

Good Cause for Great Zeal

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon passionately exhorts believers to recognize their divine provision from the King of kings, to avoid dishonoring Him, and to faithfully inform and act in His service with zeal.

Scripture: Ezra 4:14, Psalm 23:1-3, Isaiah 40:31, Psalm 84:11, 2 Samuel 9:7, Joshua 24:15, Psalm 37:1-2

Topics: "Divine Provision", "Christian Zeal"

Description

In 'Good Cause for Great Zeal,' C.H. Spurgeon powerfully reminds believers of their privileged position as recipients of God's abundant provision. He challenges them to live lives that honor the King of kings, avoiding any actions that bring Him shame. Through vivid illustrations and heartfelt exhortation, Spurgeon calls Christians to respond with fervent zeal and faithful service, grounded in gratitude for the immense cost of their spiritual maintenance.

Transcript

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

"Now because we have maintenance from the king's palace, and it was not meet for us to see the King dishonored, therefore have we sent and informed the king." Ezra 4:14.

THE facts of the case were these. Under Zerubbabel, the Jews, who had returned from Babylon, commenced to rebuild Jerusalem. There were in the land certain half-and-half persons, somewhat like the Samaritans, who were neither Jews nor Gentiles and they asked, at first, that they might join in the building of Jerusalem. This was refused, the Jews determining to keep themselves pure from all association with the heathen or semi-heathen. So indignant were these people at this that they wrote Artaxerxes, the king, to tell him that he was very little aware of what was going on in Judea, for the Jews had always been, from time immemorial, a troublesome people, and now they were beginning to build their city again. And as soon as it was built they would, in all probability, revolt against King Artaxerxes and give him much trouble, as their fathers had done to kings before him.

Now, in writing that letter they showed themselves wise in their generation, for they told the king in the words of our text that they were moved by gratitude to write to him. It was false—but hypocrites often use the best of words and employ the best of sense to cover their deceit. They said that they, themselves, were sustained from the king's palace and, therefore, they could not bear that the king should be dishonored—for this reason they had written to tell his majesty that the Jews were building this wall and

they trusted that, for his own honor's sake, and for his subjects' sake, he would stop them.

Now let me take these words right out of those evil mouths and put them into my own and into yours. They will suit us well if we turn them to the great King of kings. We may truly say, "Now because we have maintenance from the King's palace, and it was not meet for us to see the King dishonored, therefore have we sent and informed the King." The text will enable me to speak on three points. First, here is a fact acknowledged—"we have maintenance from the King's palace." Here is, secondly, a duty recognized—"it was not meet for us to see the King dishonored." And, thirdly, here is a course of action prescribed—"therefore have we sent and informed the King."

I. Now, beloved fellow Believers, the words of our text may be used by us while we acknowledge a very gracious fact—WE HAVE MAINTENANCE FROM THE KING'S PALACE. How true this is of all God's people, in all respects, you will be abundantly ready to acknowledge. Both the upper and the nether springs from which we drink are fed by the eternal bounty of the great King. Up to now we have been supplied with food and raiment. Sometimes we may have been reduced to a pinch, no doubt, and the question has arisen, through the infirmity of our nature and fermented with the irritability of our unbelief, "What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and with what shall we be clothed?"

But we have dwelt in the land and verily we have been fed and I have no doubt that to many of you it has been peculiarly gratifying to receive the loaf, as it were, immediately from your Father's hands. You have known what poverty has meant and then there has been to you a peculiar sweetness in the daily bread which, in answer to prayer, has been sent to you. Although we do not drink of the water from the Rock, or find the manna lying at our tent door every morning, yet the Providence of God produces for us quite the same results. We have been fed and satisfied and, at any rate, many of us, in looking back, can say, "my cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life."

Therefore we have to now, even in temporal things, been made to feel that we have been maintained from the King's palace. But it has been in spiritual things, Beloved, that our continual experience of the King's bounty has been most notable. We have a new life and therefore we have new needs and new hunger and a new thirst—and God has maintained us out of His own palace as to this new life of ours. O Beloved, we have had great hunger at times, after heavenly things,

and He has "satisfied our mouth with good things," and our youth has been "renewed like the eagle's." We have had huge needs—bottomless depths of need we have had. And yet, great God, the treasures of Your Grace have been everlasting mines, deep as our helpless miseries were, and boundless as our sins.

