

## Prayer of the Month • February 2012

O my Saviour, let me not fall by little and little, or think myself able to bear the indulgence of any known sin because it seems so insignificant. Keep me from sinful beginnings, lest they lead me on to sorrowful endings.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 1834-92



‘Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves’, is an analogous saying to this prayer. ‘Sinful beginnings’ is how Spurgeon puts it. Some beginnings are so small as not to be noticeable. It is said that if frogs are put in cold water and the water is heated very slowly they stay there and until they die rather than jumping out. We are too dull to be aware of all our faults and failings, perhaps especially those with small beginnings. We need God’s help for this – not necessarily to know, but certainly to avoid and overcome them.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon was born in Essex in 1834. At the age of fifteen, and on his way to an appointment, a snow storm caused him to seek shelter in a Primitive Methodist chapel in Colchester where, reflecting on the text, ‘Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else’ (Isaiah 45.22), he found that, ‘God opened his heart to the salvation message’. Within a year he was preaching his first sermon. He became a Baptist minister in Cambridgeshire and published his first tract, written in 1853. At the age of 19 he became pastor of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark, and later the Metropolitan Tabernacle, at the Elephant and Castle. Spurgeon’s church disaffiliated itself from the Baptist Union over the ‘downgrade’ controversy, about the status of the Bible. Spurgeon often preached up to ten times a week, and also published his sermons and many other works, including books on prayer, a commentary, and an autobiography. He died on 31 January 1892.

Colin Lunt