

“AS WE HAVE HEARD, SO HAVE WE SEEN”
NO. 2014

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city
of our God: God will establish it forever.”*
Psalm 48:8.

“As we have heard, so have we seen”—this is seldom true. In many places we see what we have not heard and what we have heard we do not see. Time was when many simpletons believed that the streets of London were paved with gold. I am sure I do not know any part of London in which a single lump of that metal can be found in the footway. Ten thousand idle tales there are in every country of mines where fortunes may be dug out of the earth and plains where wealth forces itself on the immigrant. But how seldom do we hear the good news, “As we have heard, so have we seen.”

But when you come into the “City of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God,” the reports about it are true and the truth exceeds the report. For, like the Queen of Sheba, we cry, “The half was not told me.” When we speak of the privileges of the Church of God on earth it is impossible to exaggerate. “Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” Behold, what blessings, what riches, what royalties the Lord Jesus bestows upon His chosen! How cleansed they are by His blood! How quickened by His life! How honored by His glorious enthronement at the right hand of the Father!

You cannot speak of Zion and her prosperity in too exulting a style. Happy are you, O Israel! And if we speak of the city of God as it shines in full splendor above, words fail us to set it forth. I doubt not when we arrive at its blessed abodes and tread its golden streets and wear our crowns of immortality, we shall not only say, “As we have heard, so have we seen,” but we shall be lost in wonder and surprise at the overwhelming revelations of Divine love.

It is always true of the things of God and of the Church of God—“As we have heard, so have we seen.” What His Word promises His work performs. This thought will be the clue of my sermon and my line of discourse will be guided by the text. May the Holy Spirit make it useful to us all!

I. Our first observation upon the text is this—IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT WE LISTEN TO TRUE WITNESSES. Otherwise we shall not be able to say, “As we have heard, so have we seen.” If we listen to false witnesses, the more we believe them the worse for us—it will not be *faith* but credulity and in due time there will be a sad awakening from idle dreams. It is of the first importance to you all that you should hear the Word of God and receive the Truth of God as it is in Jesus. So that both in the throng of life, and when you stand upon the borders of death and in the changeless state of eternity, you may be able to say, “We thank God for the Gospel which we heard. For what we heard with our ears has been verified in our lives.”

The Israelites who sang this forty-eighth Psalm had heard of Jerusalem and its Temple, of Jehovah and of His sure defense of His chosen city—how had they heard of it? They had heard of it by reading for themselves, or listening to the reading of the Word of God. They had five books of Moses and other writings. In these books they read marvelous stories of what Jehovah had done for His people. They would remember well how the Lord worked for His chosen in Egypt and how He brought them out of the house of bondage with a high hand and an outstretched arm. They would read the record of God’s merciful provision for the tribes in the wilderness, of His victories over their enemies, such as Og, king of Bashan and Sihon, king of the Amorites.

They would read with wonder the conquest of Canaan by Joshua and the overthrow of tyrants by Gideon and Barak and Jephthah. They would see what the Lord worked by His servant, David, and by others who trusted Him in the old times. All this would raise high their confidence in Jehovah—and now it had come to pass that while Jehoshaphat was king, the holy city had been beleaguered by confederate Moabites and Edomites and Ammonites. And once more the Lord had made bare His holy arm and given a glorious triumph to Judah—without it being necessary for His people to

strike a single blow. The adversaries, moved with mutual jealousy, had fallen upon one another and become their own executioners. When the men of Judah saw this, they cried, “The old Book is true. Jehovah has worked wonders before our eyes. As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts.”

My Brethren, attend carefully to what this Book records and reveals. It is now enlarged for your greater edification. Let this record be the report which you hear concerning the Lord our God and His ways of Divine Grace. Let us give earnest heed to Prophets and Apostles and Evangelists who wrote in the name of the Lord. For in that case we shall hear the Truths of God which shall be so verified by experience as to make us joyfully exclaim, “As we have heard, so have we seen.”