Why, sometimes we have been drawn aside from our steadfastness and we have needed mighty Grace to set us on our feet again—and to make us once more, "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might"—and we have had it, have we not? We have sought it and we have found it! Our shoes have been iron and brass and as our days so has our strength been. Up till this moment we have found that underneath us are the everlasting arms. In looking back upon all the way wherein the Lord our God has led us, we can sing of the beginning of it, we can sing of the middle of it and we believe we shall sing of the end of it—for all through we have been maintained out of the King's palace. This is matter of fact both as to things temporal and things spiritual.

Beloved, it is a great mercy that you and I have been maintained out of the King's palace as Believers because, where else could we have been maintained? Where else, I ask you? As to spiritual things, to whom could we go but unto Him who has been so good to us? What empty wells ministers are if we look

to them! If we look to their Master, "the rain also fills the pools," and we find that there is supply in the preached Word for our consolation. But have you not often known what it is to find that even God's servant under whom you have been fed does not meet your case? He is meeting the case of hundreds of others, perhaps, but somehow he misses you—there is no food for your soul!

Yes, and the books you once read with so much comfort appear to have lost their flavor, their aroma and their sweet savor, and, I may add, even the Word of God itself, though it is unchanged, appears to be changed sometimes to you. But God, the God of Israel, your God, oh, how graciously has He still supplied you! "All my springs are in You," my God. And had they been elsewhere they long ago would have failed. Who else could supply our needs but Jehovah? As the king of Israel said to the woman in the famine of Samaria, "If the Lord does not help you, how can I help you out of the barn-floor or out of the winepress?"

There is no help for the child of God if his heavenly Father should shut the granary door. If out of the King's palace there came no portions of meat in due season, we might lay down and die of despair! Who could hold us up but God? Who could guide us but God? Who could keep us from falling into Perdition but God? Who could, from hour to hour, supply our desperate needs but God? Is it not, then, right well for us—abundantly well—that we have had our maintenance from the King's palace?

While we turn over this very sweet thought, we may remember that our maintenance from the King's palace has cost His Majesty dearly. He has not fed us for nothing. We do not know what was the expenditure in gold of King Solomon, every day, to supply all his court with wine and oil, with meal and fine flower, with sheep and fat oxen, harts and roebucks, venison and fatted fowl. But we do know that Solomon's cost was nothing at all compared with the vast expense at which we are sustained by the munificence of God! It cost Him His own dear Son at the very first. We should not have begun to live if He had spared His Son and kept Him back from us!

But the choicest treasure in Heaven, the Koh-i-noor of God's regalia, He was pleased to spend for our sakes that we might live! And ever since then we have been fed upon Jesus Christ Himself. No other food would be adequate to our necessities. His flesh is meat, indeed! His blood is drink, indeed! This is the most royal dainty conceivable, for a soul to feed upon the Son of God! And yet we have fed upon Him these many years. Let us bless and magnify our bounteous God, whose infinite favor has thus supplied our needs.

And while He spares nothing for us, but gives everything to us, let us not keep back anything from Him. With such a generous God, generosity seems to be so natural that it ought to be spontaneous. The highest—the most ardent—form of service would seem to be but a trifling recompense for the immense expense which the Lord has been at in supporting us these many years. May I ask you to think over the kind of portion and maintenance you have had from the King's palace? Such thoughts will stir your gratitude. Beloved, we have had a bountiful supply! God has never stinted us. As the sun throws out his wealth of heat and light and does not measure it by the consumption of men, but throws it broadcast over all worlds—even so does God flood the world with the sunlight of His goodness and His saints are made to receive it in abundance.

If you have ever been stinted it is not by God—you have stinted yourself. Our receptive faculty may be small, but His giving disposition is abundant. Floods of mercy, oceans of love has He poured out for us. O, what a bountiful

maintenance have we had! Enough and to spare. Our imagination could not have conceived greater wealth than is ours in the Covenant of Grace—for all things are yours—the gifts of God! God being ours, the Infinite is ours! The Omniscient is ours! The Omnipotent is ours! O, what a bountiful portion we have! And we have had an unfailing portion. As there has been much of it, so it has always come to us in due season. Times of need have come, but the needed supply has come, too.

If there is any Believer here that has reason to testify against his God, let him do it. Have you ever rested on Him and found Him fail you? Did you ever trust Him in vain? Are His promises false? Has He left you in the deep waters? When you passed through the fires did the flames kindle upon you? Have you found your God a wilderness? Has He been barrenness in the day of your extremity? No, Beloved, our God has been bountiful and He has continued His bounty— not good by fits and starts, but ever gracious to us. I am desirous, if this were the proper place, to stop and tell what I know of this. But then, surely, many older saints here might interrupt me and say, "Let me speak of it."

