

Celebrating 150 years of Spurgeons Children's Charity



Celebrating 150 years of Spurgeons Children's Charity



Sermon outline

As we celebrate 150 years of our founder Charles Haddon Spurgeon, we would love to bless you with some resources to help your church honour a man who has changed the course of history for so many children, young people and families. Use the following outline to help you structure a message that will inspire and encourage your congregation.

Aim: Using the testimony of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Psalm 85 and John 10:10 to remind the church that the work God starts continues through the ages and that work begins in our own communities.

Scripture to read: Psalm 85:10-13 John 10:10

Set the scene:

Spurgeon and his church recognised the very real need of people in desperate circumstances on their doorstep. He felt challenged to not just to preach about the situation but to motivate his church to leave their pews and do something about it.

Inspirational Story:

Illustrate the importance of stepping outside our churches into the community. You can use the illustration of the lamp lighter on **page 3** and an example from your church setting. Tell a story from your parent and toddler group, a club or class that you run, or a testimony from a church member of how living for Jesus has changed the life of someone else in their world.

Read and share the testimonies to show how one person stepping in and speaking up for these two girls made a dramatic impact in their lives.

Psalm 85: Love, Faithfulness, Righteousness and Peace

Use pages 7 and 8 to discover what the love and faithfulness in Psalm 85 look like today and to inspire your church in how together, we can love practically and begin to change and support people in their lives.

Prayer: Lead the congregation in the Lord's Prayer

We often pray '**Your kingdom come**, your will be done on Earth **as it is in Heaven**.' Use **page 6** to illustrate what God's kingdom looks like and what **as it is in Heaven** truly means.

Contents:

- 1:** Welcome and foreword
- 2-4:** **Sermon inspiration** - history that repeats itself
- 5-8:** God's presence
- 9-10:** A sermon from Dianne Tidball
Sermon inspiration - hope was not lost

Leave space to recognise what areas in and around the life of your need praying into and acting upon.

Invite your congregation to respond in prayer, this might be aloud, in small groups or written and displayed somewhere within the church.

End by praying through the points on page 13

History that repeats itself

Sarah was born in 1867. One of 12 children she lived with her family in the East End of London.

There were just two bedrooms in the house, one for Sarah's parents and one for the girls. The boys slept downstairs in the parlour, a grand name for a sparsely furnished room.

Aged 10 Sarah went to work in a local factory making clothing. She worked 60 hours a week to bring home a meagre wage for her family. The work was dangerous; shift supervisors were violent and keen to discipline anyone they pleased. Sarah frequently came home with injuries where the supervisor's belt had been used.

When she was 12-years-old Sarah's mother died of tuberculosis and her father went missing. Left to fend for themselves the children could not pay the rent. They were evicted from their home, penniless, hungry, orphaned and vulnerable.

Almost 4 million children are living in poverty in the UK today, with around 400,000 classed as being in need by child protection services.



We cannot ignore the huge injustices in our world, country and local communities.

Millions go hungry every day, and in the UK alone this year, 1.2 million food parcels will be collected by some of our nation's most needy families.

Shockingly, each year more is spent on pornography than on helping the poor and homeless. This is not reflective of God's heart for his people. Injustice and prejudice was never part of His plan.

The very message of the Bible compels us, the church, to act!

May God's Kingdom come, as in Heaven

Sermon
Inspiration
**God's
Presence**

The theme of the Baptist President this year is: "As in Heaven" - seeking Heaven on Earth; praying for God's Kingdom to come today in our towns, cities and villages. The theme of the Archbishop of Canterbury at Pentecost for the past two years has been: "Thy Kingdom come." Both themes recognise that the world as it is, does not reflect the love, justice and compassion of God and both are seeking more of God's presence in our communities, families and lives today.

Spurgeons Children's Charity is part of the work of God to see Heaven on Earth. Heaven is the reign of God where we are promised there will be no more tears or crying; where everyone will have enough; where all are included, accepted and fully participating in life. Heaven is the place of breath-taking joy where beauty and glory are everyday, and routine and brokenness is healed and all people know peace. At the moment, the Kingdom of God has broken in but it has not yet taken over. Our role is to participate in God's mission to bring His life to all.

We are called as God's people to do all we can to create Heaven on Earth now. Christian discipleship involves life in all its fullness for all people now.

