

EVERYBODY'S SERMON

NO. 206

A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, JULY 25, 1858,
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AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

*"I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes."
Hosea 12:10.*

WHEN the Lord would win His people Israel from their iniquities, He did not leave a stone unturned, but gave them precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little. He taught them sometimes with a rod in His hand, when He smote them with sore famine and pestilence and invasion. At other times He sought to win them with bounties, for He multiplied their corn and their wine and their oil and He laid no famine upon them. But all the teachings of His Providence were unavailing and while His hand was stretched out, they still continued to rebel against the Most High. He hewed them by the Prophets. He sent them first one and then another. The golden-mouthed Isaiah was followed by the plaintive Jeremy, while at his heels in quick succession, there followed many far-seeing, thunder-speaking seers. But though Prophet followed Prophet in quick succession, each of them uttering the burning Words of the Most High, yet they would have none of His rebukes! They hardened their hearts and went on in their iniquities. Among the rest of God's agencies for striking their attention and their conscience, was the use of similitudes. The Prophets were accustomed not only to preach, but to be, themselves, as signs and wonders to the people. For instance, Isaiah named his child, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, that they might know that the judgment of the Lord was hastening upon them. And this child was ordained to be a sign, "For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, 'my father and my mother,' the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria." On another occasion, the Lord said unto Isaiah, "Go and loose the sackcloth from off your loins and put off your shoes from your feet. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot. And the Lord said, "Like as My servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia—so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners and the Ethiopians captives young and old, naked and barefoot, to the shame of Egypt."

Hosea, the Prophet, had to teach the people by a similitude. You will notice in the first Chapter a most extraordinary similitude. The Lord said to him, "Go, take unto yourself a wife of whoredom; for the land has committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord," and he did so. And the children begotten by this marriage were made as signs and wonders to the people. As for his first son, he was to be called Jezreel, "For yet a little while and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu." As for his daughter, she was to be called Lo-Ruhamah "For I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel. But I will utterly take them away." Thus by many significant signs, God made the people *think*. He made His Prophets do strange things in order that the people might talk about what He had done and then the meaning which God would have them learn should come home more powerfully to their consciences and be the better remembered.

Now it struck me that God is preaching to us every day by similitudes. When Christ was on earth He preached in parables and, though He is now in Heaven, He is preaching in parables today! Providence is God's sermon. The things which we see about us are God's thoughts and God's words to us. And if we were but wise, there is not a step that we take which we would not find to be full of mighty instruction. O you sons of men, God warns you every day by His own Word! He speaks to you by the lips of His servants, His ministers, but besides this, He addresses you at every turn by similitudes! He leaves no stone unturned to bring His wandering children to Himself, to make the lost sheep of the house of Israel return to the fold. In addressing myself to you this morning, I shall endeavor to show how every day and

every season of the year, in every place and in every calling which you are made to exercise, God is speaking to you by similitudes.

I. EVERY DAY God speaks to you by similitudes. Let us begin with the *early morning*. This morning you awakened and you found yourselves unclothed and you began to array yourselves in your garments. Did not God, if you would but have heard Him, speak to you by a similitude? Did He not as much as say to you, "Sinner, what will it be when your vain dreams shall have ended, if you should wake up in eternity to find yourself naked? With what shall you array yourself? If in this life you cast away the wedding garment—the spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ—what will you do when the trumpet of the archangel shall awaken you from your clay-cold couch in the grave; when the heavens shall be blazing with lightning and the solid pillars of the earth shall quake with the terror of God's thunder?" How will you be able to dress yourself then? Can you confront your Maker without a covering for your nakedness? Adam dared not—can you attempt it? Will He not frighten you with His terrors? Will He not cast you to the tormentors that you may be burned up with unquenchable fire because you forgot the clothing of your soul while you were in this place of probation?

Well, you have put on your dress and you come down to your families. And your children gather round your table for the morning meal. If you have been wise, *God has been preaching to you by a similitude*—He seemed to say to you—"Sinner, to whom should a child go but to his father? And where should be his resort when he is hungry but to his father's table?" And as you feed your children, if you had an ear to hear, the Lord was speaking to you and saying, "How willingly would I feed you! How would I give you of the bread of Heaven and cause you to eat angels' food! But you have spent your money for that which is not bread and your labor for that which is not. Listen diligently to Me and eat that which is good; let your soul delight itself in fatness." Did He not stand there as a Father and say, "Come My child, come to My table. The precious blood of My Son has been shed to be your drink and He has given His body to be your bread. Why will you wander hungry and thirsty? Come to My table, My child, for I love My children to be there and to feast upon the mercies I have provided."

