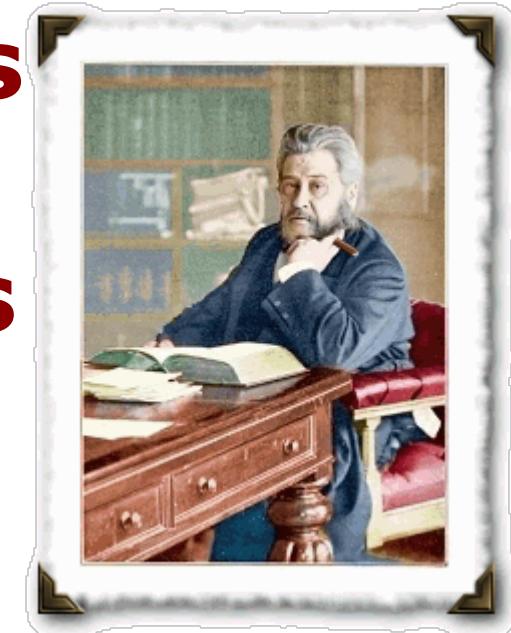


Spurgeon's Love of Fine Cigars



Note: Because we get so many requests for information about Mr. Spurgeon's use of cigars, we provide the following vignettes from some early Spurgeon biographies. It is important to note that Mr. Spurgeon's love for cigars was not an addiction, and he deliberately kept it from becoming an addiction, as is clearly shown in the anecdotes related by William Williams (below).

Furthermore, we fully agree with Mr. Spurgeon that smoking cigars *per se* is not a sinful activity. Cigars, unlike cigarettes, are properly smoked without inhaling, minimizing the risk of lung damage. Nor does cigar smoking normally involve the kind of addictive behavior associated with cigarette use. By all accounts, Mr. Spurgeon's smoking was occasional, and never much more than a cigar a day or so—which, again, suggests that this was no addiction with him.

There are no doubt health risks associated with cigars, but this is also true of cream cheese, or coffee, or almost anything when consumed without moderation. There is no real evidence that cigars in any way hastened Mr. Spurgeon's death.

Mr. Spurgeon's smoking was a historical fact, and the cause of truth cannot be served by denying it or inventing myths that suggest he finally "repented" of this activity. The fact is that he did not regard smoking cigars as a sinful activity, and he evidently held that opinion until the end of his life.

Spurgeon's Cigar Case

The photographs below were supplied by David Spurgeon of Dublin (Spurgeon's great grandson). These pictures should put to rest the common myth that Spurgeon gave up smoking cigars before he died (though he *did* evidently quit smoking this one stogie before it got down to a nub).



(Click the picture for a hi-res look at the letter of authentication. Spurgeon died—not from smoking but from complications of gout and Bright's disease—at the Hotel Beau-Rivage in Mentone on the last day of January 1892. So the half-smoked cigar in the above trio is most likely the last cigar he ever smoked.)

David Spurgeon also kindly posted these pictures of the band on one of the unsmoked cigars:



(Click images for higher-res photos.)

"Proveedor de la Real Casa" means "Purveyor to the Royal House." The other two circles identify the manufacturer: "F. P Del Rio y Ca." Francisco Perez del Rio was a famous Cuban cigar maker of that era. Though Spurgeon's cigars do not show a brand name, the company's best-known brand was *La Legitimidad*. ([Here](#) is a link to some typical Del Rio & Co. labels and information about the company.)

People frequently ask what brand of cigars Spurgeon smoked, and I have never seen that information recorded in any biography of Spurgeon or in any of the extant correspondence. Here at last is proof of what brand he was smoking at the end of his life. The F. P. del Rio trademark was registered in 1882 and the company was bought out by a competitor in 1898, so this brand was not available until the final decade of Spurgeon's life. It does not exist today.

Two Anecdotes about Spurgeon's Cigars

From William Williams, *Charles Haddon Spurgeon: Personal Reminiscences* (London: The Religious Tract Society, n.d.), 30-32.



