

An Exhortation By Rev. C.H. Spurgeon

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon warns believers against spiritual idleness and complacency, urging them to remain vigilant and active in their faith to avoid falling into temptation as King David did.

Scripture: 2 Samuel 11:1, 1 Corinthians 10:12, Psalm 121:4, Revelation 3:15-16

Topics: "Spiritual Vigilance", "Temptation", "Christian Duty"

Description

In this powerful exhortation, C.H. Spurgeon uses the example of King David's failure to go to battle to warn believers about the dangers of spiritual idleness and complacency. He emphasizes the importance of vigilance, active service, and watchfulness, especially during seasons of prosperity and ease. Spurgeon challenges both individual Christians and the church to resist lethargy and to fervently engage in the Lord's work to avoid falling into temptation and losing the joy of communion with Christ.

Transcript

AND A SALUTATION BY REV. MERLE D'AUBIGNE, OF GENEVA DELIVERED IN THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, ON SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 18, 1862.

"And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel. And they destroyed the children of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem." 2 Samuel 11:1.

THE last sentence informs us of a circumstance so significant that the Holy Spirit has recorded it twice. In the parallel passage in the Chronicles, you will find a repetition of the statement that, "David tarried at Jerusalem." It had, up to now, been his custom to march at the head of his troops. The king of Israel was the commander-in-chief of the Lord's hosts, and by personal deeds of prowess excited the national spirit. But on this occasion, you perceive, he delegates his power to Joab and seeks inglorious ease.

We are informed that the season had arrived when kings go forth to battle—probably the spring, when horses could be maintained by forage and when, if a long siege should be necessary, the armies might sit down before a city with the prospect of advancing summer and ripening harvests. It was a great occasion. For otherwise, how is it that he sent all Israel with Joab? A great war had been provoked and most important interests were at stake. This makes it the less excusable on the part of the king, that he should, when his presence was especially necessary, absent himself from his proper post.

Nor do we think that State affairs needed his presence in Jerusalem. No rebellions were hatching. The whole land was quiet and all the tribes voluntarily submitted themselves to his sway. It does not seem, from the context, that David was at all occupied with State cares. For you find that he rises from his bed at eventide. Contrary to the hardier custom to which he had accustomed himself in his earlier days, after his noontide meal he laid himself down and slept till the sun was setting. And when he arose, it was not to succor the poor, or to dispense justice, but to take a stroll on the housetop.

And then, being idle, having put his armor off, the arrow smote him—having nothing good to do, the enemy found his awful work. For the Tempter planted straight before his eyes a fair temptation, into which he rushed as a bird to the snare, or as a bullock to the slaughter. Happy would it have been for king David had he been in battle. He would not then have known this temptation. Probably if the temptation had presented itself, he would have been so occupied with martial cares that he would not have fallen a victim.

Idleness was the mother of the mischief and if you trace it to its source, the foul iniquity that has made the name of David a special mark for all the Lord's enemies, you will find it had much to do with his not going out to battle when the country required it—when the season commanded it and when no affairs of State justified his absence.

You will readily perceive the subject of my address. First, to the individual Christian. And secondly, to the Church, as God shall help me. I will utter warnings against that deadly lethargy which is so apt to steal over us, putting us into a position to be readily assailable by temptation, yes, and to be easily overcome by it, too.

I. To you, BROTHER IN CHRIST, I SPEAK PERSONALLY.

1. Let me direct your special attention to the season at which this temptation to idleness came upon David. Brethren, David never refused to go forth to battle while he was harassed by his adversary Saul. So long as he is hunted like a partridge upon the mountains, David's character is spotless and his zeal is unrivalled. In his religion there was an intensity of energy, so long as in his life there was an intensity of adversity.

But now an hour of trial is at hand, Saul is dead and the last of his race sits as a humble pensioner at David's table. The son of Jesse is no more obliged to frequent the tracks of the wild goats, or to hide himself among the glooms of

Engedi. His great adversary has long ago fallen by the arrows of the Philistines upon the mountains of Gilboa. But a stealthier foe is lurking in ambush—woe to you, David, if he overcomes you!

