modern Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 128.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

²² *Ibid.*, 82.

²³ *Ibid.*, 85.

²⁴ Karl Barth, Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001), 641, 644.

²⁵ Alan P. F. Sell, Theology in Turmoil: The Roots, Course and Significance of the Conservative-Liberal Debate in Modern Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 74.

²⁶ Alan P. F. Sell, Theology in Turmoil: The Roots, Course and Significance of the Conservative-Liberal Debate in Modern Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 41.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

Possibly the most significant English liberal theologian of this time was D. F. Strauss. He determined to differentiate between the facts of history and what he viewed as mythological expressions of Christian ideas. He proposed to “get behind” the accounts of Christ and find out who Jesus “really was.”²⁸ He determined that “in the person and acts of Jesus no supernaturalism shall be suffered to remain.”²⁹ The pervasive influence of these liberal theologians, and others, can hardly be understated. Anglican Bishop, J. C. Ryle (1816-1900), stated, “Whether we like it or not we cannot shut higher criticism out. Like frogs in the plague of Egypt, it creeps in everywhere.”³⁰

While theological liberalism was spreading like frogs in England, not all ministers accepted these changes. Perhaps the most vocal opponent to the new teachings was Reverend Charles H. Spurgeon. He began publishing a warning to all Christians in his periodical, “The Sword and the Trowel.” A series of messages became known as “The Down Grade” articles. The first two articles were not actually written by Spurgeon but, rather, by an associate of his, Robert Schindler. Spurgeon continued this series, beginning with the third article. To give a mental picture of what they were trying to say, they began speaking of a high pinnacle. This pinnacle had a great downgrade. Truth and churches occupy a position on the top of the pinnacle. As many churches compromised their beliefs, they gradually became disconnected from truth. With this disconnection they lost their footing also, and began tumbling down the great downgrade.

In the third issue, Spurgeon began warning his readers of some specific things. He lamented that preachers were spreading unbelief. He warned that such ministers are ten times more dangerous than atheists.³¹ He argued that along with the abandonment of sound doctrine also went the living of a holy life. Spurgeon warned that some ministers were amusing themselves at play houses or theatres. He said that there was a time in England when a Nonconformist minister would lose his whole church for making such a compromise.³² He lamented that the doctrines of the atonement³³ and of the inspiration of the Scriptures were being derided, that the Holy Spirit was being degraded, that punishment for sin and belief in the resurrection was treated as fiction.³⁴ He reminded his readers that many of them were called by the name of Nonconformist, and that “Our nonconformity is beyond measure precious as a vital spiritual force, but only while it remains such will it justify its own existence.”³⁵ With strong and compelling language, Spurgeon communicated the gravity of the downgrade issue. Liberal theology was not just

another side of Christianity, it was apostasy. He declared, “A new religion has been initiated, which is no more Christianity than chalk is cheese.”³⁶

In his second article, Spurgeon told his readers that the stand that he was taking was simply his duty to take as a minister. He assured them that he did not gain pleasure in stirring up antagonism, and that he had not written in hate. His motive for writing was that “the gospel is too precious for us to be indifferent to its adulteration. By the love we bear to the Lord Jesus we are bound to defend the treasure with which He has put us in trust.”³⁷

Spurgeon was well aware that liberal theology had spread within his own denomination. He weighed the decision and then made the difficult choice to withdraw his personal membership. It wasn't easy for him, for there were others within the denomination who were loyal to him and who shared his concerns.

Spurgeon opposed the humanistic focus of modern liberalism. He maintained that theology should not be man-centered, nor should it be shaped to accommodate human wisdom. He lamented that, “The new religion practically sets ‘thought’ above revelation, and, constitutes man the supreme judge of what ought to be true.”³⁸

²⁸ D. F. Strauss, quoted in Louis A. Drummond, *Spurgeon Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1992), 662.

²⁹ D. F. Strauss, *The Life of Jesus*, quoted in *Theology in Turmoil: The Roots, Course and Significance of the Conservative-Liberal Debate in Modern Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 45-46.

³⁰ J. C. Ryle, quoted in *Theology in Turmoil: The Roots, Course and Significance of the Conservative-Liberal Debate in Modern Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 51.

³¹ Charles H. Spurgeon, “The Sword and the Trowel” Aug. 1887, *The Down Grade Controversy* (Pasadena: Pilgrim Publications, n.d.), 19.

³² *Ibid.*, 18.