These good people had also *listened* to the ministers of God. The priests, when they were not engaged in actual attendance at the Temple, were expected to teach the people. It is said of the tribe of Levi, “They shall teach Jacob Your judgments and Israel Your Law.” Prophets also went through the land declaring the mind of God and when the people heard these messengers whom the Lord had sent to speak in His name, they heard that which the Lord fulfilled. For none of the words of His servants were suffered to fall to the ground. How necessary it is that you should hear the Truth of God spoken by those that are *sent of God*.

Many false Prophets have gone forth into the world. That which a man fetches out of his own mind may or may not be true. In any case you have a right to criticize and discuss it. But he that speaks with, “Thus says the Lord,” at the back of his words stands on another platform. God’s Word demands our reverent faith and he that speaks it faithfully speaks with authority and not as the scribes. Conscience within the breast of man echoes to the voice of Divine Truth and owns its power, even when the will refuses to obey. Oh, that you may not, because of itching ears, heap to yourselves teachers. But may you hear the faithful messenger of God so that you may say at the end, “As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of our God”!

No doubt, also, these good people had listened to their fathers. In these days the proud notion is abroad that our fathers cannot have been so wise as their highly cultured sons. Yet in the long run, these same youths will alter their opinions as their years increase. Wisdom is neither in age nor in youth but in God alone. I love to hear what gray-headed men have to say who are further advanced in the journey of life than I am. For there is weight in their testimony. They may not speak with all the brilliance and fire of youth, but their speech has salt in it, derived from the certainty of actual experience. I love to think of those things which we have heard with our ears and our fathers have told us. Even the wondrous things which the Lord did in *their* day and in the old time before them.

The singers of our Psalm had listened to their gracious fathers and when they saw the adversary round about the City of God and afterwards marched forth to that strange battle in which there was no clash of arms but only a joyful division of the spoil—then, I say they knew that what their fathers had told them was really true and they cried out in wonder, “As we have heard, so have we seen.”—

*“In Zion God is known,
A refuge in distress.
How bright has His salvation shone
Through all her palaces!
Often have our fathers told,
Our eyes have often seen,
How well our God secures the fold
Where His own sheep have been.”*

Those who were not actually in Jerusalem would hear the descriptions of those who had been there. They had heard of the Temple which was so “exceedingly magnificent.” They had heard of Jachin and Boaz, the two famous pillars—of the great altar and the smoking sacrifices of the morning and the evening lamb, and the priests in their white attire ministering at the altar. They had heard of the high priest himself, when he came forth in his garments of glory and of beauty and of the blessing which he blessed the assembled people. In the cottage homes on the far-off hills they had heard of all these things and heard a truthful report, so that when they came to the holy city and their feet stood within the gates of Jerusalem, their hearts beat high and they said within themselves, “We have not listened to cunningly devised fables. But as we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts.”

It is well, dear Friends, for us to form our associations with a view to lasting benefit. Let the friends of God be your friends. Speak to those who speak well of God and of His holy name. Cultivate the acquaintance of those who, by experience, are able to inform you whether these things are so. “He that walks with wise men shall be wise.” He that talks much with experienced Christians will acquire much assurance in the things of God. It is most important for us that we receive the recorded witness of ancient saints and the hearty testimony of living worthies—that afterwards we may be able to say—“As we have heard, so have we seen.”

Some, nowadays, are inclined to hear everything, bad, good and indifferent. I believe that hearing everything will end in hearing nothing. That text is often quoted and misunderstood, which says, “Prove all things.” If men really mean what they say and are going to prove all things, I would persuade them to begin with their bodies and not at first to run great risks with their souls. Gentlemen, I invite you to begin with more common things than the Gospel. For instance—commence with proving all the patent medicines and next prove all the drugs of the chemist. If you survive the process, it will then be time to go round and prove all the ministers and all the different doctrines of this wretched period.

If you survive the drugs and poisons, you will not survive the false doctrines. False doctrines cannot be proved and you need not make the attempt. It is only the Truth of God which is capable of proof. The text does not mean “experiment upon everything”—but receive nothing until it has been proved to be true and good. The most of us are not appointed to the office of Universal Taster—we are not commissioned to taste all deadly things that we may know their precise effect—we are far better employed in holding fast that which is good. The truths which we have already proved to be the Truths of God, we hold as with a death grip. And, as we hold them fast, we also hold them forth.