You left your home and you went to your business. I know not in what calling your time was occupied—of that we will say more before we shall have gathered up the ends of your similitudes this morning—but you spend your time in your work. And surely, Beloved, all the time that your fingers were occupied, God was speaking to your heart, if the ears of your soul had not been closed. But you were heavy and ready to slumber and could not hear His voice. And when the sun was shining in high Heaven and the hour of noon was reached, might you not have lifted up your eyes and remembered that if you had committed your soul to God, your path would have been as the shining light which shines more and more unto the perfect day? Did He not speak to you and say, "I brought the sun from the darkness of the east. I have guided him and helped him to ascend the slippery steeps of Heaven and now he stands in his zenith like a giant that has run his race and has attained his goal. And even so will I do with you! Commit your ways unto Me and I will make you full of light; your path shall be as brightness and your life shall be as the noonday. Your sun shall not go down by day, but the days of your mourning shall be ended, for the Lord God shall be your light and your salvation."

And the sun began to set and the shadows of evening were drawing on—and did not the Lord, then, remind you of your death? Suns have their setting and men have their graves. When the shadows of the evening were stretched out and when the darkness began to gather, did He not say to you, "O Man, take heed of your eventide, for the light of the sun shall not endure forever"? There are 12 hours wherein a man shall work, but when they are past, there is no work nor device in the night of that grave where we are all hastening! Work while you have the light, for the night comes wherein no man can work. Therefore, whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might. Look, I say, to the sun at his setting and observe the rainbow hues of glory with which he paints the sky. Mark how he appears to increase his orb as he nears the horizon. O Man, kneel down and learn this prayer—"Lord, let my dying be like the setting of the sun. Help me, if clouds and darkness are round about me, to light them up with splendor. Surround me, O my God, with a greater brightness at my death than I have shown in all my former life. If

my deathbed shall be the miserable pallet and if I expire in some lone cot, yet nevertheless, grant, O Lord, that my poverty may be gilded with the light that You shall give me—that I may exhibit the grandeur of a Christian's departure at my dying hour." God speaks to you, O Man, by similitude, from the rising to the setting of the sun!

And now, you have lit your candle and you sit down. Your children are about you and the Lord sends you a little preacher to preach you a sermon, if you will hear. It is a little gnat and it flies round and round about your candle and delights itself in the light thereof, till, dazzled and intoxicated, it begins to singe its wings and burn itself! You seek to put it away, but it dashes into the flame and having burned itself, it can scarcely fan itself through the air again. But as soon as it has recruited its strength again, mad-like it dashes to its death and destruction! Did not the Lord say to you, "Sinner, you are also doing this! You love the light of sin. Oh, that you were wise enough to tremble at the fire of sin, for he who delights in the sparks thereof must be consumed in the burning!" Did not the hand seem to be like the hand of your Almighty, who would put you away from your own destruction and who rebukes and smites you by His Providence, as much as to say to you, "Poor silly Man, be not your own destruction"? And while you see, perhaps, with a little sorrow the death of the foolish insect, might not that forewarn you of your awful doom when, after having been dazzled with the giddy round of this world's joys, you shall at last plunge into the eternal burning and lose your soul, so madly, for nothing but the enjoyments of an hour? Does not God preach this to you?

And now it is time for you to retire to your rest. Your door is bolted and you have fast closed it. Did not that remind you of that saying, "When once the master of the house is risen up and has shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door saying, 'Lord, Lord, open unto us,' and he shall answer and say unto you, 'I know not who you are'?" In vain shall be your knocking, then, when the bars of Immutable Justice shall have fast closed the gates of mercy on mankind—when the hand of the Almighty Master shall have shut His children within the gates of Paradise and shall have left the thief and the robber in the cold chilly darkness—the outer darkness—where there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth! Did He not preach to you by similitude? Even then, when your finger was on the bolt, might not His finger have been on your heart?

And at nighttime you were startled. The watchman in the street awoke you with the cry of the hour of the night, or his tramp along the street. O Man, if you had ears to hear, you might have heard in the steady tramp of the policeman the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom comes! Go out to meet Him!" And every sound at midnight that awakened you from your slumber and startled you upon your bed might seem to forewarn you of that dread trumpet of the archangel, which shall herald the coming of the Son of Man in the day He shall judge both the quick and the dead according to my Gospel! O that you were wise, that you understood this, for all the day long, from dewy morning till the darkness of the eventide and the thick darkness of midnight, God always preaches to man—He preaches to him by similitudes!

