

“Let Thy Gospel Permeate This City”: Charles Haddon Spurgeon in Late Victorian London

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On the first morning of February in 1892, passersby near the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London's Southwark neighborhood would have noticed a series of telegrams posted on the front of the building. These were sent from the city of Menton in southern France, announcing the death of the Tabernacle's pastor who had died there while recovering there from an influenza attack. Those passersby might have known of this pastor's reputation as a "Dissenter," a Reformed Baptist who departed from the mainstream Church of England's views on certain theology. Yet in the following days, the city of London commemorated this pastor, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, in a way that few British religious figures have ever been honored. Tens of thousands of people, including several members of Parliament and high-ranking clergy from the Church of England, attended funeral services for Spurgeon. Shops were closed and flags flew at half-mast for the funeral procession, which had a length of two hundred carriages. The metropolis of London, in the middle of one of the most dynamic time periods in its history, paused for a moment to remember the man known throughout the city as the "Prince of Preachers."<sup>1</sup>

This enormous tribute that Spurgeon received from the city indicates that he earned the respect of the metropolis during his ministry. Londoners knew him not only for his revolutionary theological views but also for his eloquence and charisma, which earned him the aforementioned nickname. Gifted with an extraordinary voice, Spurgeon had the ability to speak to massive crowds, often delivering sermons to tens of thousands of people at open-air venues. For nearly forty years, he preached twice every Sunday at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, a building that

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<sup>1</sup> Reginald Henry Barnes. *Spurgeon: The People's Preacher* (London: Walter Scott Limited, 1928), 319-324

could accommodate more than five thousand worshippers.<sup>2</sup> Spurgeon also reached an extremely diverse group of people within London; he would often preach that the faith was best suited for the “common man,” giving him a unique appeal to the working and middle classes.<sup>3</sup> The church’s location in the central Southwark area nevertheless helped create a relatively heterogeneous congregation, drawing individuals and families from many social classes and professions.<sup>4</sup> Over the course of Spurgeon’s ministry, the population of the Tabernacle evolved into a microcosm of the metropolis.

Spurgeon clearly had an enormous, wide-ranging impact on London during his lifetime, and even after his death, his legacy inspired good work throughout the city.<sup>5</sup> Because Spurgeon’s ministry was so city-centric, the trends and events of the metropolis influenced the man as well. Spurgeon’s exhaustive library of sermons reveals how the dynamic issues of the day played a significant role in how he reached his listeners. This paper will argue that Spurgeon, through his sermons, responded to the crises of the modern metropolis by applying his unique theology to the relevant moral, cultural and political issues. Spurgeon addressed the increasingly rampant violence and illness (bodily and mental) in the city, as well as the rise of toxic social and political

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<sup>2</sup> Peter Morden. *C.H. Spurgeon: The People’s Preacher* (London, Penguin Books, 2010) as cited in Peter J. Morden, "The Bible for The Masses: The Popular Preaching of C. H. Spurgeon." In *Text Message: The Centrality of Scripture in Preaching*, ed. Stackhouse Ian and Crisp Oliver D., 100-16. (Cambridge: United Kingdom: Lutterworth Press, 2014), 100-103

<sup>3</sup> Morden, “Bible for The Masses”, 106

<sup>4</sup> Metropolitan Tabernacle. “History.” Metropolitan Tabernacle. Accessed 20 November 2018  
<https://www.metropolitantabernacle.org/Church-Details/History>

<sup>5</sup> In 1855, Spurgeon established a theological college and taught there over the course of his lifetime. Originally named the “Pastor’s College,” it was renamed to “Spurgeon’s College” in memory of Spurgeon. The school, which still exists to this day, has trained hundreds of young pastors, many of whom planted churches in the city. Spurgeon himself played a role in founding dozens of churches in London, and also established alms houses and an orphanage. See Christianity Today. “Charles Spurgeon.” *Christian History | Learn the History of Christianity & the Church*, Christianity Today, 18 Feb. 2016,  
[www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/pastorsandpreachers/charles-spurgeon.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/pastorsandpreachers/charles-spurgeon.html).

ideologies such as nationalism and Social Darwinism. Spurgeon kept his finger on the pulse of the city, keenly observant of both individual events and the broader social climate. In responding to these, he stayed true to the core tenets of his faith, and from that context criticized the trends and problems uniquely faced by the modern metropolis.