That which we accept for ourselves we commend to others—this is a far safer and healthier exercise than imitating the Athenians in their desire to be forever hearing some new thing. Take heed what you hear, lest you be not able to say, “As we have heard, so have we seen.”

II. Secondly, GOOD HEARING LEADS ON TO SEEING—“As we have heard, so have we seen.” You cannot all use those words. Some of you have heard and heard but have never yet seen. The man who is content with one inlet to his mind, namely, his ears—but never uses his eyes, must imagine that God has made a mistake and has given him more senses than he needs. Surely this argues a want of sense. Dear Friends, you are not only invited to hear the Gospel, but the Lord Jesus says to you, as He said to His first disciples, “Come and see.” “O taste and see that the Lord is good.” You are invited to *see* for yourselves whether these things are so. You will ask how can a hearer of the Gospel become a seer of it?

Note first, that he can do this by examining the facts which he hears stated, and judging whether they are really so. The Scripture tells you that your heart is deceitful—see whether it is not so. It tells you that there is a natural inclination in man towards evil—study yourself and see whether this is not the case. It tells you that there is in human nature an impotence towards that which is truly good and an aversion to God. Seriously consider whether your own life, as a natural man, does not prove the truth of these charges. There are some things about yourself, while as yet you are unconverted, which you have heard of in the Scriptures and I would urge you to see whether they are not true in your own case. It will be a great help to you if you will examine these things in reference to your own self. The subject for consideration is near at hand and it will be, in many ways, useful to yourself to know whether Holy Scripture gives a true description of human nature, as you find it in yourself.

We further see what we hear when we obey the commands and receive the blessings promised upon obedience. For instance, you are bid to confess your sins. Now see whether this is true—“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins”—not only hear the precept but see whether the promise is true. Here is another test—“Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.” You have heard it hundreds of times—come and see for yourself whether such a rest is given. Obey the precept so that you may receive the promise which hangs upon the precept.

We also turn hearing into sight when, receiving the blessings which are promised to faith, we enter into a new life. Some of us can bear witness that we have entered into a new world. That things which are now everything to us were nothing to us a little while ago. As to a deaf man there is no sound, as to a blind man there is no light, so to us a few years ago there were no spiritual things. We were devoid of those spiritual faculties by which spiritual things are discerned. But now that we have believed in Jesus we have passed into another universe. And we now possess a life as much above the life of our former state as the mental life is above that of the brute which perishes. We know that there is a heavenly life, for we possess it. And in the power of it we see a thousand things not dreamed of in the common man’s philosophy. We heartily wish that all of you who hear the Gospel would see its Truths, so that you might say with the singers in this Psalm, “As we have heard, so have we seen.”

The promises of God are of little service to a man if he merely hears them or reads them and has no further dealing with them. They are like a check which is kept for months and years in a drawer and never presented at the bank. The promises of

God must be presented by prayerful faith to the Lord Himself. The sacred promises, though in themselves most sure and precious, are of no avail for the comfort and sustenance of the soul unless you grasp them by *faith*, plead them in *prayer*, expect them by *hope* and receive them with *gratitude*. Oh, that you might say of every promise of God, “As we have heard, so have we seen.”

The best hearing is that which leads to seeing. When a man says, “The Word of God tells me so and I will test it for myself”—that man is in a very hopeful state. To this we invite our hearers. The banquet is spread and rich are the provisions. But do not so trust our testimony as to stay away. Come and see for yourselves. We tell you that there is a great atonement made by the blood of Jesus which will at once wash out the most scarlet sins. Believe our message so far as to come and try it for yourselves and you will soon exclaim, “As we have heard, so have we seen.”

III. I beg your attention to the third point, which is this—that SEEING WONDERFULLY CONFIRMS THE TRUTH OF WHAT WE HEAR. We are bound to believe God, even when we cannot see. That the Lord has said it would be quite enough for us if we revered Him as we ought. But it does help us very much when, having implicitly believed in God’s testimony, He grants us grace to *see* that what we have believed is most surely true. Let me show how the experience of a believing man confirms the truth of what he has heard.