All the world knows that Mr. Spurgeon now and again enjoyed a cigar. Not a few caricatures represented him smoking a pipe, but he never used a pipe all the years I knew him. His shrewd reply to the gentleman who "had heard he smoked, but could not believe it to be true," and asked Mr. Spurgeon to satisfy him, is choice: "I cultivate my flowers and burn my weeds."

"Enjoying your 'bacca again, sir!" said old George, Mr. Spurgeon's tried and trusted servant, one day when his master was lighting a cigar.

"I can do without my 'bacca' a good deal easier than you can, George," said the master.

"I don't believe you can, sir."

"Very well, George, don't smoke again until I do."

"Agreed, sir."

A week passed—a fortnight. Poor old George was dying for his pipe. One was asked to intercede with the master that George might be allowed to have it.

"No, no!" said Mr. Spurgeon. "He made a bargain; let him stick to it."

Eventually George was allowed to smoke, but Mr. Spurgeon did not have a cigar for months after that. . . .

While Mr. Spurgeon was living at Nightingale Lane, Clapham, an excursion was one day organised by one of the young men's classes at the Tabernacle. The brake with the excursionists was to call for the President on their way to mid-Surrey.

It was a beautiful early morning, and the men arrived in high spirits, pipes and cigars alight, and looking forward to a day of unrestrained enjoyment. Mr. Spurgeon was ready waiting at the gate. He jumped up to the box-seat reserved for him, and looking round with an expression of astonishment, exclaimed: "What, gentlemen! Are you not ashamed to be smoking so early?"

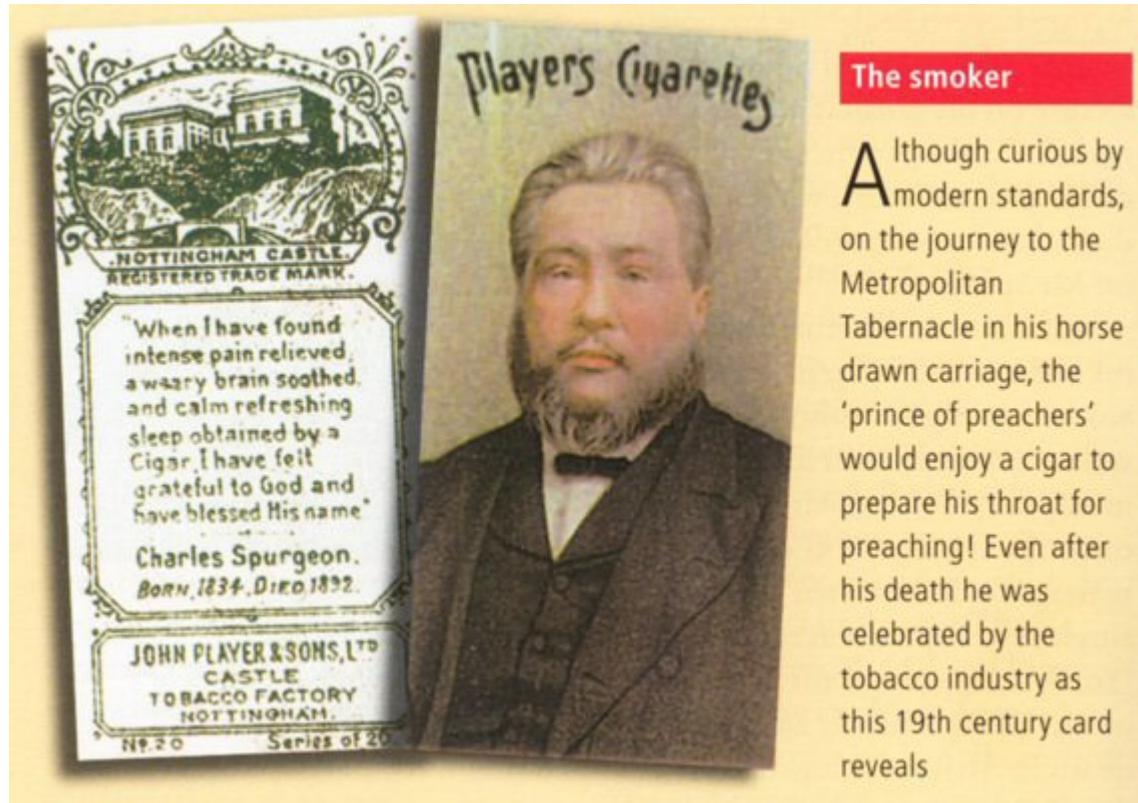
Here was a damper! Dismay was on every face. Pipes and cigars one by one failed and dropped out of sight.