Spurgeon, who grew up in the county of Essex, outside London, arrived in the city in 1853, at the age of nineteen, to begin his pastoral career.<sup>6</sup> Over the course of his thirty-nine years in London, the metropolis changed dramatically. The population of the city more than doubled; from approximately 2.7 million in 1851 to approximately 5.6 million in 1891, having become the largest city on the planet by 1885.<sup>7</sup> As the capital of the British Empire under Queen Victoria, London was the political center for a large portion of the world and, as a result, was a hub for trade and ideas.<sup>8</sup> But with the city's growth came serious environmental and health issues, including pollution, overcrowding, and poor sanitation. Illness and plagues became staples of the metropolis; at least four major different cholera outbreaks occurred throughout Spurgeon's time in London. The effects of these outbreaks reverberated around the city and within Spurgeon's congregation.

Not only did diseases cast a constant shadow over the city; vice and violence, primarily in the East End of the city, grew increasingly visible. The historian Judith Walkowitz points to one particular moment as a key turning point in the public perception of the East End: the July 1885 publication of W.T. Stead's article series entitled, "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon." In these articles, the journalist Stead gained firsthand experience with the child prostitution market

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<sup>6</sup> Eric W. Hayden, *A Centennial History of Spurgeon's Tabernacle* (Pasadena, TX, Pilgrim Publications, 1971), 8

<sup>7</sup> Demographia. "Great London, Inner London & Outer London: Population & Density History." Demographia. <http://www.demographia.com/dm-lon31.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Class Lecture, 09.14.18 (Notes from Sheehy, Jack)

in East London; and composed something resembling an epic narrative tragedy, complete with mythological and biblical references. According to Walkowitz, the publication of these articles inspired a variety of reactions:

“Maiden Tribute” provoked multiple and contradictory readings on the part of a heterogeneous reading public. Stead’s journalistic conventions not only permitted evangelical reformers, feminists, and socialists to speak out against male rakes, but allotted space to the male libertine voice as well.<sup>9</sup>

Walkowitz spends little time discussing the response of the “evangelical reformers,” instead focusing on the political and journalistic reaction. Walkowitz observed a growing sense of shock at the events occurring in the East End, and this notion gave rise to a variety of responses with regard to existing and new legislation.<sup>10</sup> This essay will discuss Charles Spurgeon’s response from the pulpit, not only to the “rakes” but also to the perceived moral decline of the city as a whole.

Fear and concern for the visible moral decline also led to rises in xenophobic (and particularly anti-Semitic) political movements. This shift provoked British citizens to take a more nationalist approach to the notion of citizenship, which also entailed a backlash against expanding that citizenship to immigrants or Jews. Not only did this appeal to the West End elites, but also to middle- and lower-middle-class citizens, who best exemplified the “common Briton.”<sup>11</sup> Spurgeon had a congregation that drew much of its population from those income levels, and he himself appealed to this idea of the “common man.” Thus, he faced a unique challenge in responding to nationalism and ethnic prejudice. Nevertheless, he addressed this issue in his sermons.

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<sup>9</sup> Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late Victorian London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 103.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 105

<sup>11</sup> E.J. Hobsbawm. *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 160

Another related form of prejudice also began to permeate the West End. Social Darwinism began to take hold in the second half of the nineteenth century, with the introduction of anthropology and racial sciences as legitimate fields of study. Under the guise of these sciences, the practice of “pseudo-scientific racism” crept into academic and elite circles. Writers like Herbert Spencer established racial hierarchies and designated superior and inferior races, justifying imperialism through such reasons. Francis Galton proposed eugenics specifically in order to preserve the British race.<sup>12</sup> These movements gained popularity in scientific circles and eventually worked their way into mainstream West End culture and politics. They provided an extremely toxic counter to the prostitution and violence in the East End; and posed another moral issue for Spurgeon to address.