To go back to where I was just now, all that Holy Scripture says about our ruin may be seen to be true. Many of us have not only heard but we have felt the evil result of sin upon our minds and hearts. We know that sin dwells in us and strives for the mastery. We can never doubt that our natural tendencies are faulty and that our best desires are imperfect. Since the Holy Spirit convinced us of sin the existence of a foul fountain within our nature is a fact which we cannot doubt. Sin’s infinite demerit is, also, a Truth of God to which our conscience gives solemn assent. I remember when I learned this lesson, with the Law as my schoolmaster. If anyone had asked me whether I deserved to be sent to the lowest Hell my tears would have owned that no punishment could be too severe for sin like mine.

Whenever I read a terrible threat in Scripture, I gave an inward assent to it in my quickened conscience—yes—and I do so now. Apart from my Lord on the Cross, a deep damnation would be mine. It does not matter what modern deceivers preach—you may depend upon it—that men when they come to die, if their consciences are at all awake, are persuaded that the threats of Holy Scripture are true. Sentiment kicks against eternal punishment. But conscience cries, “Amen” to the righteous sentence of the Law. When the Spirit of God awakens conscience, it ceases to trifle with sin and no longer denies that an awful penalty must surely be its consequence.

I am sure I can appeal to those of you who have seen the Lord in His glory, so as to abhor yourselves in dust and ashes and to those of you who have seen yourselves, so that you have been ashamed and confounded at your own ways. I say I can appeal to you to confirm the most solemn statements of Holy Scripture. However much its denunciations may make you shudder, your inmost soul consents to the truth of them. When the Holy Spirit opens up before us the bottomless pit of our natural depravity, we admit that, “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.” We believe in the Fall, for we are fallen. We are sure we are not as the Lord made us. We believe in the hereditary taint of natural depravity—for we mourn it in ourselves. We believe in the impotence of fallen humanity—for we are ourselves without strength.

We believe in our personal desert of the wrath of God, for we are sure it is so and our only comfort is that the sentence of death has been fulfilled in us in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Substitute. All that the Holy Scripture says about sin and its results we do from our heart of hearts confirm, for, “As we have heard, so have we seen.”

Brighter things, however, have we heard and seen. Brethren, we heard that there is a calling of God whereby He separates His chosen from the rest of mankind. And we know that there is such an effectual calling by the Spirit of God for we have been so called. We heard the general call by which men were invited to come to Christ. But we refused *that* call. We learned that there was a special effectual call of the Holy Spirit by which men are sweetly drawn to Jesus and we found this report to be true for we have been so drawn. The Spirit of God did not drag us to Christ by our ears but He drew us with bands of love. We came to Jesus with the full consent of our renewed wills and yet against our old wills. Without violating one single delicate Law of our mind, the Lord constrained us to run in the way of salvation. As we have heard concerning the effectual calling of the Spirit of God so have we seen and we cannot but bear witness of it this day.

We heard, too, that if we came to Jesus as we were, He would receive us—and He did receive us. We heard that He would graciously forgive. And He did forgive. We heard that in forgiveness He would give us peace and we have found it so. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” We heard that poor sinners, justified by faith, received a joy unspeakable and we have received that joy. We bear our testimony that, “This Man receives sinners”—we bear witness that He casts out none that come to Him. We declare to you that in the fullness of His grace He puts rebels in the chil-

dren’s place. Yes, “As we have heard, so have we seen.” The bravest preacher of the Gospel has never preached more Gospel than is true. The boldest testifier to the free grace of God has never said more for the freedom and fullness of Divine Grace than he ought to have said. Exaggeration is impossible. When you would describe Divine Grace you may lay the reins upon the neck of thought.

