

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Spurgeon on Election

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

Who is Charles Haddon Spurgeon? Known as the “Prince of Preachers,” this Victorian, Calvinistic, Baptist minister testified as a powerful gospel witness in his time, but his influence endures today. So much so that Carl F. H. Henry, the dean of twentieth-century evangelical theologians, once called Spurgeon “one of evangelical Christianity’s immortals.”



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Born on June 19, 1834, in Kelvedon, Essex, to John and Eliza Spurgeon, he was the firstborn of seventeen children. A boy who loved books, he quickly became fascinated with John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*. However, Charles did not lose his own burden at the foot of the cross until January 6, 1850. That morning a roaring blizzard forced Charles into the first church he could find, the Primitive Methodist Chapel on Artillery Street in Colchester, England. There Charles heard a sermon delivered by a man who was in his words, “really stupid” and who could “not even pronounce the words rightly.” Yet, by God’s grace Charles “looked to Christ” and was saved. Soon thereafter he moved to Cambridge, joined St. Andrews Street Baptist Church, and began his ministry as an itinerant preacher. In October of 1851, Charles was called to preach in first church, Waterbeach Chapel, and soon thereafter accepted the pastorate of New Park Street Chapel in Southwark, London in April of 1854. In 1861 the Metropolitan Tabernacle opened and his ministry exploded resulting in the founding of 66 parachurch ministries. His remarkable ministry in London would last 38 years before his death on January 31, 1892, in Menton, France.

In 1855, one anonymous writer, *Vox Populi*, the “voice of the people,” wrote that, “Mr. Spurgeon institutes a new era, or more correctly revives the good old style of Bunyan, Wesley, and Whitefield—men whose burning eloquence carried conviction to the hearts of their hearers—men who cared naught for the applause of their fellow-mortals, but did all for God’s glory.” Indeed, Spurgeon gave fresh voice to the stream of rich theology which flowed through Calvin, Owen, Bunyan, Edwards, Wesley, and Whitefield. He knew that Christ had not commanded him to “feed my giraffes,” but rather to “feed my sheep.” Thus, in preaching he insisted that, “We must not put the fodder on a high

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rack by our fine language, but use great plainness of speech.” And Spurgeon did speak plainly and often upon his favorite theme, “Jesus Christ and him crucified.” Indeed, it is for his richly theological, exceptionally vivid, and dogmatically Christo-centric preaching for which Charles Haddon Spurgeon is known.

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