When all had disappeared, out came the President's cigar-case. He lit up and smoked away serenely.

The men looked at him astonished. "I thought you said you objected to smoking, Mr. Spurgeon?" one ventured.

"Oh no, I did not say I objected. I asked if they were not ashamed, and it appears they were, for they have all put their pipes away."

Amid laughter the pipes reappeared, and with puffs of smoke the party went on merrily.



The smoker

Although curious by modern standards, on the journey to the Metropolitan Tabernacle in his horse drawn carriage, the 'prince of preachers' would enjoy a cigar to prepare his throat for preaching! Even after his death he was celebrated by the tobacco industry as this 19th century card reveals

From *Travel With C. H. Spurgeon*, by Clive Anderson. ©2002. DayOne Publications.

The Daily Telegraph Scandal

Adapted from G. Holden Pike, *The Life and Work of Charles Haddon Spurgeon*, 5 vols. (London: Cassel, n.d.), 5:138-40. Mr. Pike's full account of the incident is included here. We have embellished it by adding the complete text of Mr. Spurgeon's letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, the article from the *Christian World*, and W. M. Hutchings's reply to Spurgeon.

S[in the autumn of 1874] a passage-at-arms on the subject of smoking occurred between Spurgeon and Dr. Pentecost. . . . The latter had been received as a brother preacher at the chapel and as a guest at Clapham. After visiting the Continent, the Tabernacle was revisited. "On this occasion Mr. Spurgeon invited him to divide the sermon, proposing that one should lay down the doctrine, and that the other should close by enforcing and illustrating the subject. With no thought beyond the illustration of the subject, Dr. Pentecost related his own struggle with the cigar. Mr. Spurgeon, as a smoker, made the application personal, and, when the brother sat down, immediately arose and combated what had been said."¹ Perhaps the most graphic description of what took place within the Tabernacle, however, was given by a morning newspaper:—

"Last Sunday evening, at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, the deservedly popular, unquestionably benevolent, and eminently shrewd Mr. Spurgeon was preaching a sermon on the sinfulness of little sins—a somewhat favourite topic among Nonconformist clergymen, and on which, under the title of 'The Little Foxes,' some curious lay-sermons have been written by Mrs. Harriet Beecher-Stowe.

"The gist of Mr. Spurgeon's discourse was that habitual indulgence in little sins leads to the commission of great ones—a position enforced by one of the most famous English divines in the illustration of the 'boy who plays with the devil's rattles.'

"At the close of his useful sermon the minister introduced an American clergyman who, he said, was anxious to address a few words to the congregation. This reverend gentleman 'improved the opportunity' by inveighing fiercely against the sin of smoking tobacco, especially in the form of cigars, and told his hearers how he had struggled and fought against the pernicious habit, and how at last, by the blessing and with the assistance of Providence, he had conquered his addiction to the weed.

"Then uprose Mr. Spurgeon and, with quiet humour, remarked that he would not allow the congregation to separate without telling them that he did not consider smoking to be a sin, and that, by the grace of God, he hoped to enjoy a good cigar before going to bed that night.

"Hypercriticism should discern no irreverence in the conclusion of those remarks. We should be thankful for all things; and in observing that he hoped to enjoy a cigar through the Divine grace, he was but echoing the natural piety of Charles Lamb, who asked why we should not say grace before going out for a walk in the fields as well as before and after meat. Dr. Johnson said grace before he began the 'Rambler'; and if Mr. Spurgeon be a smoker, he only adds another and most excellent name to the long catalogue of distinguished English divines of the Established and the Dissenting Churches who have solaced themselves with that Indian weed."[2](#)

The incident was also reported in a church magazine, *Christian World*, on September 25, 1874:

LAST Sunday evening, Mr. Spurgeon, before beginning his sermon, announced that he should not preach long that night, because he wished his friend Mr. Pentecost, who was on the platform, to say a few words to the congregation.