Then we heard that there was such a thing as regeneration. We used to hear with wonder that declaration, “You must be born again.” We were told that we must pass from death unto life—that old things must pass away and all things must become new. We heard it attentively and believingly. But now we have gone further—we have *seen* it. Many of you know the great and radical change because you have experienced it. You can say, “One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” We have passed out of a dead world into a living world. Having been buried with Christ we have also risen with Him and our life dwells and flourishes in a new world. We are conscious that a new heart beats within us. A new life looks out of our eyes and moves in our members. The new birth is a fact—“As we have heard, so have we seen.”

We used to hear of the Holy Spirit and it seemed to us when we heard it that His operations and indwelling were mysteries incomprehensible. How could God the Holy Spirit dwell *in* men and make their *bodies* His temples? We marveled as we heard of His convincing men of sin, withering their self-righteousness, enkindling hope in their bosoms, leading them to Jesus, renewing them, comforting them, sanctifying them, illuminating them, preserving them. We used to hear of all this. But now with delight we can stand before you and say, “As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of our God.”

The Holy Spirit has convinced us of sin. What a “spirit of bondage” He was to us for a time! He seemed to fetter hand and foot and shut us up under the Law! Then He broke our chains asunder and taught us that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. What a liberty it is! How joyfully did we leap when we were set free from the tyranny of sin. Since then the blessed Spirit has continually quickened, guided and strengthened us. Speak, sons and daughters of mourning, and tell how the Comforter has graciously consoled you! He has also taught us and led us into all Truth. He has been in us life and light and fire. He has moved upon our minds and He has ever given us in the same hour what we should speak!

What a permeating influence is that of the Holy Spirit! How He makes us mourn for sin! How He constrains us to follow after holiness! How He uplifts and elevates the heart, causing our conversation to be in Heaven while our body is still on earth. “As we have heard, so have we seen.” And we have never heard more of the glorious power of the Holy Spirit than is absolutely true—our own joyful experience leads us to believe that He can work all gracious things in us.

Further, to show you how experience supports the Word of God, we were told many times over that God hears prayer. We were reminded of the Savior’s words, “Ask and it shall be given you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.” Brothers and Sisters, how have you found it? Has prayer been a mere pious amusement? Have you found it to be a reality? Have you not prayed yourselves out of the dark into the sunlight? Prayed yourselves out of the low dungeon of dependency to the mountaintop of communion? Prayed yourselves out of the depths of despair up to the Throne of God? “Out of the belly of Hell, cried I,” said one, “and You heard my voice.” Oh, the omnipotence of prayer! The facts which prove the prevalence of prayer would convince anybody unless he is determined not to be convinced.

There are numbers of persons here whom any lawyer would be glad to put in the witness box on any matter of fact. For their statements would be questioned by nobody, since they are well known for integrity and truth. These persons are prepared to bear solemn witness, as in the Presence of God, that many a time God has as distinctly heard their prayers as if He had thrust His hand through yonder skies. As we have heard about prayer, so have we seen. And none can drive this faith out of us since it is confirmed by what we have seen over and over again in actual experience. So long as reason holds her seat we must, and will, believe in prayer.

Yes, let me remind you, also, that we heard with our ears, that there is a God of Providence who rules and overrules all things. We were glad to sing, “The Lord will provide.” We used joyfully to hear the congregation say—

*“Though cisterns are broken and creatures all fail,
The Word He has spoken will surely prevail.”*

We believe in a gracious Providence and we have also seen it! Time does not suffice this morning for us to narrate personal incidents but assuredly my own experience teems with them. In times of need the Lord has showed Himself quite as able and willing to supply the needs of His servant in these days as He was to feed the nation in the wilderness when He rained manna from Heaven for them daily.

All things have worked together for good to them that love God, even until now. We can look back upon experiences which, at the time, were especially bewildering and perplexing. And of those very experiences we can now say, “Blessed be God for them!” If I were to ask those to stand up who have seen undoubted proofs of Providential care, I believe thousands of you

would rise from your seats and bear witness that the hand of the Lord still works wisely and powerfully for those who trust in Him. We heard that it was so and we have seen that the report was true to the letter. Even as to temporal things, the Lord is gracious. And as to eternal things, He is beyond conception kind.