Ah, Christian, it is a dangerous time to you when temptation has ceased to harass you, when Satan has left you in peace, and when you have placed your foot on your adversary's neck. When the storm has hushed itself to sleep, when a dead calm takes the place of the awful hurricane, it is then you have need to look well to it, for then your soul may lose its former strength and watchfulness and you may decline into indifference and Laodicean lukewarmness. While the devil assails you on the right hand and on the left, you will hardly be able to rest upon the couch of carnal security.

The dog of Hell, by barking in your ears, keeps you awake. But when he shall cease his howling, your eyelids will grow heavy, unless Divine Grace prevents it. When you are no more driven to your knees by furious assaults from Hell, you may experience the still more terrible trials of the enchanted ground and

you will have good cause to cry out, "Lord let me not sleep as do others, but let me watch and be sober." Yet again, David at this time had obtained the crown and it was sitting softly and securely upon his head.

Dear Friends, far from depreciating the full assurance of faith, we know that it is our strength and our joy. But there is a temptation connected with it. The Christian is apt to say, "Now I am saved, I have no doubt about it. For the crown of my salvation encircles my head right royally." Believer, be on your watchtower, for the next temptation will be, "Soul, take your ease. The work is done. You have attained. Now fold your arms and sit still. All will end well, why do you need to vex yourself?" Take care of the seasons when you have no doubts." "Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."

"I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by Your favor You have made my mountain to stand strong—you did hide Your face and I was troubled." Bless God for full assurance. But, remember, nothing but careful walking can preserve it. Full assurance is a priceless pearl. But when a man has a precious jewel, and he walks the streets, he ought to be much afraid of pickpockets. When the Christian has full assurance let him be assured that all the devils in Hell will try to rob him of it. Let him be more upon his watchtower than he was before. This is the temptation of assured Believers—to sit down upon the throne and say—"I shall I sit in my glory forever and see no sorrow. I need no more go forth to fight the Lord's battles."

Yet further—it appears that at this time David was at the height of his prosperity. He had attained to about fifty years of age. The year of his jubilee was come and everything went on jubilantly. Wherever he turned his hand, he prospered. "Moab is my wash pot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph." He could boast exceedingly, for God was with him in all his ways. Ah, dear Friends, when a Christian prospers, it is an ill time for him, unless he is on his watchtower.

"In all time of our wealth, good Lord deliver us." When a man is poor, when he is sick, when he is tried in his estate, he has need of Divine Grace. But when he is rich, when his business succeeds and he and his family are in good health and all is well, he has need of Grace upon Grace. It is hard standing in high places. The brain grows dizzy with looking down. It is not easy to carry a full cup with a steady hand. Smooth places are slippery places. Let us beware, lest when we get full, Jeshurun waxes fat and kicks against the Lord.

Summer weather breeds flies. Fair weather in the soul brings out the evils and mischiefs of our nature. Heat hatches the cockatrice eggs and the heat of prosperity often brings out the young serpents of sin. See to it, lest, like David, you refuse to go forth to battle because you are prospering in the world.

To complete the tragedy, David had now the opportunity of indulging himself in all the luxuries of life. He had a palace with all the accompaniments of oriental magnificence. He was no more the humble shepherd eating a crust from his wallet—no more the chieftain of an outlawed clan, depending upon such churlish husbandmen as Nabal for temporary assistance. The fat of the land was his, the vintage of Ephraim, the corn of Judah, and the dainties brought from afar, from Tyre and Sidon—all were his.

He could be clothed in scarlet and fine linen and fare sumptuously every day—then it was that his soul grew lean, while the flesh was pampered. Fat steeds sometimes will not work. Birds too well fed refuse to sing. And so does it happen when the riches of the earth are ours freely to enjoy, and the blessings of Divine Providence are poured out of the cornucopia of Divine munificence, that we refuse to do the Lord's work, and, like David, go not out to battle.