Mr. Spurgeon then gave a very earnest address on the words, "I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord; I will keep Thy statutes. I cried unto Thee; save me, and I shall keep Thy testimonies." (Ps. cxix. 145-6.)

He spoke strongly and plainly upon the necessity of giving up sin, in order to success in prayer for "quicken," and as an evidence of sincerity. Mr. Spurgeon, in concluding his discourse, said, "Now then, perhaps Brother Pentecost will give you the application of that sermon."

"Brother Pentecost" is an "open communion" Baptist minister, of the American city of Boston. He responded at once to Mr. Spurgeon's call, and, stepping to the front of the platform, gave some excellent remarks on the latter portion of the text, with much simplicity and force of manner.

Referring to one part of Mr. Spurgeon's sermon, he gave us an interesting bit of personal experience. He said that some years ago, he had had the cry awakened in his heart, "Quicken Thou me." He desired to be more completely delivered from sin, and he prayed that God would show him anything which prevented his more complete devotion to Him. He was willing, he thought, to give up anything or everything if only he might realise the desire of his heart.

"Well," said he, amidst the profound silence and attention of the immense congregation, "what do you think it was that the Lord required of me? He did not touch me in my church, my family, my property, or my passions. But one thing I liked exceedingly—the best cigar which could be bought."

He then told us that the thought came into his mind, could he relinquish this indulgence, if its relinquishment would advance his piety? He tried to dismiss the idea as a mere fancy or scruple, but it came again and again to him, and he was satisfied that it was the still small voice which was speaking.

He remembered having given up smoking by the wish of his ministerial brethren, when he was twenty-one years of age, for four years. But then, he had resumed the habit, for he declared during that four years he never saw or smelt a cigar which he did not want to smoke. How, however, he felt it to be his duty to give it up again, and so unequal did he feel to the self-denial, that he "took his cigar-box before the Lord," and cried to Him for help. This help he intimated had been given, and the habit renounced.

Mr. Spurgeon, whose smoking propensities are pretty well known, instantly rose at the conclusion of Mr. Pentecost's address, and, with a somewhat playful smile, said,

"Well, dear friends, you know that some men can do to the glory of God what to other men would be sin. And notwithstanding what brother Pentecost has said, I intend to smoke a good cigar to the glory of God before I go to bed to-night.

"If anybody can show me in the Bible the command, 'Thou shalt not smoke,' I am ready to keep it; but I haven't found it yet. I find ten commandments, and it's as much as I can do to keep them; and I've no desire to make them into eleven or twelve.

"The fact is, I have been speaking to you about real sins, not about listening to mere quibbles and scruples. At the same time, I know that what a man believes to be sin becomes a sin to him, and he must give it up. 'Whatsoever is not of faith is sin' [Rom. 14:23], and that is the real point of what my brother Pentecost has been saying.

"Why, a man may think it a sin to have his boots blacked. Well, then, let him give it up, and have them whitewashed. I wish to say that I'm not ashamed of anything whatever that I do, and I don't feel that smoking makes me ashamed, and therefore I mean to smoke to the glory of God."

The matter was widely discussed both in the newspapers and in private circles; and as the phrase "smoking to the glory of God" became associated with his name, Spurgeon addressed a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* with a view of scattering any misapprehension which might arise. The pastor of the Tabernacle wrote:

To the Editor of the Daily Telegraph.

SIR,

YOU cannot regret more than I do the occasion which produced the unpremeditated remarks to which you refer. I would, however, remind you that I am not responsible for the accuracy of newspaper reports, nor do I admit that they are a full and fair representation of what I said. I am described as rising with a twinkling eye, and this at once suggested that I spoke flippantly; but indeed, I did nothing of the kind. I was rather too much in earnest than too little.

I demur altogether and most positively to the statement that to smoke tobacco

is in itself a sin. It may become so, as any other indifferent action may, but as an action it is no sin.

Together with hundreds of thousands of my fellow-Christians I have smoked, and, with them, I am under the condemnation of living in habitual sin, if certain accusers are to be believed. As I would not knowingly live even in the smallest violation of the law of God, and sin in the transgression of the law, I will not own to sin when I am not conscious of it.