II. And now, we turn the current of our thoughts and observe that ALL THE YEAR round God does preach to man by similitudes. It was but a little while ago that we were sowing our seeds in our garden and scattering the corn over the broad furrows. God had sent the seedtime to remind us that we, too, are like the ground, and that He is scattering seed in our hearts each day. And did He not say to us, "Take heed, O Man, lest you should be like the highway whereon the seed was scattered and the fowls of the air devoured it. Take heed that you are not like the ground that had its basement on a hard and arid rock, lest this seed should spring up and by-and-by should wither away when the sun arose because it had not much depth of earth. And be you careful, O son of man, that you are not like the ground where the seed did spring up, but the thorns sprang up and choked it. But be you like the good ground whereon the seed did fall and it brought forth fruit, some twenty, some fifty and some a hundred fold."

We thought, when we were sowing the seed, that we expected one day to see it spring up again. Was there not a lesson for us there? Are not all of our actions as seeds? Are not our little words like grains of mustard seed? Is not our daily conversation like a handful of the corn that we scatter over the soil? And ought we not to remember that our words shall live again; that our acts are as immortal as ourselves, that

after having laid a little while in the dust to be matured, they shall certainly arise? The black deeds of sin shall bear a dismal harvest of damnation. And the right deeds which God's Grace has permitted us to do, shall, through His mercy and *not* through our merit, bring forth a bounteous harvest in the day when they who sow in tears slowly reap in joy! Does not seedtime preach to you, O Man, and say, "Take heed that you sow good seed in your field"?

And when the seed sprang up and the season had changed, did God then cease to preach? Ah, no! First the blade, then the ear and then the full corn in the ear—each had its homily. And when at last the harvest came, how loud the sermon which it preached to us! It said to us, "O Israel, I have set a harvest for you. Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap. He who sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. And he who sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." If you have an opportunity to journey into the country during the next three weeks, you will, if your heart is rightly attuned, find a marvelous mass of wisdom couched in a cornfield! Why I could not attempt for a moment to open the mighty mines of gabled treasure which are hidden there! Think, Beloved, of the joy of your harvest. How does it tell us of the joy of the redeemed if we, being saved, shall at last be carried like shocks of corn fully ripe into the garner? Look at the ear of corn when it is fully ripe and see how it bends toward the earth! It held its head erect before, but in getting ripe how humble does it become! And how does God speak to the sinner and tell him that if he would be fit for the great harvest he must drop his head and cry, "Lord have mercy upon me, a sinner." And when we see the weeds spring up among wheat, have we not our Master's parable over again of the tares among the wheat? And are we not reminded of the great day of division when He shall say to the reaper, "Gather first the tares and bind them in bundles, to burn them. But gather the wheat into My barn"? O yellow field of corn, you preach well to me, for you say to me, the minister, "Behold, the fields are already ripe to the harvest. Work yourself. And pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers into the harvest." And it preaches well to you, you man of years, it tells you that the sickle of death is sharp and that you must soon fall—but it cheers and comforts you, for it tells you that the wheat shall be safely housed—and it bids you hope that you shall be carried to your Master's garner to be His joy and His delight forever! Listen, then, to the rustling eloquence of the yellow harvest!

In a very little time, my Beloved, you will see the birds congregated upon the housetops in great multitudes and after they have whirled round and round and round as if they were taking their last sight of Old England, or rehearsing their supplications before they launched away, you will see them, with their leader in advance, speed across the purple sea to live in sunnier climes while winter's cold hand shall strip their native woods. And does not God seem to preach to you, Sinners, when these birds are taking their flight? Do you not remember how He, Himself, puts it? "Yes, the stork in the heavens knows her appointed times. And the turtle and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming. But My people know not the judgment of the Lord." Does He not tell us that there is a time of dark winter coming upon this world—a time of trouble such as there has been none like it, neither shall be any more? A time when all the joys of sin shall be nipped and frostbitten and when the summer of man's estate shall be turned into the dark winter of his disappointment? And does He not say to you, "Sinner fly away—away—away to the goodly land where Jesus dwells! Away from self and sin! Away from the city of destruction! Away from the whirl of pleasures and from the tossing to and fro of trouble! Hasten like a bird to its rest! Fly across the sea of repentance and faith and build your nest in the land of mercy, that when the great day of vengeance shall pass over this world, you may be safe in the clefts of the rock"?