Dear Friends, I know that my sermon is pertinent to some of you. I would that I could portray the individuals so clearly that they could not allot to others the rebuke intended for themselves. It is a well known fact that when some people get rich in gold they grow poor in grace. They rise in the eyes of the world and sink in the esteem of their heavenly Lord. Things which Believers were glad to undertake when they were little in Israel, they cannot look upon when they have grown great among the inhabitants of Zion. Certain folks, when they can keep a carriage, are ashamed to frequent the meeting house. They must go to some more respectable place of worship.

The Truth of God was respectable enough for them when they loved it—but now they love the honor of men more than Christ. They can hoodwink their consciences and unite with worldly Churches, who love architecture, scholarship and pomp, more than the Truth of God and holiness. "God grant," said one of Wesley's followers, "that the Methodists may never grow rich." And I think I might well say, God grant the Baptists never may. O Lord, give them neither poverty nor riches but especially let them not grow too respectable to associate with the poor of the land!

Why, there are some of you who, when you joined this Church, were as earnest as you could be—and where are you now? There are some that were prominent in the prayer meeting—how often do we see them now? Are there not many among us as miserly towards the Lord's cause as if they did not care a rush for it? You will say I am personal. Brethren, I mean to be and want to be. And if you feel that this is your case, instead of being offended at the honest rebuke now offered to you, solemnly thank God that it comes home to you!

Earnestly retrace your steps, be no more sluggish and sleepy but for the sake of Him who loves you with an everlasting love, once more cast your souls into His cause and go forth to fight your Lord's battles. Away with your downy dozing and comfortable slumbers. Lord, arouse us by a thunderbolt from Heaven! When Christians have learned the doctrine but begin to forget the practice, when they have a little smattering of experience and think they are the men and wisdom shall die with them—when they despise the broken-hearted and timid—there is but a step between them and a fall.

Oh, you who are in such a condition, I solemnly warn you. I sound this day an alarm in Zion. Arise! Arise, you slum-berers upon your soft couches, for if you slumber now, you shall one day awake and find yourselves upon the verge of destruction and only the Sovereign Grace of God shall bring you back as David was brought back, and restore you once again to the right way, to journey with broken bones to your tomb, sorrowing because of your sin.

2. Observe, my Brethren, that there are certain tendencies abroad which will co-operate with the dangers of the occasion, and unless the Christian is very watchful, will lead him into David's vice of slothfulness. Brethren, what would the flesh do with some of us but make us, if we would let it have its way, as idle as Solomon's sluggard? I do confess, there is, perhaps, no man living that has a stronger temptation to sheer idleness than myself, although I am no boaster when I say I labor as hard as any man in either hemisphere.

Alas, for this body of sin and death, it is hard for a man to serve the Lord aright while imprisoned in it. Brethren, you will find that not only the mere flesh, but the lusting of the mind will naturally lead you to be cold in Christ's work. Enthusiasm is not the tendency of Englishmen in matters of religion. Only the Spirit of God can give the tongue of fire, and the rushing mighty wind to the assembled disciples. The flesh lusts continually towards inaction. The inertia of matter reaches its height in the corruption of humanity.

We lift up our souls unto God but we fall down again to the earth, for our nature has in it more of the sinking of a millstone than the mounting of an eagle. Well does Watts put it—

"Look, how we grovel here below, fond of these trifling toys— Our souls can neither fly nor go to reach eternal joys." Brethren, your unmortified flesh will make you idle enough, without any other tempter.

Then there is Satan. He will take care to sing your lullaby and rock your cradle if you want to sleep, for he loves not to see God's warriors on the alert. While they are all asleep, he knows the war will not go on very briskly. An army dosed with chloroform would be quite as useless as if they were chained and manacled. While swords sleep in scabbards, no foe needs dread them. Ah, my fellow Soldiers, this is a great artifice of Satan, and one of his craftiest devices to lull us all into a deep sleep.

Besides, you will find the world has a great tendency to make you cold and dead. What do you feel, Brethren, after some few hours of intermeddling with business? Is not this vain world a foe to Divine Grace? Unless you are very spiritu- ally minded, do you not find that the world has a down-dragging tendency? I ask the workers, the merchants, the thinkers—do you not find that secular occupations, unless you are exceedingly careful in consecrating them to God—have a tendency to stain the garments of your priesthood and bring you down from your high standing?