There is growing up in society a Pharisaic system which adds to the commands of God the precepts of men; to that system I will not yield for an hour. The preservation of my liberty may bring upon me the upbraiding of many good men, and the sneers of the self-righteous; but I shall endure both with serenity so long as I feel clear in my conscience before God.

The expression "smoking to the glory of God" standing alone has an ill sound, and I do not justify it; but in the sense in which I employed it I still stand to it. No Christian should do anything in which he cannot glorify God; and this may be done, according to Scripture, in eating and drinking and the common actions of life.

When I have found intense pain relieved, a weary brain soothed, and calm, refreshing sleep obtained by a cigar, I have felt grateful to God, and have blessed His name; this is what I meant, and by no means did I use sacred words triflingly.

If through smoking I had wasted an hour of my time—if I had stinted my gifts to the poor—if I had rendered my mind less vigorous—I trust I should see my fault and turn from it; but he who charges me with these things shall have no answer but my forgiveness.

I am told that my open avowal will lessen my influence, and my reply is that if I have gained any influence through being thought different from what I am, I have no wish to retain it. I will do nothing upon the sly, and nothing about which I have a doubt.

I am most sorry that prominence has been given to what seems to me so small a matter—and the last thing in my thoughts would have been the mention of it from the pulpit; but I was placed in such a position that I must either by my silence plead guilty to living in sin, or else bring down upon my unfortunate self the fierce rebukes of the anti-tobacco advocates by speaking out honestly. I chose the latter; and although I am now the target for these worthy brethren, I would sooner endure their severest censures than sneakingly do what I could not justify, and earn immunity from their criticism by tamely submitting to be charged with sin in an action which my conscience allows.

Yours truly,

C. H. SPURGEON.

Nightingale Lane, Clapham, Sept. 23.

Among the non-smokers who had no sympathy with Spurgeon in this smoking

controversy was the preacher's old friend, James Clarke, who remarked in the *Christian World*: "To ourselves this tobacco pest is a daily martyrdom, and we could earnestly wish that every Christian teacher, at all events, felt no desire to indulge in a habit... which is unquestionably most fearfully destructive both to the bodies and souls of tens of thousands of our young men."³

Another critic, W. M. Hutchings, was less kind. He saw Spurgeon's stance on smoking as a threat to the growing temperance movement, and he published and distributed the following open letter in tract form:

TO THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.⁴

SIR,

THE LORD has greatly honoured you, and wonderfully blessed your labours as a Christian minister. The churches of Christ of all denominations have rejoiced in your success, and blessed God for all that He has accomplished through your instrumentality. Your name has become a "household word" throughout Christendom, and your utterances are carried all over the civilised world. Men hang upon your lips; they cherish your earnest faithful words in their memories and in their hearts; and multitudes are moulding their lives according to the truth you have preached to them. You have become a power in the Church and in the world; and, thank God, a power for good.

These are no words of flattery; they simply express evident truth—apparent to all—universally admitted; and I use them, not as a sycophant, but rather as a censor (if I may venture to say so), and with the view to press upon you the solemn responsibility of every word you speak. Thousands of people believe what you say because you say it.

True, they ought to be more like the Bereans of old, but they are not. You must know this. Your people at the Tabernacle know it. We, Christians of other churches, know it; and we bless God that grace has been given you to prove yourself worthy of this great trust, and to lead these weaker brethren into the way of truth.

But suppose, in your teachings of doctrine or duty, you yourself should be misled into error upon any point—however trivial it may seem—what a misleading that would be! What a following you would have in the wrong path! What mischief—irreparable in time or eternity—might be wrought! Why, sir, angels might weep, and hell would hold carnival! Pardon the suggestion I make of such a possibility. You are not infallible, nor do you desire to be thought so.

Many hearts have been deeply grieved by your apology for smoking—made in God's House, and forming part of the Sabbath Worship therein. We feel that a great calamity has overtaken us. We stagger under the blow of a giant. We shudder when we think of the consequences. *The greatest power for evil upon earth is the false teaching of a good and great man.* The greater and the better the man, the more terrible the evil influence.