I remember well how God once preached to me by a similitude in the depth of winter. The earth had been black and there was scarcely a green thing or a flower to be seen. As you looked across the field, there was nothing but blackness—bare hedges and leafless trees and black, black earth wherever you looked. All of a sudden God spoke and unlocked the treasures of the snow and white flakes descended until there was no blackness to be seen—all was one sheet of dazzling whiteness! It was at that time that I was seeking the Savior and it was then I found Him. And I remember well that sermon which I saw

before me—"Come now and let us reason together; though your sins are as scarlet they shall be as snow, though they are red like crimson they shall be whiter than wool." Sinner, your heart is like that black ground! Your soul is like that black tree and hedgerow without leaf or blossom. God's Grace is like the white snow—it shall fall upon you till your doubting heart shall glitter in whiteness of pardon and your poor black soul shall be covered with the spotless purity of the Son of God! He seems to say to you, "Sinner, you are black, but I am ready to forgive you. I will wrap your heart in the ermine of My Son's righteousness and with My Son's own garments on, you shall be holy as the Holy One."

And the *wind* of today, as it comes howling through the trees—many of which have been swept down—reminds us of the Spirit of the Lord which "blows where it wishes," and when it pleases. And it tells us to seek earnestly after that Divine and mysterious influence which alone can speed us on our voyage to Heaven! It shall cast down the trees of our pride and tear up by the roots the goodly cedars of our self-confidence—which shall shake our refuges of lies about our ears and make us look to Him who is the only protection from the storm—the only shelter when "the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall."

Yes, and when the *heat* is coming down and we hide ourselves beneath the shadow of the tree, an angel stands there and whispers, "Look upwards, Sinner, as you hide yourself from the burning rays of Sol beneath the tree. There is One who is like the apple tree among the trees of the wood and He bids you come and take shadow beneath His branches, for He will screen you from the eternal vengeance of God and give you shelter when the fierce heat of God's anger shall beat upon the heads of wicked men."

III. And now again, EVERY PLACE to which you journey, every *animal* that you see, every *spot* you visit has a sermon for you! Go into your farmyard and your ox and your ass shall preach to you. "The ox knows his owner and the ass his master's crib, but Israel does not know, My people do not consider." The very dog at your heels may rebuke you. He follows his master—a stranger he will not follow, for he knows not the voice of a stranger—but *you* forsake your God and turn aside unto your crooked ways! Look at the chicken by the side of yonder pond and let it rebuke your ingratitude. It drinks and every sip it takes, it lifts its head to Heaven and thanks the Giver of the rain for the drink afforded to it—while you eat and drink—there is no blessing pronounced at your meals and no thanksgiving bestowed upon your Father for His bounty! The very horse is checked by the bridle and the whip is for the ass. Your God has bridled you by His Commandments and He has chastened, by His Providence, yet are you more obstinate than the ass or the mule! Still you will not run in His Commandments, but you turn aside, willfully and wickedly following out the perversity of your own heart! Is it not so? Are not these things true of you? If you are still without God and without Christ, must not these things strike your conscience? Would not any one of them lead you to tremble before the Most High and beg of Him that He would give you a new heart and a right spirit and that no longer you might be as the beasts of the field, but might be a man full of the Divine Spirit, living in obedience to your Creator?

And in *journeying* you have noticed how often the road is rough with stones and you have murmured because of the way over which you have to tread. And have you not thought that those stones were helping to make the road better and that the worst piece of road when mended with hard stones would in time become smooth and fit to travel on? And did you think how often God has mended you? How many stones of affliction has He cast upon you? How many wagon loads of warnings have you had spread out upon you, and you have been none the better, but have only grown worse? And when He comes to look on you to see whether your life has become smooth, whether the highway of your moral conduct has become more like the king's highway of righteousness—how might He say, "Alas, I have repaired this road, but it is none the better! Let it alone until it becomes a very bog and quagmire, until he who keeps it thus shall have perished in it himself." And you have gone by the seaside and has not the sea talked to you? You are inconstant as the sea, but you are not one-half as obedient. God keeps the sea, the mountain-waved sea, in check with a belt of sand. He spreads the sand along the seashore and even the sea observes the landmark. "Do you not fear Me, says the Lord? Will you not tremble at My Presence, which have placed the sand for the boundary of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot

pass it? And though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail—though they roar, yet can they not pass over it.” It is so. Let your conscience prick you. The sea obeys Him from shore to shore and yet you will not have Him to be your God, but you say, “Who is the Lord that I should fear Him? Who is Jehovah that I should acknowledge His sway?”