³³ Because Spurgeon was a Calvinist, it would be easy to misinterpret the issue that he was addressing with regards to the atonement. In the *Down Grade* articles, he was not directing his objections towards those, such as Methodists, who held an Arminian understanding of the atonement. He clarifies this point in these words, “In our fellowship with Methodists of all grades we have found them firmly adhering to those great evangelical doctrines for which we contend ... We care far more for the central evangelical truths than we do for Calvinism as a system ... Those who hold the eternal verities of salvation, and yet do not see all that we believe and embrace, are by no means the objects of our opposition: our warfare is with men who are giving up the atoning sacrifice, denying the inspiration of Holy Scriptures, and casting slurs upon justification by faith. The present struggle is not a debate upon the question of Calvinism or Arminianism, but of the truth of God versus the inventions of men.” Charles H. Spurgeon quoted in Louis A. Drummond, *Spurgeon Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1992), 678.

³⁴ Charles H. Spurgeon, “The Sword and the Trowel” Aug. 1887, *The Down Grade Controversy* (Pasadena: Pilgrim Publications, n.d.), 17.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 17.

³⁷ Charles H. Spurgeon, “The Sword and the Trowel” Sept. 1887, *The Down Grade Controversy* (Pasadena: Pilgrim Publications, n.d.), 23.

³⁸ Charles H. Spurgeon, “Choice Teachings for the Chosen”, *The Forgotten Spurgeon* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), 187.

Spurgeon's decision to oppose theological liberalism, both by word and by action of disassociation, offended many in nineteenth-century England. The *Down Grade* articles shocked many evangelicals who were going with the flow of modern thought. Spurgeon was urged to soften his rhetoric.³⁹ Because Spurgeon was suffering from kidney problems during this time, some felt that his writings were just the rantings of a stressed, dying man. Others thought that Spurgeon was being too vague.⁴⁰ Some claimed that Spurgeon was crying "wolf," making an issue unnecessarily. Others responded with a defense of theological liberalism. One newspaper, *The Christian World*, said that young ministers, and others, must now decide whether or not they would accept the "modern thought' which in Mr. Spurgeon's eyes is a 'deadly cobra,'" but in their eyes was "the glory of the century."⁴¹ This magazine said further that "Mr. Spurgeon professes to despise or ignore the science and criticism at the progressive life and thought of the present day."⁴² John Clifford, the vice-president of the denomination in 1887, said that Spurgeon's statements had not been proved.⁴³ Spurgeon was subsequently censored in April 1888.⁴⁴

Was liberal theology the glory of the nineteenth century? Did it bring to England a new and improved form of Christianity that Englishmen of other generations did not know? While it is true that God did express Himself through human form, liberal theology was wrong to center its teachings on human expression and humanism. Their redefinition of the inspiration of the Bible was too great an alteration. It directly undermined the authority of the Bible, the very grounds of Christianity itself. Although the Bible does convey some of its truths through allegory and poetry, this does not mean that we should view the bulk of Scripture in this way. By making allegorical interpretations the governing rule of hermeneutics, many in Spurgeon's day were able to dismiss the difficult teachings or commands of Scripture. While Christ's sacrifice was an example for us, it was more than an example; it was an atonement. By challenging the doctrine of the atonement, nineteenth-century English theologians were challenging Christianity's most central theme. By simply flowing with the downgrade, many Victorian Englishmen were making a compromise. Spurgeon may have been suffering from kidney problems, but the nineteenth-century modernist church was suffering from spiritual sickness that was much more serious. Spurgeon was not being vague. He named his issues, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the atonement, punishment for sin, the resurrection and holiness. Then

Then he addressed these issues directly, clearly and with great persuasion. This is in contrast to many liberal theologians, whose writings were deeply philosophical and often mind-bending in their complexity. It is because Spurgeon approached these issues so directly that he was asked to temper his rhetoric. It was precisely his strong preaching that was needed to communicate the seriousness of the situation. As Spurgeon said, "A little plain speaking would do a world of good just now."⁴⁵ Because liberalism had spread in nineteenth-century England to the extent that it had, it cannot fairly be said that Spurgeon was crying wolf. The old story of the boy who cried wolf does not apply because, as Spurgeon has said, "The parallels only fail in the all-important point that he cried 'Wolf!' when there was none, and we are crying 'Wolf!' when packs of them are howling so loudly that it would be superfluous for us to shout at all if a wretched indifferentism had not brought a deep slumber upon those who ought to guard the flocks."⁴⁶ Spurgeon was not overreacting on this point, for theological liberalism in England was as plenteous as the frogs in Egypt. The liberal theologians of Spurgeon's day were more dangerous to the English church than atheists. Atheists did not have the trust of English churchmen. Many liberal theologians did have this trust and were undermining the truth of sacred scripture. Spurgeon was a Nonconformist in the true sense of the word, and voiced his concerns out of his duty as a minister. While it is true that nineteenth-century England saw many changes in technology, politics and philosophy, does this necessitate a change in spirituality? Spurgeon's question is a fair one, "Do men really believe that there is a gospel for each century?"⁴⁷ His question is a fair one, and his stand was a true one; theological liberalism had effectively placed many churches on the downgrade.