Spurgeon does receive a brief mention in Walkowitz’s commentary on the wake of the “Maiden Tribute” scandal. She uses Spurgeon as an example of the evangelical reaction with the quote: “Old-fashioned conspiratorial fantasies reached their height when Charles Spurgeon, the popular evangelist, publicly railed against the ‘princes of the blood’ and other royal patrons of London brotheldom.”<sup>13</sup> While Spurgeon largely refrained from making political commentary of any kind, he did hold strong feelings against British royalty and political elites. In a sermon from June 1885, just before the “Maiden Tribute” scandal emerged, he labeled the political elites as responsible for the spread of child prostitution in the East End. “To our infinite disgust and horror, the names of certain of the greatest in the land are at this hour openly mentioned in connection with the filthiest debauchery... O God, have mercy upon the land whose judgment-

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<sup>12</sup> Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst, eds. *The Fin de Siecle: A Reader in Cultural History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 316

<sup>13</sup> Walkowitz, 103

seats and palaces are defiled with vice.”<sup>14</sup> Spurgeon spoke this in a sermon where he discussed the ignorance of the people of Israel towards the evil prevalent in their own government. While part of this statement may serve to contextualize the passage for his Londoner congregation, part of it may simply stand as an independent political statement from Spurgeon. As a religious non-conformist strongly opposed to the Church of England and the trend of “Anglo-Catholicism,”<sup>15</sup> he likely held a resentment for the powerful institutions in the nation. It is also clear that he was a strong admirer of Oliver Cromwell, who overthrew the English monarchy in the seventeenth century.<sup>16</sup> Clearly Spurgeon would not violate his personal convictions; as he confessed to his congregation: “I know I shall stir a hornet’s nest by these honest rebukes but I cannot help it.”<sup>17</sup> However, this one sermon excerpt is an outlier in terms of the substance of his preaching, and Spurgeon largely refrained from political commentary; not only because he sought to keep his sermons Scripture-focused, but also because he had a congregation to whom to answer. Walkowitz may characterize Spurgeon as a proponent of “conspiratorial fantasies” from this episode; but closer observation of Spurgeon’s sermons shows that this anti-establishment mentality was not consistently reflected in his preaching. While Spurgeon may have, on occasion, spoken his personal mind, he always returned to Scripture and his faith as the substantive responses to the issues at hand.

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<sup>14</sup> Charles Haddon Spurgeon. “Israel and Britain: A Note of Warning.” Sermon. Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, 7 June 1885.

<sup>15</sup> Alister E. McGrath. *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought* (Oxford, John Wiley and Sons, 1999), 3-4

<sup>16</sup> Bacon, 28

<sup>17</sup> Spurgeon, “Israel and Britain.”

Apart from Walkowitz’s brief mention, much of the scholarship devoted to Spurgeon comes from the academic branch of evangelical Christianity.<sup>18</sup> This circle mainly produces theological analysis of Spurgeon’s preaching and writing, focusing on his Biblical interpretation and expository skill. Yet the emphasis within these circles centers around Spurgeon as a theologian rather than a social commentator. Much of the scholarship on Spurgeon overlooks the remarkable context in which he preached and the societal issues that he faced in late Victorian London. Spurgeon’s works, particularly his sermons – because of their unique rhetorical context – deserve consideration as important primary sources of the time period, not just as pieces of theology. They represent his responses to the crises of the modern metropolis. While Spurgeon never departed from the Bible as the basis for his sermons,<sup>19</sup> he also sought to bring Scripture straight into the contexts and the lives of the individual members of his congregation. Thus, when London’s issues overlapped with the Scripture at hand, Spurgeon used his platform to account for and respond to such issues.