I remember once trying to speak of the great goodness of God in the pulpit, when my venerable grandfather, who is now in Heaven, was sitting behind me. He pulled my coattail and bid me stop, for he thought he could talk upon that better than I could! And, indeed, he could, because of his deep experience of the faithfulness of the living God! It is a great delight and benefit to younger men to hear their gray-headed sires stand up and say what they have known and what they have proved of God's eternal goodness! But I think we can say, whether young or old, if we have known His name a few years—

"When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,

Has gathered thick and thundered loud,

He near my soul has always stood,

His loving kindness, oh, how good!" He has been a faithful Friend to us—we have been right well maintained from the King's table.

While the supply has thus been bountiful and continuous, it has ennobled us. For consider how great a thing it is, to be supported from a king's palace—but it is the greatest of all privileges to be living upon the bounty of the King of kings—and "Such honor have all the saints." Even the feeble Mephibosheths that are lame in their feet shall eat at the King's table! The Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd, makes all His little ones to be like the ewe lamb of the parable which was fed out of the man's own cup and did lie in his bosom! Even those that are weakest and meanest have this high honor—to be supplied by Royalty, itself, with all that they need!

Lift up your heads, you that hang them down. You poor desponding saints that think yourselves less than the least of all, you are, every one of you, King's sons! You are all gentlemen commoners upon the King of kings! Your diet is better than that of the angels! God will sooner let Gabriel starve than you—

"Never did angels above, know

Redeeming Grace and dying love" Yet that is your daily bread, your morning meal and evening feast! Be glad! Have you little of temporal good? Well, but your Father sends it to you. Do you mourn that you have so little spiritual good? Bless Him that you have any, for it is God that sends it to you! You would have had none if it were not for His Infinite Grace! Therefore praise Him for what you have and confidently ask Him for more.

And there is reason for good cheer in this, dear Friends, that we have such a soul-satisfying portion in God. A soul that gets what God gives him has quite as much as he can hold and as much as he can need. He has got a portion that might well excite envy! If the world did but know how happy and blessed Christians are, they would count them up in the royal family and they would envy them beyond all others. There is nothing in the worldling's estate to envy. The more he has, the worse it will be for him to leave it. His fine gardens and lawns and parks will make it hard to die. The greater his earthly honor the worse will be his eternal dishonor. It must be to him a horrible thing to have had such a high flight and then to have all the greater fall because of it.

"Fret not yourself because of evildoers, neither be you envious because of the prosperity of the wicked." What, after all, becomes of him that prospers in his way? "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree; yet he passed away, and lo, he was not: yes, I sought him, but he could not be found." The place that has known the ungodly and the lands they have called by their own name, soon become oblivious of their memory. Their record has perished quickly and they, themselves, have gone back "to the vile dust from where they sprang." But you have eternity

to be your heritage! You have Heaven to be your portion! The few drops of gall that are in your cup today shall soon be rinsed out and it shall be full of the nectar of celestial thrones!

Be content, now, with your brown bread and hard fare a little while, for you shall eat the delicacies of angels! Yes, and by faith you do even now feast upon the fat things full of marrow and the wines on the lees well-refined, which your God sends to you from the King's palace! Let us rejoice, dear Brothers and Sisters, if we are, any of us, downcast tonight, for our maintenance is from the King's palace and what can we need more?—

"Father, I wait Your daily will.

You shall divide my portion still.

Grant me on earth what seems You best,

Till death and Heaven reveal the rest." Thus we acknowledge the fact with lively interest and devout gratitude—"We have maintenance from the King's palace."

II. Now, secondly, here is A DUTY RECOGNIZED—"It was not meet for us to see the King dishonored." No doubt you will see the force of the argument without need of much explanation. It is good reasoning. If they were fed from the king's palace it was not right that they should stand by and see the king dishonored. The reasoning comes home to us. If we are so favored—we, who are Believers—with such a choice portion, it is not right for us to sit down and see our God dishonored.

And here I will notice some things which dishonor God and which we are bound not to put up with. By every sense of propriety we are bound not to see God dishonored by ourselves. It is well to begin at home. Are you doing anything that dishonors your God, Believer—anything at home, anything in your daily avocation, anything in the way of conducting your business? Is there anything in your conversation, anything in your actions, anything in your reading, anything in your writing, anything in your speaking that dishonors God? Seeing that you are fed from the King's table, I beseech you, let it not be said that the King got damage from you! If there is a traitor, let him be found somewhere else, but not among the Lord's own chosen!