The world is to the Christian an ice house and he a tender plant that has been the gardener's special care. I would give nothing for that Christian who loves to be in worldly company. I think if any man can find himself quite at home with ungodly persons, he must be one of them. And if even with merely moral persons he can find a settled rest, surely there can be nothing of the high and aspiring nature within him that belongs to the true-born heir of Heaven.

But, Brethren, I am sorry to have to add one more thing. Even association with some portions of the Church of God, in its present state, may cool the ardor of piety. Ecclesiastical lethargy is perhaps one of the greatest stumbling blocks to young Believers. I am not staggered by the world's indifference to religion, for I can understand it—but the indifference of the Church to the progress of Jesus' kingdom is an enigma which one cannot solve. Many a young enthusiastic Christian has had the noble spirit of Christ all but crushed out of him by seeing the dullness and deadness of older saints, who seemed to be pillars in the temple of God.

Oh, have we not heard our young Davids saying concerning our foes, "Who is this Philistine? I will go against him and smite off his head"? But a veteran Eliab in the Church has said, "Because of the pride and the naughtiness of your heart is why you have come to see the battle." When he is brought before a Saul-like minister, he says, "Well, young man, you are enthusiastic, you must not attempt to do the Lord's work by simple faith, you must put this helmet on and carry this spear, you must wear this leg armor of brass."

And the poor young man, with almost enthusiasm enough in him to melt the armor off his back, has to go out to sure defeat, wearing untried weapons which prove his ruin. Oh, give us back the glorious days when the Church was a pillar of fire and when every new member was a new coal added to the glowing mass! Give us back even the stakes of Smithfield, if we might have the fiery energy of the first Reformers! Visit us anew with persecution, if we can but renew the diligent prosecution of the ends and aims of the Church of Christ! Let our foes grow angry if we may but grow zealous.

3. To pass on rapidly to the third point. What happened through David's tarrying at home? Some men think it a small thing to be doing nothing for Christ. It is a great thing and will be a damnable thing, unless God gives you repentance. What happened, I say, to David? Why, now that he was tarrying at home and giving himself up to sloth, he was losing his usefulness and honor by no more fighting the Lord's battles. No more triumphs were being written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah. And even Joab had to send for him to come in at the end of the fray to take the city, lest it should be called by Joab's name.

Is it a little thing for a follower of Christ to be losing the immortal honor of serving the Lord? What will not men do to win fame? And shall we, when it lies at our doors, turn aside to our beds of ease and cast our glory to the grooms? Let us be up and doing—for it is no light thing for a faithful servant of Christ to be losing the honor of serving his Master.

David lost his communion and joy. A man cannot be idle and yet have Christ's sweet company. Christ is a quick walker and when His people would talk with Him they must travel quickly, too, or else they will soon lose His company. Christ, my Master, goes about doing good and if you would walk with Him you must go about upon the same mission. The Almighty lover of the souls of men is not likely to keep company with idle persons. I find in Scripture that most of the great appearances that were made to eminent saints were made when they were busy.

Moses kept his father's flock when he saw the burning bush. Joshua is going round about the city of Jericho when he meets the Angel of the Lord. Jacob is in prayer and the Angel of God appears to him. Gideon is threshing and Elisha is plowing, when the Lord calls them. Matthew is in the receipt of customs when he is bid to follow Jesus—James and John are fishing. The manna which the children of Israel kept till morning bred worms and stank—idle grace would soon become active corruption.

Moreover, sloth hardens the conscience—laziness is one of the irons with which the heart is seared. Abimelech hired vain and light persons to serve his turn, and the Prince of Darkness does the same. Oh, Friends, it is a sad thing to rust the edge off from one's mind and to lose keenness of moral perception! But sloth will surely do this for us. David felt the emasculating power of sloth. He was losing the force of his conscience and was ready for anything. The worst is near at hand.