One example of this comes from the aforementioned sermon from June 1885. Spurgeon responded to the increasingly visible moral decline of the city – no doubt on the hearts and minds of his congregation – by making a biblical comparison. In the sermon, entitled: “Israel and Britain: A Warning,” he recalls two examples from Old Testament Israel: one from the people of

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<sup>18</sup> Today, many of the most famous names in the evangelical circle have studied and written about Spurgeon. While plenty of biographical information about the preacher exists, most of the academic study dedicated to Spurgeon has a purely theological context – for many consider Spurgeon as a pioneer in the doctrine of *sola scriptura*, or the pre-eminence of Scripture.<sup>18</sup> The theological tenets that Spurgeon holds most closely hearken back to the theology of the Puritans from previous centuries; and contemporary theologians credit him for preserving these ideas, which still retain their importance today. One of the foremost evangelical academic institutions in America, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has established a “Spurgeon Center” for “making visible the life, legacy, and library” (see The Spurgeon Library. “Spurgeon Library: Home Page.” The Spurgeon Center. <https://www.spurgeon.org/>) of Spurgeon. Eminent theologians such as Alistair Begg and Albert Mohler have contributed to the wealth of biographical and theological research at the Center.

<sup>19</sup> Bacon, 76

Israel who did not heed the warnings of the prophets;<sup>20</sup> and another from the city of Sodom, which God destroyed for its depravity.<sup>21</sup> Spurgeon preached: “We have sin rampant among us almost beyond precedent.... Those who dare walk our streets after sundown tell us that Sodom, in its most putrid days, could scarce exceed this metropolis for open vice.”<sup>22</sup> Comparing London to arguably the most infamous city of all time should have convicted the audience in the Tabernacle that day. Nevertheless, Spurgeon was not indicating that the city should prepare for God’s imminent judgment, but rather he was using the Sodom example as a call to action for his congregation. Six years earlier, he had used the same illustration in a sermon, entitled “The Present Crisis,” in which he preached:

What then is to be done? This much is to be done. All hope for a country lies in the true believers who dwell therein. Remember Sodom, and how it would have been spared had there been ten righteous men found therein, and know that ye also are the salt of the earth, by whom it is to be conserved.<sup>23</sup>

Spurgeon evoked Sodom in order to call upon his congregation to step up to the responsibility of preserving righteousness in the city.

In that same sermon, Spurgeon called upon his congregants to adopt a policy of intercession for the city. Citing Scripture, he spoke:

Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace... Let us make confession of sin on behalf of the people as Moses and Jeremiah and Daniel did aforetime... You see sin enough all around you of one sort or another.<sup>24</sup>

In this sermon Spurgeon gave both a general reminder to look out for the welfare of the city, but also a specific call for intercession and prayer. To his congregants emotionally grappling with

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<sup>20</sup> John 12:37-41. All Scripture verses found using: Crossway Bibles, *English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2007)

<sup>21</sup> Genesis 18-19

<sup>22</sup> Spurgeon. “Israel and Britain.”

<sup>23</sup> Spurgeon. “The Present Crisis.” Sermon. Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, 13 July 1879.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

the evil present in the city, he urged first and foremost a spiritual response, rather than backing a political cause or encouraging public activism. Spurgeon never spoke out against London's social reform movements, but his exhortations from the pulpit remained largely within the spiritual realm.

Spurgeon, through his ministry, gained much experience with the sins of the metropolis: prostitution, drunkenness, corruption, and violence, to name a few. Yet he firmly believed that all these, at the core, had one collective cause: human depravity. To illustrate this, he frequently used a metaphor that likely struck a chord with his congregation: the plague.<sup>25</sup> In an 1879 sermon, preaching on the topic of the human heart, he warned the congregation:

Plague at the heart is mortal, and I am much surprised if I have not in this great congregation some who have a present pain, a present disease of the heart, and who will, unless God of his grace lead them to adopt the cure we shall set before them tonight, perish through this deadly plague.<sup>26</sup>

In metaphorical terms – that citizens of the plague-stricken metropolis would understand – Spurgeon spoke of sin as part of the human condition, and one that will ultimately lead to no good end. In February 1886, he used the same terms, this time using the city as an example: “That grievous side of London life which raises ‘the bitter cry,’ is not after all the worst side of it: it is to a great extent the outer disease which marks a secret cancer at the heart. . . . Great Lord, thou knowest better than we do what horror dwells in the ungodliness of men!”<sup>27</sup> With such a disease, Spurgeon argued, the consequences for the sins of London could be disastrous until an outside party prescribes a cure; and according to Spurgeon, the Christians of London had the cure. “Brethren, the multitudes are without the bread of life. Shall we not distribute it among

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<sup>25</sup> See pg. 4.