You are bought with blood—will you trample on that blood? The Crucified One died for you—will you crucify Him afresh and put Him to an open shame? You will soon be where Jesus is. Would you blush to see His face and to stand in His Presence? What? And shall it ever be said that you bring dishonor upon Jesus? God has given you a portion above the angels and will you fill the devils' mouths with laughter and cause them to have a reason to glory against God? May that be far from you, my Brother! The Lord grant us Grace to feel that if we are maintained from the King's palace it is not right for us to cause the King dishonor!

Perhaps that dishonor may come from those who dwell under our roof and live in our own house. I charge you that are parents and masters, to see to this! Do not tolerate anything in those over whom you have control that would bring dishonor to God. Remember Eli—he did not restrain his sons and they behaved shamefully. They were the minister's sons and because they were not restrained, God overthrew Eli's house and did such terrible things that the ears of him that hears might well tingle! Joshua said, "And for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." We cannot impart to our children new hearts, but we can see to it that there shall be nothing within our gates that is derogatory to the religion of Jesus Christ. I charge you, see to it!

But you cannot control your children, you say. Then the Lord have mercy upon you! It is your business to do it and you must do it, or else you will soon find they will control you! And no one knows what judgment will come from God upon those who suffer sin in children and servants to go unrebuked. No, if we are maintained from the King's palace, let us not see the King dishonored. Let the same holy jealousy animate us among those with whom we have influence—as, for instance, among those who wish to be united with us in Church fellowship. It is the duty of every Church to try, as far as it can, to guard the honor and dignity of King Jesus against unworthy persons who would intrude themselves into the congregation of the saints, of those who are called, chosen, and faithful.

We are deceived, and always shall be, for the Church never was infallible. But still let no negligence of our practice supplement the infirmity of our judgment. Because ungodly men will creep in unawares, we are not, therefore, to cooperate at their entrance. To allow persons to come to the Communion Table who do not even profess to be born-again is a clear act of treason against the King of kings! To receive into our membership persons of unhallowed life, unchaste, unrighteous—of licentious life and lax doctrine, such as know not the Truth of God as it is in Jesus—would be

to betray the trust with which Christ has invested us! That must not be and every Church member is bound to do his best to guard the Church against that which would render her unclean in the sight of God! If you are maintained from the King's table, it is not meet that you should see the King dishonored. We are under sacred obligations to maintain the Statutes and Testimonies of the Lord. And, oh, how the King is dishonored by the mutilation and misrepresentation of His Word! Therefore, dear Brothers and Sisters, we are always bound to bear our protest against false doctrine.

I am sometimes accused of saying sharp things. The charge does not come home to my conscience with very great power. If anybody said I spoke smooth things I think it would oppress me a great deal more. As long as there are evils in this world, God's ministers are bound to protest against them! That man who, as he goes through the world, can say, "Hail, fellow, well met!" with everybody and extol the modern Diana of charity—universal charity, false charity, charity towards the false—that man, when he comes to stand before his Maker, will find it hard to give his account. In these days, when nobody believes anything, when everybody has subscribed to the belief that black is white and white is black, and colors are nothing at all

but imaginary distinctions, it is time that somebody should believe something! And a little sharpness of speech might not only be excused, but commended, if we had but men who spoke what they did know and testified honestly to the Truth of God which they had received.

Everyone here present who is maintained from the King's palace, is bound to fight against every doctrine which insults the King. When I see a man pretending to be a priest and assuming that he has power to forgive sins and to dispense pardons and indulgences, I do my best to unmask the deceiver and to speak against his imposition, lest I might be accounted accessory to his crime, chargeable with his guilt and be made partaker of his condemnation! Therefore, let every Englishman, let every Protestant and, above all, let every Christian denounce priestcraft of every sort and in every Church, whether among Romanists, Anglicans, or Dissenters. Down with it!

There is only one Priest and He is in Heaven!! And none of us have any power to offer any sacrifice for sin, or any power to absolve our fellow men. Whether you accuse us of being censorious or not, the profanity appalls us, the duplicity that is taken ill by it amazes us and the sincerity with which we love the Gospel inflames us to make our protest heard! If we do not speak out about this crying perversion of the Truth of God, we ought to be ashamed of ourselves!

Then there are some in these days who deny the divinity of Christ and there can be no terms of peace between us and them. I remember a remark of a Unitarian doctor, which I thought eminently correct. He said of a certain Calvinist, who was accused of speaking sharply against Unitarians, "Quite right and so he ought, because if the Calvinist is right the Unitarian is not a Christian at all. But if the Unitarian is right the Calvinist is an idolater, because he worships one who is a man and is not the Son of God."