Sir, have YOU contemplated the results of your defence of smoking? Have you thought of the result upon the young men who light their cigars, on Sunday evening, within the precincts of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and walk away from God's House puffing a good [sometimes a very bad] cigar, or a short dirty pipe? Is it well that these young men should be confirmed in their self-indulgence (disgustingly offensive to hundreds of their fellow-worshippers) by your powerful voice? *They have no "intense pain" to be relieved—no "weary brain" to be soothed, and their nightly slumbers need no artificial help.*

Some of them *do* waste many hours in smoking—they *do* stint the gifts they ought to bestow on the poor—nay they are often embarrassed to pay their lawful debts—they *do* render their minds less vigorous—and now, in answer to the remonstrances of their friends, they will be ready to say, "SPURGEON PREACHES IN FAVOR OF SMOKING; let's have 'a good cigar to the glory of God.'"

Have you thought of men of riper years—poor men—who cannot buy tobacco except by depriving their wives and children of the food, or clothing, or education they ought to have? These men are now armed in triple mail. They are proof against all the assaults of the anti-tobacco "Pharisees." "Spurgeon's Sermon on Smoking" (so they call it) is at once a helmet, a sword, and a shield to them.

Sir, it is no figure of speech—it is no rant of a fanatic—it is sober, solemn, awful truth, that pious mothers are shedding bitter tears when they contemplate the influence of your words [Matt. 12:36] upon their sons, just acquiring the filthy habit; wives are weeping over the encouragement you have given to their husbands to continue an expense they cannot afford; and children will be deprived of home comforts by those who will plead your example and advice for their unmanly conduct. Sir, I fear your words have given a powerful push downwards to multitudes who are already in the road which leads to temporal and eternal ruin.

I observe, with some satisfaction, that the tone of your letter to the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph* is very different from the tone of your Tabernacle address. The earlier utterance was that of defiant championship—the later, and more deliberate one, is softened down to an apology and an excuse. If, in reply to "Brother Pentecost" you had said just what you afterwards wrote, namely, that your "good cigar" was to be smoked—not as a gratifying indulgence—not for the enjoyment it would afford—but on account of the "infirmities of the flesh," then little objection would have been taken, even by those who are most earnestly opposed to the use of tobacco in any form.

Then, you would have afforded no pretext to the young men of your congregation and others to follow your example in smoking, without your motive, and without your excuse. If you had told your people that you only smoked because thereby intense pain was relieved, a weary brain soothed, and refreshing sleep obtained, we should have remembered your abundant labours, your exceptional position, the enormous strain put upon you, bodily and mentally, and we should have held our peace.

True, we might have thought of one August Sufferer, who, in more intense pain, and greater mental weariness, refused and put away from Him the offered opiate by which relief could have been obtained [Matt. 27:34]; but we should have been silent. We should have looked upon your cigar in the same light as we look on Timothy's wine; and, in our charity, we should have remembered that "the flesh is weak."

But your Tabernacle utterance was defiant. Its teaching was: Smoking is right and proper for all men; and those who say otherwise are adding to God's commandments. And, in your letter to the Editor of the *Telegraph*, though your tone is subdued, and your language that of apology, you are still intolerant and unjust. First, you say that we, anti-tobacco advocates, charge you with living in habitual sin. We do not.

We say, Smoking is a dirty habit—bad habit—injurious to the body and the mind—leading to other worse and more ruinous habits; but we do not say that every man who smokes is living in habitual sin. We see the habit growing—we mark its evil effects upon our young men—we discover that it holds tens of thousands in cruel bondage—and we try to persuade our young people never to contract the habit, and our older friends to break it off.

We declare war to the knife against tobacco, and the drinking customs which go hand in hand with tobacco, but we do not presume to sit in judgment upon you or any other man. You must be guided by your own judgment and conscience. To your own Master, you stand or fall [Rom. 14:4]. We should like to make a convert of you. We know what a powerful ally you would be. But even while you are arrayed against us and smiting us with vigorous, blows, we believe that you are honest and sincere in your antagonism, and we feel sure that if you believed smoking to be an evil thing you would at once and at any cost abandon it.