Light in the darkness

There is an old story of a lamplighter who used to go out every night to light the gas street lamps in the 19th century. One child recalling this nightly routine said, "**When the lamp was lit it was as if holes had been punched in the darkness.**"

The darkness was pushed back and light prevailed. Spurgeon, when he set up the orphanages and took on many other initiatives to support the vulnerable, was punching holes in the darkness. For many orphaned children in London, 19th century life was hell; it was dark with little light in it. Spurgeon saw how wrong this was and did all he could to bring light and love into their lives.

Alongside the present-day church, Spurgeons continues to punch holes in the darkness. The support we offer to children and families brings hope and a future to those who can only see overwhelming challenges.



We celebrate all that God has done through the example of Charles Haddon Spurgeon. We thank God for children who say **“You were there for me when I was sad”** and **“I believe in myself a lot more than before”**.

We continue to pray, to give and to work hard so that God’s Kingdom might be established further amongst us. That we all might see more of Heaven here on Earth.

**For yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,
forever and ever, Amen.**

A light of hope

A
Sermon
from
**Dianne
Tidball**

Over the years life has changed dramatically for children and families in our cities, towns and villages, and yet many of the same issues remain.

Children and families struggle with relationships, finance, health and security. Many find themselves in a downward spiral or in a setting where they feel trapped and powerless.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon recognised the responsibility of the church to act. Not for his own gain or merit but because that's what the Lord wanted him to do.

Seeing first-hand the desperate need of orphans in London he challenged his congregation to act. The result of his passionate leadership and vision was where the orphanage, that housed 500 children, began.

Spurgeon could not just preach about loving your neighbour, caring for the poor, serving the blind and setting people free – he knew that God's word required action as well. And so, he set up schools, colleges, homes for the elderly and alms houses seeking to see the love and presence of God in action across London.

150 years later, the foundations God laid through Charles Spurgeon have developed into Spurgeons Children's Charity, an organisation that carries his same vision and passion.

What an incredible example of how the obedience of one church, living out their faith with action, could make an astounding difference to generations of children across hundreds of communities.

“We will work for them, as long as our brain can think, and our pen can write and our heart can love.” ~CHS

Praying. May your Kingdom come, your will be done, as in Heaven.

You have, no doubt, prayed hundreds, maybe thousands of times, that God's Kingdom come, His will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. The Lord's prayer, a prayer that Jesus himself gave as a blueprint of communication to his disciples in Matthew chapter 6. The Lord's prayer is so familiar; we can be guilty of reciting it without understanding what it actually means.

When we pray, 'As in Heaven' what exactly are we asking?

- That God's rule and reign might be seen in our communities. That His loving, powerful presence might transform despair to hope; tears to laughter and pain to joy.
- That all the features of Heaven are seen more fully in our communities and the lives of children and families. Heaven is the place of God's presence, mercy, grace, generosity, faithfulness, justice and hope.
- That the broken, desolate and helpless might find a welcome and acceptance that has previously eluded them.
- That those who feel worthless discover that in the Kingdom of God they are valued and precious.

Spurgeons heart for the community mirrored that of God's own heart, his work was to bring Heaven to Earth; to bring light into the hell that was the experience of many children in the 19th century. This continues to be our prayer today: that children and families may know the light and presence of caring people who support and journey with them.

Read Psalm 85:10-13:

*Love and faithfulness meet together;
Righteousness and peace kiss each other.
Faithfulness springs forth from the Earth,
and righteousness looks down from Heaven.
The Lord will indeed give what is good,
and our land will yield its harvest.
Righteousness goes before Him
and prepares the way for His steps.*



Love and faithfulness meet together

A
Sermon
from
**Dianne
Tidball**

The reign of God is about kindness, generosity and unselfishness, reaching out to those in darkness, those lost and hurting. It is about hard working, robust, love finding a way forward in impossible situations and being faithful until God transforms the situation. It is love that sees the problem; has a realistic understanding of how deep and challenging the issue is but faithfully finds a way to bring hope and change.

It is love which is faithful, even when that love is refused or rebuffed. This love takes patience, as receiving love can make us feel vulnerable and afraid, and learning to trust is more than a one meeting exercise.



Psalm 85:10. Righteousness and peace kiss each other

If you read this in The Message translation, this verse says: ‘Right Living and Whole Living embrace and kiss.’

What wonderful imagery of God’s desire for the values which should reign in our relationships and communities. Many families and children do not find themselves on the receiving end of “**Right Living and Whole Living.**”

Varying struggles, from mental health issues and poverty, to domestic violence and discrimination, mean many never experience what it is like to enjoy basic whole living and wellbeing.