He walks upon the housetop and sees the object which excites his lust. He sends for the woman, the deed is done. It leads to another crime, he tempts Uriah. It leads to murder—Uriah is put to death. And he takes Uriah's wife. Ah, David! Ah, David! How are the mighty fallen! How is the Prince of Israel fallen and become like the lewd fellows who riot in the evening! From this day forth his sunshine turns to clouds, his peace gives place to suffering, and he goes to his grave an afflicted and troubled man, who, though he could say, "God has made with me an Everlasting Covenant," yet had to precede it with that very significant sentence, "Although my house is not so with God."

Dear Friends, is there anyone here among the Lord's people who would crucify the Lord afresh and put Him to an open shame? Is there anyone among you that would wish to sell your Master, as Judas did, or turn aside from Christ with Demas? It is easy to do. Oh, you say, you could not do it. Now, perhaps you could not. Get slothful. Do not fight the Lord's battles—and it will become not only easy for you to sin, but you will surely become its victim. Oh, how Satan delights to make God's people fall into sin! For then he does, as it were, thrust another nail into the bloody hand of Christ.

Then he does stain the fair white linen of Christ's own garment. Then he vaunts himself that he has gotten a victory over the Lord Jesus and has led one of the Master's favorites captive at his will! Oh, if we would

not thus make Hell ring with Satanic laughter and make the men of God weep because the cedars of Lebanon are cut down, let us watch unto prayer and be diligent in our Master's business, "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

My dear Friends, we do not exhort you to serve Christ, to be saved by it. David was saved. I only speak to you who are saved, and I beg and beseech you to take notice of David's fall—and of the sloth that was at the beginning of it—as a warning to yourselves. Some temptations come to the industrious but all temptations attack the idle. Notice the invention used by country people to catch wasps. They will put a little sweet liquor into a long and narrow-necked phial. The do-nothing wasp comes by, smells the sweet liquor, plunges in and is drowned.

But the bee comes by, and if she does stop for a moment to smell, yet she enters not, because she has honey of her own to make. She is too busy in the work of the commonwealth to indulge herself with the tempting sweets. Master Green-ham, a Puritan Divine, was once waited upon by a woman who was greatly tempted. Upon making enquiries into her way of life, he found she had little to do, and Greenham said, "That is the secret of your being so much tempted. Sister, if you are very busy, Satan may tempt you, but he will not easily prevail, and he will soon give up the attempt."

Idle Christians are not tempted of the devil so much as they do tempt the devil to tempt them. Idleness sets the door of the heart ajar and asks Satan to come in. But if we are occupied from morning till night, if Satan shall get in, he must break through the door. Under Sovereign Grace and next to faith, there is no better shield against temptation than being, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." And, dear Friends, let me remind those of you who are doing little for Christ, that once you were not so cold as this.

There was a time with David when the sound of the clarion of war would have stirred his blood and he would have been eager for the fray. There was a day when the very sight of Israel marshaled in goodly phalanx would have made David bold as a lion. Oh, it is an ill thing to see the lion changed like this! God's hero stays at home with the women! There was a time when you would have gone over hedge and ditch to hear a sermon and never minded standing in the aisles. But now the sermons are tedious to some of you, although you have soft cushions to sit upon.

Then if there was a cottage meeting, or a street preaching, you were there. "Ah," you say, "that was wildfire." Blessed wildfire! The Lord give you the wildfire back again. For even if it is wildfire, better wildfire than no fire at all—better be called a fanatic than deserve to be called a drone in Christ's hive. Those of you who do very little for your Mas-ter—and there are a few such in this Church, who grudge to give of their substance—let me say to you, Are you not ashamed to see how the Lord's other servants serve Him? When Uriah said to David, "The ark, and Israel, and Judah abide in tents. And my lord Joab and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go into my house, to eat and to drink? As you live and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing." When he said that, methinks the king must have felt very uneasy in his luxurious sloth.