You are less charitable in your treatment of us. You call us Pharisees—you insinuate that we are self-righteous—you charge us with adding to the commandments of God the precepts of men—and you intimate that we desire to invade your liberty. Do you really believe all this? Are the conductors of the Band of Hope [Ed Note: the church youth group] at your Metropolitan Tabernacle a company of Pharisees, training up the young in the "Pharisaic system?" If you

think so, pray give orders to shut it up at once. I do not know whether a pledge against tobacco is taken with the pledge against intoxicating drinks in the Tabernacle Band of Hope. Probably so. But if not, it matters little to my argument. The crusade against tobacco is conducted on precisely the same principles as the crusade against strong drink; and the arguments by which we advocate the one are almost identical with those by which we advocate the other.

"Pharisees," are we? Well, we are in good company. We follow that arch-Pharisee who said, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth [1 Cor. 8:13];"

and

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything [is it possible that the word "anything" can include "a good cigar"] whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak [Rom. 14:21]."

We know tobacco is a stumbling-block, and an offence, and a cause of weakness to multitudes of our brethren—brethren in the Church of Christ—brethren in the bonds of a common humanity—and so we practise what "Pharisee" Paul teaches, and sacrifice personal indulgence, lest it should be a snare to others. We think we have also a Higher Authority and a Greater Example—even the authority and example of Him who "pleased not Himself [Rom. 15:3]."

May I, without intentional impertinence, illustrate this? Two men stand side-by-side on the platform of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, the one a "Pharisee," the other—Mr. Spurgeon. One describes his pilgrimage along the steep rough path of self-denial, and tells us how he "took his cigar-box before the Lord, and cried for help." The other prefers the easier, smoother, smokier path of self-indulgence, holds fast to the cigar-box, and declares his intention to smoke a good cigar before going to bed. WHICH OF THESE LOOKS MOST LIKE CHRIST? Which would it be to the advantage of the young men, who heard both, to follow?

But I wish in this letter to raise a question of far greater importance than that of smoking. In defending your "good cigar," you laid down a principle. You indicated a rule of Christian life and conduct.

Now, Sir, (forgive me if I seem, uncharitable and harsh) I hold that that principle is false, mischievous, and utterly repugnant to the teaching of Christ and his Apostles. This is a far more important question than that of your right to "smoke a good cigar." If your words about the ten commandments [Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21] mean anything, they mean that all that is required of us is obedience to the letter of those commandments. You expressly repudiate any other law, when you decline to be bound by an eleventh or a twelfth commandment.

Did it strike you that this was a two-edged argument? If all that is required of us be obedience to the letter of the Decalogue—then *literal* obedience to each command is imperative. You told us (I do not say "Pharisaically") that you do obey all these—though you find it hard work. What?—the fourth? To the letter? In every detail? If so, you are a much maligned man. Pray understand that I am not expounding the Law of the Two Tables; I am merely following your exposition of Christian Duty.

Clearly, the rule of life you laid down in your defence of smoking is this:—That a Christian man is at liberty to exercise self-indulgence in all matters against which there is no direct and express command in Scripture. I have not so learned Christ. I read the Master's command, "DENY THYSELF, take up thy cross, and follow me [Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; Mark 10:21; Luke 9:23; Luke 14:27]," and my chief object in addressing you is to point out the essential viciousness of the principle you laid down.

I will do this, not by argument, but by use. Let us hear your utterance, and then listen attentively to the echoes of that utterance which may be imagined to come from persons whose inclination leads them, not to smoking, but to other indulgences which Christians condemn, but which are not prohibited by express command:—

The Rev C. H. SPURGEON says (I quote the *Christian World's* report):—"If anybody can show me in the Bible the command, 'Thou shalt not smoke,' I am ready to keep it; but I haven't found it yet. I find ten commandments, and it's as much as I can do to keep them; and I've no desire to make them into eleven or twelve."

ECHO No. 1.—"If anybody can show me in the Bible the command, 'Thou shalt not frequent the play-house,' I am ready to keep it; but I haven't found it yet. I find ten commandments, and it's as much as I can do to keep them; and I've no desire to make them into eleven or twelve."