John 10:10 says that Jesus came to bring life, life in all its fullness. This is what we want in our lives, communities and relationships; fullness of life.

Jesus says you can find goodness and peace when you live His way. Our desire for this goodness and peace should be a motivator to be obedient to God’s word, a motivation that drives us to change lives.

Spurgeons Children’s Charity, along with many Christian organisations across the world, are motivated by the goodness of God to bring about his peace in families and the lives of individuals.

Each family that we help out of despair, supporting them to discover the hope they can have in Jesus, continues to highlight the beauty and awesomeness of God. When we watch children smile and begin to grown in confidence and realise their self-worth, these are the times when we see goodness and peace embrace, kiss and laugh.

This Psalm speaks of mercy, truth, goodness and peace coming together to give hope back to all people. These four virtues combine as truth upholds what is right, and mercy and peace lead to forgiveness, healing, reconciliation and life.

When God orchestrates a plan it’s for a greater purpose. It’s been over 2000 years since Jesus came to Earth, died and rose again and yet His story lives on.

It is 150 years since Spurgeon set up his first orphanage and we continue to tell the story of a legacy that God started through him.

Jesus came with radical and astonishing news that every individual is loved by God and is important to Him. And more than that He frequently used individuals that society undervalued to show a life and love that the rich and powerful often missed out on.

Early on in His ministry, Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit being on Him to heal, release, comfort and bring good news. This same Holy Spirit works today through all who seek Heaven on Earth and are part of God’s mission to establish love, mercy, kindness and justice in our world.

As Jesus died and rose again and ascended to Heaven He promised that the Holy Spirit would continue the work through His followers that He had started.



Hope was not lost

Workers from Spurgeons orphanage heard of their plight and they joined other children in a home opened by Charles Haddon Spurgeon. There they received the basic love, care and support that every child needs to flourish.

Spurgeons vision was: **“to give every child the opportunity of a hope-filled life.”**

In their darkest hour, Spurgeon’s orphanage was the light of hope that Sarah and her siblings so desperately needed.

A century and a half later in 2007, another Sarah was born in the East End of London. She had no brothers and sisters and lived in a flat with her mother.

Life was not easy for Sarah; Her mother was an alcoholic and she often found herself getting her own meals, or she would go hungry when there was no food in the house.

Sarah began to struggle at school - her home life meant that she often went to school hungry, anxious or angry.

On one particularly bad day, her teacher tried listening to her and offered her some support and help. Sarah felt ashamed and did not want to make a ‘fuss’, but eventually she accepted help from the Spurgeons Childcare Local Support Centre. There she found people she could go to when life seemed too difficult.

Sarah found people who gave her “the opportunity of a hope-filled life.”

**“The opportunity
of a hope-filled life.”**

A thank you from Ross Hendry, Spurgeons' Chief Executive



During Charles Spurgeon's last recorded visit to the Stockwell Orphanage in 1890, a great storm descended soon after his arrival. In his account of the visit he records how the rain, thunder and darkness forced him and the boys into the Home's great hall. There he prayed and preached about "the cross of Christ as the place of peace-making, peace-speaking, and peace-finding, both for boys and men, girls and women", whatever their background or circumstance.

In the words of Dianne Tidball's specially prepared sermon text, these Spurgeons Sunday resources are designed to help you and your church "punch a hole in the darkness" that many children and young are facing today.

Our work brings us into contact with thousands of children and families who are struggling through the storms of life. Whether because of poverty or sickness, imprisonment or exploitation, there are so many who need our support and the light that, together, we can bring into their lives. We hope these resources will help motivate, inspire and, through God's grace, transform minds, hearts and actions. For us that would be a fitting legacy to Charles Haddon Spurgeon's life and ministry.

May God bless you and your endeavours.

Could you get more involved in our life changing work?

 01933 412412

 info@spurgeons.org

 www.spurgeons.org

www.spurgeons.org

74 Wellingborough Road, Rushden, Northants, NN10 9TY

Spurgeons Children's Charity is a registered charity. Number: 1081182

You could support us by praying for us, raising awareness of our work in your church or getting involved with fundraising. Whatever you do, your help will make a huge difference to children in the UK who need our support today as much as they did 150 years ago.

Yours Faithfully,
Spurgeons