What do you say to this, some of you? You, who were once the chief of sinners, are now saved by Divine Grace. You have had high privileges, great tastes of love, near fellowship with Him—you are His own elect, anointed, taken up from the dunghill and made to sit among princes! And yet you are doing next to nothing for Christ. Oh, dear Friends, I would not so much bid you to think over these things, as beseech the Holy Spirit to lay these matters to your hearts—that you may not sleep any longer—but being of the

day, may do the day's work, till the day shall end!

II. I shall occupy but a few minutes more, while I endeavor to speak of the text as it refers to THE WHOLE CHURCH. For I think it has a loud voice to the whole of us as a community. Strangers and members of other Churches must kindly forget that they are here. I am not about to speak to them but I am about to speak to you—the two thousand members of this Church under my care, to whom I am bound most of all to speak personally and faithfully.

My dear Friends, it does seem to me that to us as a Church the temptation to sloth is very likely to come, for we are very much in the same condition as David. Our enemies do not harass us so much as they once did. When the Parliament is over, we shall have certain newspapers abusing us again, for when they have nothing else to say, they fill up with abusing us. But there was a time when we had no friends. We look back some eight years ago, when the Church of Christ was very shy of us—we were innovators, preaching in those wicked music halls.

It was such a very awful thing to preach the Gospel where people would come to hear it! It was going contrary to the customs of the Christian Church to carry the Gospel to poor sinners. And good people, holy people, and godly people, thought we were sinners above all sinners on earth. And if an accident did occur, if the tower of Siloam fell, how plainly were we told that we deserved the catastrophe. Then there were sneers everywhere, caricatures, jeers, jibes of all sorts—and you all had to suffer, each your share, with your leader.

To a great extent that is over. The clergy of the Church of England do now what it was once infamous for us to do. Now the theater hears the voice of Christ. Now the cathedrals echo with the holy hymn—blessed be God for all this! We enjoy a degree of peacefulness and have not now all the world against us, as once we had. Now we shall be tempted to fold our arms and say, Let us subside into the easy respectability of other congregations and let it be well with us.

During all the time God has been pleased to favor us with profound peace in the Church. We have been disturbed by no word of ill-doctrine, by no uprising of heretics in our midst, or any separations or divisions. This is a blessed thing—but still Satan may make it a dangerous matter. We may begin to think that there is no need for us to watch, that we shall always be as we are. And deacons and elders, and pastor and Church members, may all cease their vigilance—and then the root of bitterness may spring up in the neglected corner till it gets too deeply rooted for us to tear it up again.

We have accomplished, as a Church, and by God's Divine Grace, the great work which we set for ourselves—the building of this House of Prayer. And now we come to our place in our loved House of Prayer and feel the Master's presence with us. But without a grand object before our eyes imperatively demanding self-sacrifice from each one of us, as this object did—without some enterprise which we can all lay hold of and feel that we could give our last shilling to carry it out successfully—we are apt to grow rusty.

We will be tempted to lean upon our weapons instead of using them, and to withdraw from the Lord's host instead of rushing on to battle with the shout of men who mean to win the victory. Ah, give us back again all the noise and the confusion and the strife! Let us have once more the coldness and the harshness and evil speaking of the entire Church of God, if we may but have our early enthusiasm and earnestness for Christ. Our work of educating men for the ministry may supply the object for our zeal—may the Lord give zeal for the object!

Dear Friends, let me say solemnly, there are many tendencies to make this Church sleep. We come frequently into contact with professed Believers who will throw cold water upon every effort—who think doing anything for Christ a work of supererogation. And there is a tendency in us to go with them and to say, "Let it be so. Let us be quiet." It is almost necessary for the Church that, at least once in a hundred years, there should arise in it some new body of enthusiasts. For the old Churches, though noble at the start, like all human things, flag before long.

Why, Methodism, though still most powerful, has nothing like the fire it had in Wesley's and Whitfield's time. It is now no more like a great volcano sending up torrents of holy fire to Heaven in prayer and sending down streams of all-consuming lava into the plains of sin. It has grown respectable and learned and fine. So with each of the Churches. Do they not all degenerate? No matter whether it is England, America, France, Switzerland—wherever it may be, there is a down-drawing tendency constantly at work. And unless God the Holy Spirit comes in with irresistible might, we shall as a Church succumb to general lethargy and yield ourselves to apathy.