³⁹ John MacArthur, *Ashamed of the Gospel: When the Church Becomes Like the World* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1993), 207.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 208.

⁴¹ "The Christian World", quoted in Charles H. Spurgeon, "The Sword and the Trowel" Oct. 1887, *The Down Grade Controversy* (Pasadena: Pilgrim Publications, n.d.), 30.

⁴² W. Copeland Bowie, to "The Christian World", 22 Sept. 1887, *The Forgotten Spurgeon* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), 184.

⁴³ Ernst W. Bacon, *Spurgeon: Heir of the Puritans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), 133.

⁴⁴ Susannah Spurgeon, and Joseph Harrald, ed., *C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), 470.

⁴⁵ Charles H. Spurgeon, "The Sword and the Trowel" Aug. 1887, *The Down Grade Controversy* (Pasadena: Pilgrim Publications, n.d.), 20.

⁴⁶ Charles H. Spurgeon, "The Sword and the Trowel" Oct. 1887, *The Down Grade Controversy* (Pasadena: Pilgrim Publications, n.d.), 28.

⁴⁷ Charles H. Spurgeon, "The Sword and the Trowel" Apr. 1888, *The Down Grade Controversy* (Pasadena: Pilgrim Publications, n.d.), 50.

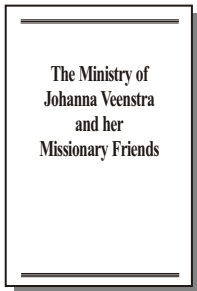
It is today as it was in the time of the Reformation: decision is needed. Here is the day for the man, where is the man for the day? We who have had the gospel passed to us by martyr's hands dare not trifle with it, nor sit by and hear it denied by traitors, who pretend to love it, but inwardly abhor every line of it. The faith I hold bears upon it marks of the blood of my ancestors. Shall I deny their faith, for which they left their native land to sojourn here? Shall we cast away the treasure which was handed to us through the bars of prisons, or came to us charred with the flames of those burned at the stake in Smithfield? Personally, when my bones have been tortured with rheumatism, I have remembered Job Spurgeon, doubtless of my own stock, who in Chelmsford Jail was allowed a chair, because he could not lie down by reason of rheumatic pain.

That Quaker's broad-brim overshadows my brow. Perhaps I inherited his rheumatism; but that I do not regret if I have his stubborn faith, which will not let me yield a syllable of the truth of God. When I think of how others have suffered for the faith, a little scorn or unkindness seems a mere trifle, not worthy of mention. Having so many ancestors who were lovers of the faith before us, ought to be a great plea with us to ourselves abide by the Lord God of our fathers, and the faith, which they lived. As for me, I must hold the old gospel: I can do no other: God helping me, I will endure the consequences of what men think in obstinacy. Look you, sirs, there are ages yet to come. If the Lord does not speedily appear; there will come another generation, and another, and all these generations will be tainted and injured if we are not faithful to God and to His truth today. We have come to a turning point in the road, if we turn to the right, perhaps our children and our children's children will go that way; but if we turn to the left, generations yet unborn will curse our names for having been unfaithful to God and to His Word. I charge you, not only by our ancestry, but by your posterity (on behalf of your children ... and your children's children), that you seek to win the commendation of your Master; that though you dwell where Satan's seat is, you yet hold fast His name, and do not deny His faith. God grant us faithfulness, for the sake of the souls around us! How is the world to be saved if the church is false to her Lord? How are we to lift the masses if our fulcrum is removed? If our gospel is uncertain, what remains but increasing misery and despair? Stand fast, my beloved, in the name of God! I, your brother in Christ, entreat you to abide in the truth. Handle yourselves like men! Be strong! And may The Lord sustain you ... for Jesus' sake. Amen.¹

¹Charles Spurgeon, quoted in John MacArthur, Word Pictures, Does the Truth Matter Anymore? Produced by John MacArthur, Videocassette.

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In this issue, I would like to feature two of my books. You may read these books on line. You may also request a hard copy from this ministry, free of charge for as long as God enables. God bless you.



THE MINISTRY OF JOHANNA VEENSTRA AND HER MISSIONARY FRIENDS

While others around her dreamed of starting a family, pursuing a career, or advancing themselves in the bustling, exciting, urban America which had just entered the twentieth century, Johanna Veenstra dreamed of being a missionary. This dream would carry her into the mysterious interior of what is today Nigeria.

THE YORUBAS AND EARLY MISSIONARY WORK AMONGST THEM

Read about one of Nigeria's four largest people groups and the early missionaries who courageously went to them, bridged their culture, and shared with them the good news of Jesus Christ.