If what we hold is true, it is not possible that the man who denies the Deity of Christ can be a Christian, nor can there be for him a hope of salvation. He deliberately refuses the only way of escape from the wrath to come. I can understand a man getting to Heaven as a Roman Catholic, notwithstanding all his errors, because he believes in the Divinity of Christ and relies on the expiatory Sacrifice of His death, with whatever superstitions his creed may be overlaid. But I cannot understand, nor do I believe, that any man will ever enter those pearly gates who, in doubting or discrediting the Deity of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, renounces the sheet-anchor of our most holy faith and dares to face his maker without a Counselor, without an Advocate, without a plea for mercy!

It is time we said so, and spoke out plainly. This is no theme for trifling. Courtesies are thrown away upon antagonists whose cause is treason! Nor are we the men who should practice reserve, for if we are maintained from the King's palace, we are cowards if we do not stand up for our King! Then there have been attacks made in modern times upon the doctrine of Substitution. If the doctrine of Substitution is not true, I am a lost man—therefore, tooth and nail, will I fight for it! No other hope beneath the skies have I, except in the expiatory Substitution of the Lord Jesus Christ. If He did not suffer in my place, the Just for the unjust, then flames of Hell must be my portion. Therefore I can never give up that Truth of God, for it is giving up my own salvation. But it has been revealed, and I cling to it with the most implicit credit.

Do you tell me that "modern thought" assails it? How, and with what weapons, I ask? Is it with argument, with proof, or with any counter-suggestion? Oh, no, it is merely met with vague questionings, idle quibbles and impertinent sneers—a style of answer that affects much, though it affirms nothing! I pray you, Brothers and Sisters, wherever you are, defend this fundamental doctrine of our most holy faith—that the Lord Jesus Christ has laid down His life to make

atonement for the sins of His people. Or should we be confronted with any other form of false doctrine, or should we be haunted with any kind of skepticism—(skepticism! An anomalous thing, which is without form and void)—are we to stand with mealy mouths and say, "Yes, Brethren, you are of that opinion, and I am of the other"?

No, but opinion is light as a bubble when judgment is pronounced by the supreme court from which there is no appeal. What do you think? Is there no fact? Is there no Truth? Is the Word of God, "yes," and, "no"? Has it come to this, that it is to be shuffled like a pack of cards, or shaped like a nose of wax as every man may please? Oh, no! By the ever-living God there is Truth somewhere and that Truth we will find out if we can! And, having found it, we will hold it fast. Let us, in the day of battle, use our standard—and if our arm is torn off, we hope the standard will not fall but that others will be found to hold it up as there were in the brave days of yore—when our fathers burned at the stake for these things, or went to the galleys, or perished amidst the Alps sooner than the Truth of God's own Word should be without witnesses among the sons of man!

Hear none of these things in your hearts with tolerance, but hold fast to the things which you have been taught and hold them fast in faith and love to Christ Jesus! Those who have their maintenance from the King's palace ought not to allow the Lord to be dishonored by a neglect of His ordinances. Brothers and Sisters, I remind you, who are Believers, the Lord Jesus has given you only two symbolic ordinances. Take care that you use them well. Follow Him in what He did, when He said, "Thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness." Be baptized in His name! Follow Him to the Communion Table. He said, "This do you, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." Be obedient, I pray you, to His gracious Word, and suffer not the King's precept to be trifled with!

Again, if we are, indeed, His courtiers, let us take care that He is not dishonored by a general decline of His Church. When churches go to sleep when the work of God is done deceitfully—for to do it formally is to do it deceitfully—when there is no life in the Prayer Meeting—when there are no holy enterprises afloat for the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom, then the world says, "That is your Church! What a sleepy set these saints are!" O, let not the King be thus dishonored! Brothers and Sisters, bestir yourselves! May this Church never settle upon its lees, or fall into slumber as it grows older. May God grant it may grow more earnest! May there be ever here regiments of stalwart men who shall fight for King Jesus and not be ashamed—and may the Church be full of life and vigor till Christ Himself shall come.

When we sleep with our fathers, may there be others found better than we are to maintain the cause and crown rights of King Jesus. And oh, dear Friends, how can we tolerate it that so many should dishonor Christ by rejecting His Gospel? We cannot prevent their doing so, but we can weep for them! We can pray for them! We can plead for them! We can make it uncomfortable for them to reflect that Believers are loving them and yet they are not loving the Savior! If you are fed from the King's palace it is not right that you see, with dry eyes, the King dishonored!