One thing more I will notice and have done with these verifications which sight gives to hearing. We have often heard that those who believe in God have hope in their deaths. We have been told over and over again, that—

*“Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows.”*

Now, we have not seen this for ourselves, for we have not yet forded the last river. But we have seen it in others. I suppose that the most of you have distinctly seen that the end of the righteous man is peace. I, from my calling, have many scores of times seen saints in their last hours. This is the witness I put on record—the very happiest persons I have ever met with have been departing Believers.

I have not met at weddings, nor at jubilee feasts, nor in moments of singular prosperity such joyful persons as I have seen amid weakness and pain upon their dying beds. The only sons of men for whom I have felt any envy have been dying members of this very Church whose hands I have grasped in their passing away. Almost without any exception I have seen in them holy delight and triumph. And in the exceptions to this exceeding joy I have seen deep peace exhibited in a calm and deliberate readiness to enter into the presence of their God. They have been as ready for the eternal world as they would have been to rise from their beds and return to their daily callings on the Monday morning. “The peace of God, which passes all understanding” has kept their hearts and minds even when the joy of the Lord has not lifted them into transports or ecstasies.

Saintly deathbeds are grand evidences of Christianity. It is something to say in our last hours, “As we have heard, so have we seen.” I can truly say that up to now my own experience and observation have confirmed the teachings of the Word of God. I have not yet met with anything which could shake my confidence in the Divine Revelation. I trust I am neither an absolute fool nor a blind bigot who would shut his eyes to reason—I would not ignore a certified fact, either in science, or history, or in the world of mental life. And yet I know of no fact which can disprove so much as one of the solemn declarations of God—nor even cast a shadow of suspicion upon a doctrine of Holy Scripture. I have heard much but I have seen nothing of the science which disproves the Scriptures—there is no such science—it is an impostor which has stolen the name.

Our knowing is far better than our theorizing. And whatever our theorizing may have done, our actual knowledge has never been on the side of the baptized infidelity of the advanced school. All our experience makes us say, “As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts.” On this point I have spent the strength of my discourse. The remaining two heads shall be treated briefly, although they are of great practical value.

IV. WHEN HEARING TURNS TO SEEING AND IS CONFIRMED BY IT, THEN IT LEADS TO WITNESSING.

The text, you see, is itself a testimony—“As we have heard, so have we seen.” In these days every man that can witness for the Truth of God ought to do so—even if he stammers, he must not be silent. So many are decrying the Truth of God that, if in your heart and conscience you have proved it true, you are bound to give to the Lord the testimony of even a stammerer. I suppose Moses could do no more than that for he was a man slow in speech. But when he would have preferred to be quiet the Lord said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth?” Your mouth is as God made it—use it as best you can, and speak up for His name and cause.

Such testimony as that of our text is sometimes involuntary and is none the less precious on that account. When these good people had seen the Moabites and Ammonites and Edomites marching round Jerusalem in their pride and a few days afterwards had beheld them cold in death, they could not help crying, “As we have heard, so have we seen.” You could not have kept them quiet in the presence of such a marvel. You could not have muzzled them into silence. They were so taken aback, so astounded at what God had done, that they cried aloud, “As we have heard, so have we seen.” So when you have tasted and handled of the good things of God, I am sure you will have to tell others of your glorious discoveries! Your mouth will be filled with laughter and your tongue with singing till those who are round about you will be compelled to say, “The Lord has done great things for them,” and you will answer, “Yes, the Lord has done great things for us; whereof we are glad.”

Jesus said, “Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings have You ordained strength,” when the children were shouting in the Temple. Young converts, if they have newly tasted that the Lord is gracious, must sound out their joys. Who would stop them? If these should hold their peace, the stones would cry out. But your involuntary witnessing must lead up to constant voluntary witnessing for your Lord and His holy cause. O you who are on the Lord’s side, awake, arise, or be condemned as traitors!