What shall we do, as a Church, then? Let us take heed to our footsteps, everyone of us, and be doubly careful—let us meet together in greater numbers for prayer. Let each man feel more and more his individual responsibility to Christ. Let us weigh the awful necessities of this huge city. Let us put out every energy and use every agency that can possibly be employed for the regeneration of this dark, dark land.

If we grow idle. If the Church of Christ universally shall grow idle, we cannot expect that our enemies will be idle, too. Once the Light said to the Darkness, "I am growing weary with shooting my arrows every morning at you, O Darkness! I am weary with pursuing you around the globe continually. I will retire, if you will." But the Darkness said, "No, it is of necessity that if you yield your dominion I shall take it. There can be no truce between you and me."

Friends, I might address the members of this Church as it is said an old Scotch Commander once addressed his soldiers when he saw the enemy coming. This was his brief, terse speech—"Lads," said he, "there they are, and if you dinna kill them they will kill you." Look, members of the Church. If you do not put down lethargy and sloth, if you strive not against Popery, infidelity and Sin, they will put you down. There is no other alternative. To conquer or to die. To live and to be glorious. Or to fall ignobly.

Look! Jehovah lifts His banner before our eyes today! Rally! Rally! Rally, you soldiers of the Cross! The trumpet sounds exceedingly loud and long today. And the Hell drum on the other side sounds, too. Who dares to hesitate? Let him be accursed. "Curse you, Meroz, curse you, Meroz," says the Lord, "curse you bitterly the inhabitants thereof, if they come not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. He that is not with Me is against Me. He that gathers not with Me scatters abroad."

Away with you, you indifferent ones! Know you not you are either on Christ's side or else you are His adversaries? On! The charge comes—forward, heroes of Heaven! What shall become of those who are midway between the two armies? Over you, over you—troops shall trample on your bodies! You shall be the first to be cut in pieces—O you indifferent ones—who are neither this nor that! And then shall come the shock and then the charge. And as in that conflict you shall have no portion, so in that great triumph which shall surely follow, you shall have no share.

I will give way to my friend, Mr. D'Aubigne, who will address you for a few minutes, when I have simply reminded those who are not in Christ's army, that with them there is something to come before service, "Except you repent and are converted, you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven." The door to

that kingdom is Christ—trust Him and you are saved. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved and your house."

My dear Friend, Dr. D'Aubigne, is here this morning, having been called by the Bishop of London, according to the order of our Beloved Queen, to preach in the Royal Chapel of St. James. In a kind note with which he favored me last week, he expressed a desire publicly to show his hearty fellowship with his Brethren of the Free Churches of England and I am delighted to welcome him in the Tabernacle this morning—in the name of this Church, and I may venture to add, in the name of all the Free Churches of England. May the Historian of the Reformation continue to be honored of the Lord his God!

DR. MERLE D'AUBIGNE—I do not speak your tongue, my dear Friends—I speak it very badly but I will do what I can to make myself understood. When I heard your dear pastor reading to us the 16th chapter of the Romans, I remembered those words which we find very often in the Epistles of Paul—"Love to the saints," and "Faith in the Lord." In the 16th chapter we find a beautiful exhibition of the love to the saints, the children of God.

We see it was written from the Church of Corinth, in Greece, to the Church of Rome. Observe how many Christians that Church of Corinth and the Apostle knew at Rome! We have a long catalog of names—Priscilla, Aquila, Andronicus and others. I must confess, my dear Friends, to my shame, that in this great assembly I know only two or three names. I know the name of our dear Friend, Mr. Spurgeon. I know the name but not the person, of Mr. North, upon my left, and I know the name of the friend who has received me in your great city, Mr. Kinnaird, "Gaius, my host," as the Apostle says.

But in this great assembly of six thousand men and women and I hope Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I do not know another name. Well, my dear Friends, I would ask you, do you know the names of many Christians in Geneva? You do not know perhaps three, perhaps two, perhaps one. Now, that is to me a demonstration that fraternity, or brotherly love, is not so intense in our time as it was in the time of the Apostles. In the first century, for a man to give his name to the Lord was to expose himself to martyrdom.