<sup>26</sup> Spurgeon, “The Plague of the Heart.” Sermon. Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, 10 August 1879.

<sup>27</sup> Spurgeon, “The Problem of the Age.” Sermon. Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, 7 February 1886.

them at once?”<sup>28</sup> He urged his listeners to minister to the city for the sake of its serious, mortally ill condition. Again, he advocated a missional and spiritual response rather than specifying a political cause to support.

If London had fallen ill to a serious disease, one of the most dramatic symptoms occurred in the year 1888, when a mysterious serial killer, known today as “Jack the Ripper,” murdered five women in grotesque fashion. The morning after the third murder, Spurgeon responded by preaching on a passage from the book of Hosea on the subject of the resurrection: “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; oh death, I will be your plagues; oh grave, I will be your destruction.”<sup>29</sup> Spurgeon did not immediately seek to make a political statement about the murders or lament on the decline of the city. Instead, he addressed his congregation, still struggling with the news, with the greatest reassurance that Scripture and Spurgeon’s Christian faith provided in response to the reality of death. This was the promise of a resurrection and death’s eventual destruction: “He by death has destroyed death, and by his resurrection has torn away the gates of the grave.”<sup>30</sup> Herein lies Spurgeon’s greatest strength and the likely source of his popular appeal: the expository gift he had for applying Scripture (which he saw as unchanging and objective) to the constantly-changing, and often terrifying, context of the London metropolis. That morning, before he turned to the sermon at hand, he addressed the events directly: “We hear startling news of abounding sin in this great city. Oh! God, put an end to this, and grant that we may hear no more of such deeds. Let Thy Gospel permeate the city and let no monsters in human form escape Thee.”<sup>31</sup> Spurgeon’s request reflects his belief that God

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Hosea 13:14

<sup>30</sup> Spurgeon, “Consolation from Resurrection.” Sermon. Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, 30 September 1888.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

had the power to work beyond the limited mission of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and to reverse the evil trends in the city.

Since one of Spurgeon's strengths was to use Scripture to provide reassurance to worried citizens, he certainly had the ability to address another major concern of the metropolis.

According to some observers, an increase in nervousness, often leading to insanity, was occurring in society; and West End circles became concerned about these observations. Some believed that "the nervous energy of our race is being exhausted, that worries and cares are killing us, and that, after all, as we are in a stage of decadence, it does not much matter."<sup>32</sup>

According to the physician T. Clifford Allbutt, disagreement arose over whether these allegations were true or not,<sup>33</sup> but such a trend would reflect those occurring in other European cities at the time, such as the high-energy "Electropolis" of Berlin.<sup>34</sup> Regardless of whether or not insanity had in fact risen in the late nineteenth century, Spurgeon sensed the need to address this issue, and he had just the remedy. Spurgeon, because of the location of his church,<sup>35</sup> knew firsthand the frenetic nature of the metropolis. He could certainly relate to the alleged rise in depression in modern society, having experienced it himself throughout his lifetime.<sup>36</sup> In his view, those suffering from anxiety and nervousness needed to find peace. In January 1885, Spurgeon preached about finding this peace specifically in the context of the city, in a sermon entitled "The Song of a City and the Pearl of Peace." This passage from the sermon, when read

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<sup>32</sup> Ledger and Luckhurst, 263

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Andreas Killen, *Berlin Electropolis: Shock, Nerves, and German Modernity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006)

<sup>35</sup> See pg. 4.