Hear the *mountains* and the *hills*, for they have a lesson! Such is God—He abides forever—think not that He shall change!

And now, Sinner, I entreat you to open your eyes as you go home today and if nothing that I have said shall smite you, perhaps God shall put into your way something that shall give you a text from which you may preach to yourself a sermon that never shall be forgotten. Oh, if I had but time and thought, and words, I would bring the things that are in Heaven above and in the earth beneath and in the waters under the earth and I would set them all before you—and they would, every one, give their warning before they had passed from your inspection! And I know that their voice would be, “Consider the Lord your Creator and fear and serve Him, for He made you, and you have not made yourself. We obey Him and we find it is our beauty to be obedient and our glory ever to move according to His will. And you shall find it to be the same. Obey Him while you may, lest haply when this life is over all these things shall rise up against you—and the stone in the street shall clamor for your condemnation! And the beam out of the wall shall bear witness against you and the beasts of the field shall be your accusers and the valley and hill shall begin to curse you! O Man, the earth is made for your warning! God would have you be saved. He has set signposts everywhere in Nature and in Providence, pointing you the way to the City of Refuge! If you are but wise, you need not miss your way. It is but your willful ignorance and your neglect that shall cause you to run on in the way of error, for God has made the way straight before you and given you every encouragement to run therein!

IV. And now, lest I should weary you, I will just notice that every man in his CALLING has a sermon preached to him.

The *farmer* has a thousand sermons. I have already brought them out—let him open his eyes wide and he shall see more. He need not go an inch without hearing the songs of angels and the voice of spirits wooing him to righteousness—for all Nature round about him has a tongue given to it—when man has an ear to hear.

There are others, however, engaged in a business which allows them to see but very little of Nature and yet even *there* God has provided them with a lesson. There is the *baker* who provides us with our bread. He thrusts his fuel into the oven and he causes it to glow with heat and puts bread therein. Well may he, if he is an ungodly man, tremble as he stands at the oven's mouth—for there is a text which he may well comprehend as he stands there—“For the Day comes that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble. They shall be consumed.” Men ingather them in bundles and cast them into the fire and they are burned. Out of the oven's mouth comes a hot and burning warning—and the man's heart might melt like wax within him if he would but regard it!

Then see the *butcher*. How does the beast speak to him? He sees the lamb almost lick his knife and the bullock goes unconsciously to the slaughter. How might he think every time that he smites the unconscious animal, (who knows nothing of death), of his own doom? Are we not, all of us who are without Christ, fattening for the slaughter? Are we not more foolish than the bullock—for does not the wicked man follow his executioner—and walk after his own destroyer into the very chambers of Hell? When we see a drunkard pursuing his drunkenness, or an unchaste man running in the way of licentiousness, is he not as an ox going to the slaughter until a dart smite him through the liver? Has not God sharpened His knife and made ready His axe that the fatlings of this earth may be killed when He shall say to the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field, “Behold, I have made a feast of vengeance for you and you shall feast upon the blood of the slain and make yourselves drunk with the streams thereof”? Yes, Butcher, there is a lecture for you in your trade! And your business may reproach you.

And you whose craft is to sit still all day making shoes for our feet, the lap stone in your lap may reproach you—for your heart, perhaps—is as hard as it is! Have you not been smitten as often as your lap

stone and yet your heart has never been broken or melted? And what shall the Lord say to you at last, when your stony heart being still within you, He shall condemn you and cast you away because you would have none of His rebukes and would not turn at the voice of His exhortation?

Let the *brewer* remember that as he brews he must drink. Let the *potter* tremble lest he be like a vessel marred upon the wheel. Let the *printer* take heed that his life be set in heavenly type, and not in the black letter of sin. *Painter*, beware, for paint will not suffice—we must have unvarnished realities!

Others of you are engaged in business where you are continually using scales and measures. Might you not often put yourselves into those scales? Might you not fancy you saw the great Judge standing by with His Gospel in one scale and you in the other and, solemnly looking down upon you, saying, “*Mene, mene, tekel*—you are weighed in the balances and found wanting”? Some of you use the measure and when you have measured out, you cut off the portion that your customer requires. Think of your life, too—it is to be of a certain length and every year brings the measure a little farther—and at last there come the scissors that shall clip off your life and it is done! How do you know when you have come to the last inch? What is that disease you have about you but the first snip of the scissors? What is that trembling in your bones, that failing in your eyesight, that fleeing of your memory, that departure of your youthful vigor but the first cut? How soon shall you be cut in two, the remnant of your days past away and your years all numbered and gone, misspent and wasted forever!