ECHO No. 2.—"If anybody can show me in the Bible the command, 'Thou shalt not frequent the race-course, and share in the betting,' I am ready to keep it; but I haven't found it yet. I find ten commandments, and it's as much as I can do to keep them; and I've no desire to make them into eleven or twelve."

ECHO No. 3.—"If anybody can show me in the Bible the command, 'Thou shalt not gamble with cards or dice,' I am ready to keep it; but I haven't found it yet. I find ten commandments, and it's as much as I can do to keep them; and I've no desire to make them into eleven or twelve."

ECHO No. 4 (once very popular in the Southern States of America).—"If anybody can show me in the Bible the command, 'Thou shalt not hold slaves,' I am ready to keep it; but I haven't found it yet. I find ten commandments, and it's as much as I can do to keep them; and I've no desire to make them into eleven or twelve."

Illustrations might be multiplied, but these may suffice.

Yet one word. Can any Christian picture to himself the Blessed Master with "a good cigar in His mouth?" Should we not be shocked to see such a representation—even though painted with all the exquisite skill of the best of the old masters? I think so. Practical Christianity consists in a constant endeavor to be in all things like Christ.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

W. M. HUTCHINGS.
97, Camberwell Road,
October, 1874.

Finally, here's a letter Spurgeon wrote to an unknown American correspondent at the height of the smoking controversy. This previously unpublished letter is from the private collection of Gary Long, Springfield, MO, and is used by permission. (Transcript below. Click on the image for a more hi-def version):

Nightingale Lane
Clapham

Nov 21

Dear Friend,

I ought to have answered you better but have been ill & overworked. Thanks for it, it did me good. What a badgering I have gone through! Yet I yield not for what I said was right. There is no liberty left us by these spiritual prudes.

When you see an opening

say a word for I have been shot at as a live crow whereas thousands think as I do or ought to do to be consistent.

If we cannot live near to God & friends we must give it up. I can't & shall not confess to the contrary, not even in silence.

Yours heartily
C. H. Springer

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from the private collection of Gary Long,
Springfield, MO. All rights reserved. Used
by permission.

Nightingale Lane
Clapham
Nov. 21

Dear Friend,

I ought to have answered your letter but have been ill and overworked. Thanks, for it did me good. What a badgering I have gone through! But I yield not, for what I said was right. There is no liberty left us by these spiritual prudes. When you see an

opening say a word, for I have been shot at as a lone crow, whereas thousands think as I do or ought to do to be consistent.

If we cannot live near to God and smoke, we must give it up. I can and shall not confess to the contrary, not even by silence.

Yours heartily,

C. H. Spurgeon

NOTES

1. "George F. Pentecost, D.D.: a Biographical Sketch," pp. 76, 77.
2. The *Daily Telegraph*, September 23, 1874.
3. Quoted in "The Tobacco Problem," by Meta Lander, third ed., Boston, Mass., 1885, p. 185. On the same page of this book the following is also given, the report that Spurgeon had given up smoking being, of course, quite incorrect, for he continued the habit until overtaken by his last illness:—"Neal Dow, who was in England at the time of the Spurgeon-Pentecost affair, relates that he was soon after a guest in a family where the matter came up. The father told him that by long and painful labour he had obtained a promise from his son, who was a great smoker, to abandon the habit, and that he had kept his pledge till the great preacher's declaration, 'I shall go home and smoke the best cigar I have got to the glory of God.' After this he returned to his cigar, saying that Spurgeon's example was good enough for him. Even a clergyman pleads, in excuse for his habit, that 'Mr. Spurgeon, the greatest preacher in the world, smokes.' Since then, if report speaks true, this 'greatest preacher' has abandoned his cigar, not, as we wish he had done years ago, from religious principle, but because he was driven to it by its injurious influence upon his health."
4. W. M. Hutchings, *Smoking to the Glory of God: A Letter to the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon In Reply to His Apology For Smoking, With Special Reference to the Principle On Which That Apology Is Based*, 2nd ed. (London: W. M. Hutchings Pub, 1874), 7-14.



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