<sup>36</sup> Darrel W. Amundsen. "The Anguish and Agonies of Charles Spurgeon." *Christian History*. Published 12 August 2016. <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-29/anguish-and-agonies-of-charles-spurgeon.html>

in the context of neurosis in the modern metropolis, prescribes a solution to these psychological issues: “Let me speak upon this peace that God gives to us. It consists in rest of the soul... The desires recline, the hopes repose, the expectations rest, the soul throws all its weight and all its weariness upon the Lord, and then a perfect peace follows.”<sup>37</sup> Spurgeon urged his congregation to rely on this peace to combat any of the mental illnesses which the modern metropolis brought into the mainstream. He believes this also solves other problems unique to the modern metropolis, such as over-consumption or power-seeking: “Then comes a blessed contentment; we want no more, we have enough... Let me but know [God] better, and I shall grow even more satisfied with unutterable beauties, his indescribable perfections.”<sup>38</sup>

Finally, Spurgeon speaks to the ideological shift toward racism and Social Darwinism. Though it largely occurred in the West End, this movement influenced London culture, politics, and society at large. The backlash against expanding citizenship took hold not only in elite circles, but also in the middle and working class, who populated much of Spurgeon’s congregation.<sup>39</sup> Preaching on Philippians 3:20,<sup>40</sup> he introduced a radical idea that would have surprised his patriotic listeners: “If our citizenship be in heaven, then we are aliens here; we are strangers and foreigners.”<sup>41</sup> This is a response to those who lay some claim, ethnic or otherwise, to citizenship, the nation, or the city. Spurgeon seeks to turn this idea on his head. He again referenced the passage from Jeremiah<sup>42</sup> to show that they ought to care for all those living in the

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<sup>37</sup> Spurgeon, “The Song of a City and the Pearl of Peace.” Sermon. Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, 4 Jan 1885.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> See pg. 6.

<sup>40</sup> “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

<sup>41</sup> Spurgeon, “Citizenship in Heaven.” Sermon. Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, 11 October 1862.

<sup>42</sup> See pgs. 8-9.

city without exception, referring to Christians in London as “captives” or “exiles” whose true identity lies in another place.

Another passage from this sermon may give an indication as to why Spurgeon largely refrained from political commentary. He continued, still using the metaphor his congregation to foreigners: “Seeking the good of the country as aliens, we must also remember that it behoves [sic] aliens to keep themselves very quiet. What business have foreigners to plot against the government, or to intermeddle with the politics of a country in which they have no citizenship?”<sup>43</sup> Spurgeon’s words here served as a warning for his congregation to remember where their priorities lie, and to avoid relying too much on politics. Finally, he exhorted his congregation, as citizens of another place, to fight the moral shortcomings of the city: “Brethren, we are soldiers of Christ; we are enlisted in his army; and as aliens here, we are not to be constrained into the army of evil... Be it known unto thee, O world, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the image which thou hast set up.”<sup>44</sup>

In this same sermon, however, Spurgeon used the increasingly popular topic of racial hierarchy to illustrate a point. He began the sermon: “Christian men ought so to live that it were idle to speak of a comparison between them and the men of the world... The believer should be a direct and manifest contradiction to the unregenerate.”<sup>45</sup> The term “unregenerate” hearkens back to the idea of degeneration related to Spencer and Social Darwinism, even though here it refers not to a racial category but to non-Christians at large. He then, however, used actual racial terminology as part of an illustration: “If we were what we profess to be, we should be as distinct a people in the midst of this world, as a white race in a community of Ethiopians.” Since this

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<sup>43</sup> Spurgeon, “Citizenship in Heaven.”

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

follows his theme of contrast, Spurgeon relied on the idea that certain races have a hierarchical distinction from the white European. This provides an example of Spurgeon incorporating elements of the metropolis into his argument rather than distancing himself and responding to them. While Spurgeon did not subscribe to the idea of Social Darwinism, the text from this sermon shows that Spurgeon incorporated the racist vocabulary of the day in order to illustrate his point. Nevertheless, by introducing the notion of “citizenship in heaven,” he provided a unique, faith-based perspective with which to respond to the ever-increasing racist and nationalist fervor.

As he spent his last days in France in 1892, Spurgeon believed that he was about to enter the place in which he held his true citizenship; a remarkable thought for a man whose ministry had so many close ties to his city and nation. Faced with countless issues in the ever-evolving metropolis, Spurgeon remained grounded in his faith and responded wisely to each crisis with what he held to be the objective truth. Because of this, Spurgeon’s sermons represent a unique perspective on politics and society in late Victorian London.

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