And Christians in that time formed only one household in the whole world, in Europe, Asia and Africa. Let us remember that, and may we, by the Holy Spirit, say that we who have been baptized with the blood and the Spirit of the Lord, have only one Father, one Savior, one Spirit, one faith—and we are only one house, the house of the living God, the house of Christ, one house of the Holy Spirit in the whole world. Not only in Europe, Asia, and Africa, but in America, in Australia, one house, one family. Oh, my dear Brethren, let us grow in the love to the Brethren!

Then there is another thing, faith—faith in the Lord Jesus. There can be no love to the saved and the redeemed, if there is no true living faith and hope in the Savior and the Redeemer. Well, I suppose all of you in this great meeting would say, "We believe in the Lord, we have faith in Him." Yes, but that faith must be sincere, must be living, must come from the heart. I will tell you one word from Rome. Probably all these friends sent some words to the Apostle, but I will tell you one word that was said once in Rome, not at the time of Paul but at the time of our blessed Reformation.

There was in the latter part of the sixteenth century, a man in Italy, who was a child of God, taught by the Spirit. His name was Aonio Paleario. He had written a book called, "The Benefit of Christ's Death." That book was destroyed in Italy, and for three centuries it was not possible to find a copy. But two or three years ago, an Italian copy was found, I believe, in one of your libraries at Cambridge or Oxford and it has been printed again. It is perhaps singular, but this man did not, as he ought to have done, leave the

Romish Church. But his whole heart was given to Christ.

He was brought before the judge in Rome by order of the pope. The judge said, "We will put to him three questions. We will ask him what is the first cause of salvation, then what is the second cause of salvation, then what is the third cause of salvation." They thought that in putting these three questions, he would at last be made to say something which should be to the glory of the Church of Rome. They asked him, "What is the first cause of salvation?" And he answered, "Christ." They then asked him, "What is the second cause of salvation?" And he answered, "CHRIST."

And they asked him the third time, "What is the third cause of salvation?" and he answered, "CHRIST." They thought he would have said, first, Christ. Secondly, the Word. Thirdly, the Church. But no, he said, "Christ." The first cause, Christ. The second, Christ. The third, Christ. And for that confession which he made in Rome, he was condemned to be put to death as a martyr. My dear Friends, let us think and speak like that man. Let everyone of us say, "The first cause of my salvation is Christ. The second is Christ. The third is Christ. Christ and His atoning blood, Christ and His powerful regenerating Spirit, Christ and His eternal electing Grace, Christ is my only salvation, I know of nothing else."

Dear Friends, we find in the Epistle to the Romans these words—"The whole Church salutes you." I have no official charge but I may in a Christian and fraternal spirit say to you, the Geneva Church, the Church in Geneva salutes you. And I would say, the whole Continental Church salutes you, for we know you, and we love you and the dear minister God has given you. Now we ask from you love towards us. We do what we can in that dark Continent to bring forward the light of Jesus Christ.

In Geneva we have an Evangelical Society which has that work before it and in other places we are also laboring. We ask for our work an interest in your prayers, for the work is hard among the Roman Catholics and the infidels of the Continent. But as our Brother, in the beginning of the service, reminded you—from the little town of Geneva light came, by the Grace of the Spirit, to many nations and especially to England and Scotland, by the ministry of John Calvin, our Reformer.

I may mention to you that upon the tri-centenary anniversary of the death of Calvin, which will take place in two years, on the 27th of May, 1864, we desire to erect in Geneva a monument to the blessed Reformation and to the Reformer who has been the instrument of God in promoting the true doctrine, not only in Geneva, but in a great many countries. And I ask also your interest in that work and in that spot which has been blessed since the 16th century, for Switzerland, for France, for the Netherlands, for Germany, for England, for Scotland, and is now blessed for the United States and for the ends of the earth. I beg of you, dear Friends, your deep interest and your earnest prayers for us. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all! Amen.

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