Our testimony should be very frequent. Believers would do a thousand times more good if they were not so particularly careful to avoid offending men of the world. If Christ Jesus offends people, they ought to be offended. For he is sure to be a “stumbling stone and rock of offense” to those who stumble at the Word, being disobedient. We have heard of a great warrior who was more at home on the field of battle than amid the ceremonies of courts. His sword nearly tripped him up when walking backwards from the throne and his majesty remarked that his sword seemed very much in the way. “Yes,” said the brave man, “and your majesty’s enemies find it so.”

If we give offense by the Gospel to those who take no active part in holy warfare, let us not be put out of countenance—we are soldiers of the Cross and we do not regret that our religion does trouble certain people, for they ought to be troubled. The man who has never offended anybody by his religion has none worth having—rest assured of that. There are times and places when it must be seen that we are the friends of God and, consequently, cannot be in league with His enemies. Silence when the Truth of God is questioned will prove us to be recreant to Christ and false to our profession. Let us speak when it may bring upon us sneers and slanders. Why, what matters if they sneer? We shall survive that. We do not live on the breath of other men’s nostrils. We ask not leave of mortal man to be true to our convictions. But we will often and far more often than we have done, bear witness that, “As we have heard, so have we seen.”

This we should be sure to do more earnestly if we were more thoughtful. Read the ninth verse—“We have thought of Your loving kindness, O God, in the midst of Your temple.” As a true man thinks in his heart, he will speak with his lips. That which lies in the well of your thought, will come up in the bucket of your speech. Think much of what the Lord has done for you and then you will bear witness for Him. This needs to be done on a far larger scale than at present. Read the rest of the Psalm and see how the Psalmist puts it—“According to Your name, O God, so is Your praise unto the ends of the earth.” Oh, for more of the missionary spirit, more telling out to the ends of the earth of what the Lord has done! What were the stars if they did not shine? What were the sun if it did not make our day? What were the rivers if they did not water the lands? What were the sea itself if it did not act as the pulsing heart of the world?

What are Christians, if they do not shine as lights? Piety bottled up is dead. Religion put into a tin and hermetically sealed is useless. Why not go to Heaven at once if you do no good on earth? No, but would they have you among the angels? He that is of no use in the world is not fit for Heaven. He who does not glorify God on earth would not glorify Him in Heaven. Where shall we put useless people? What shall be done with salt that has lost its savor? I know not where it can be put, for Jesus says it is not fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill. And, if men cast it out, what will God do with it? If even men cannot use dead religionists, what will God do with them? If a vine does not bear fruit it is good for nothing—you cannot boil a pot with it nor even make out of its wood a hook by which to hang the pot over the fire.

Without fruitfulness the vine becomes the most worthless of all trees. And without testimony for the Truth of God, the professing Christian is of no use whatever. Creation’s blot, creation’s blank, is the best description of a dead professor. Think what you will of yourselves, O you savorless Professors—your religion is mere emptiness, a vain pretense. O children of God, stand up and bear your witness—

“Stand up, stand up for Jesus!”

in this day of blasphemy and rebuke.

V. AND LASTLY, HEARING, SEEING, WITNESSING—GOD WILL GIVE YOU A FULLER ASSURANCE THAN YOU HAVE AS YET. Permit me to read the text again—“As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it forever.” That is the conclusion which the saint comes to when he has tried the Truth of God for himself and borne witness to the result of his trial. God will never leave His Church. God will never forfeit His Word. God will never desert His Gospel. He is Jehovah of Hosts and changes not and has all power at His disposal. He is our Lord, our God in Covenant. He cannot desert the work of His own hands, nor leave the people of His love.

Because His honor is bound up in the whole enterprise that Christ undertook, He must go through with it and He must arrive at a glorious conclusion. God will establish it forever. Come, my Brethren, let us cast aside all doubts about what the future is to be. The battle rages, the foe is as furious as he is subtle—while we are weak as water and can do nothing by ourselves. But let us not despair. If the Gospel is God’s Gospel, He will take care of it. If the Church is Christ’s Church, the gates of Hell cannot prevail against her. The battle is not ours but the Lord’s—in His name let us set up our banners and cry with full confidence of victory, “The Lord of Hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge.” Hallelujah, hallelujah. Amen.

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