But you say you are engaged as a *servant* and your occupations are diverse. Then diverse are the lectures God preaches to you! “A servant waits for his wages and the hireling fulfills his day.” There is a similitude for you when you have fulfilled your day on earth and shall at last take your wages. Who, then, is your master? Are you serving Satan and the lusts of the flesh—and will you take out your wages as the hot metal of destruction? Or are you serving the fair Prince Emmanuel—and shall your wages be the golden crowns of Heaven? Oh, happy are you if you serve a good master, for according to your master shall be your reward! As is your labor such shall the end be.

Or you are one who *guides the pen* and from hour to hour you wearily write. Ah, Man, know that your life is a writing! When your hand is not on the pen, you are still a writer. You are always writing upon the pages of eternity! You are writing your sins or else your holy confidence in Him who loved you. Happy shall it be for you, O Writer, if your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life and if that black writing of yours, in the history of your pilgrimage below, shall have been blotted out with the red blood of Christ—and you shall have written upon you the fair name of Jehovah—to stand legible forever!

Or perhaps you are a *physician* or a *chemist*. You prescribe or prepare medicines for man's body. God stands there by the side of your pestle and your mortar—and by the table where you write your prescriptions—and He says to you, “Man, you are sick. I can prescribe for you. The blood and righteousness of Christ, laid hold of by faith, and applied by the Spirit can cure your soul. I can compound a medicine for you that shall rid you of your sins and bring you to the place where the inhabitants shall no more say, ‘I am sick.’ Will you take My medicine or will you reject it? Is it bitter to you and do you turn away from it? Come, drink My child, drink, for your life lies here! And how shall you escape if you neglect so great a salvation?” Do you cast iron, or melt lead, or fuse the hard metals of the mines? Then pray that the Lord may melt your heart and cast you in the mold of the Gospel! Do you make garments for men? Oh, be careful that you find a garment for yourself forever! Are you busy in *building* all day long, laying the stone upon its fellow and the mortar in its crevice? Then remember you are building for eternity, too! Oh, that you may yourself be built upon a good foundation! Oh that you may build thereon, not wood, hay, or stubble—but gold, and silver, and precious stones—and things that will abide the fire! Take care, Man, lest you should be God's scaffold, lest you should be used on earth to be a scaffolding for building His Church and when His Church is built you should be cast down and burned up with unquenchable fire! Take heed that you are built upon a rock and not upon the sand—and that the vermilion cement of the Savior's precious blood unites you to the foundation of the building—and to every stone thereof!

Are you a *jeweler* and do you cut your gems and polish the diamond from day to day? Would to God you would take warning from the contrast which you present to the stone on which you exercise your craft. You cut it and it glitters the more you cut it. But though you have been cut and ground; though you have had cholera and fever and have been at death's door many a day, you are none the brighter, but the duller, for alas, you are no diamond! You are but the pebble of the brook and in the Day when God makes up His jewels, He shall not enclose you in the casket of His treasures—for you are not one of the precious sons of Zion, comparable unto fine gold! But be your situation what it may; be your calling what it may; there is a continual sermon preached to your conscience! I would that you would now, from this time forth, open both eyes and ears and see and hear the things that God would teach you!

And now, dropping the similitude while the clock shall tick but a few times more, let us put the matter thus—Sinner, you are as yet without God and without Christ. You are liable to death every hour. You can not tell but that you may be in the flames of Hell before the clock shall strike ONE today! You are today, “condemned already,” because you believe not in the Son of God! And Jesus Christ says to you this day, “Oh, that you would consider your latter end!” He cries to you this morning, “How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you would not.” I entreat you, consider your ways! If it is worthwhile to make your bed in Hell, do it. If the pleasures of this world are worth being damned to all eternity for enjoying them—if Heaven is a cheat and Hell a delusion—go on in your sins! But if there is Hell for sinners and Heaven for repenting ones and if you must dwell a whole eternity in one place or the other, without similitude, I put a plain question to you—Are you wise in living as you do, without thought—careless and godless? Would you ask now the way of salvation? It is simply this—“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.” He died. He rose again. You are to believe Him to be saved. You are to believe that He is able to save unto the uttermost them who come to God by Him. But, more than that—believing that to be a fact—you are to cast your soul upon that fact and trust to Him, sink or swim! Spirit of God! Help us each to do this and by similitude, or by Providence, or by Your Prophets, bring us each to Yourself and save us eternally! And unto You shall be the Glory!

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