If you hear a man swearing in the streets, mourn and lament it! If you see the Sunday desecrated, grieve over it! If you behold drunkenness, do not laugh at it! If you hear lascivious songs, do not smile at them! Everything that is evil should be painful to a Believer and it ought to be an incessant sorrow to us that souls are perishing!—

"Did Christ over sinners weep, And shall our cheeks be dry?"

Privileged as you are, Beloved, you ought to love your Master so that the slightest word against Him should provoke your spirit to holy jealousy.

III. Our last point is this—A COURSE OF ACTION PURSUED—"Therefore," says the text, "have we sent and

informed the king." How shall we do that? Doubtless we act as it well becomes us, when we go and tell the Lord all about it? "Informed the king!"—but does He not know? Are not all things open to Him from whom no secrets are hid? Ah, yes, but when Hezekiah received Rabshakeh's blasphemous letter He took it and spread it before the Lord! It is a holy exercise of the saints to report to the Lord the sins and the sorrows they observe among the people—the griefs they feel and the grievances they complain of—to spread before Him the blasphemies they have heard and appeal to Him concerning the menaces with which they are threatened.

Yes, you may report to the Lord the false doctrine that is preached and the foul sophistry that is printed in these days. Such plain statements might become mighty pleas with God that He should arise, assert His cause and do His own work. Lord, You know that this day the Deity of your Son has been insulted—the Inspiration of Your Word has been denied. You know the power of Your Holy Spirit has been ridiculed, Your eternal love has been denied, Your infinitely

blessed Sovereignty has been scoffed at! O Father, You know the atoning blood has been made a subject of contempt! Arise, O God, plead Your own cause! Behold, all over the world men are mad upon their idols! They give themselves to falsehoods and to lies.

O God of Truth, arise and avenge Yourself! Have You not said, "Ah, I will ease Me of My adversaries"? Do this, then. Give glory to whom glory is due and let not the name of Jesus be forever cast out as evil by ungodly men! This ought to be the constant pleading of the Church—"Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him?" O, it ought to be! Day and night cry about all this! The sin of this London, oh, if we felt it, it would weigh us down—the drunkenness of London, the lust of London, the oppression of London, the wickedness of every shape that reeks, as from a dunghill, from this great city—O God, will You always bear it? Will You not rise and change all this? Will You not give power to Your Gospel that a gracious reformation may be made?

Tell the Lord about it! Inform the King! After those people had informed the king, they took care to plead with him. As I have already told you, they apprized him that the city of Jerusalem was a very troublesome city and therefore it ought not to be rebuilt. Plead with God! Plead with God! Plead with God! That praying is poor shift that is not made up of pleading. "Bring forth your reasons," says the Lord. Bring forth your strong arguments. O, what prayers were those of John Knox, when he seemed to say to God, "Save Scotland for this reason—for that reason—for another reason—for yet one more reason"—the number of his motives still multiplying with the fervor of his heart! So did he labor with God as though he pleaded for his life and would not let Him go until he had gained his suit for Scotland!

Why, Scotland's knowledge of the Truth of God is due, doubtless, beyond everything else to John Knox's prayers, which even now are ringing in Heaven! He, "being dead, yet speaks." O, for men of that caliber and that mind in this country, thus to plead for London! O, what a gem would London be in Christ's crown! If Christ had but London, surely out of this great city, which is the very heart of the world in many respects, there would go streaming forth rivers of health and life and blessing to the utmost ends of the earth! Spread London's case, then, before God, and plead with the Most High!

And when you have done it, do not go away and make your prayers into a lie by contrary actions, or by refraining from any action at all! He that prays hard must work hard, for no man prays sincerely who is not prepared to use every effort to obtain that which he asks of God. We must put our shoulder to the wheel while we pray for strength to put it in motion. All success depends upon God—yet He uses instruments, and He will not use instruments that are useless and unfitted to the work! "And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves. But our sufficiency is of God, who has made us able ministers"—therefore let us be up and be stirring, for if we are maintained from the King's palace, it is not meet that we see the King dishonored, but it is due to Him that we should seek His Glory.

Now, I would that every one of you knew what it was to be maintained from the King's palace, but alas, there are some here that have never eaten the King's bread and will be banished from the King's Presence if they die as they are. But, O remember, the King is always ready to receive His rebel subjects and He is a God ready to pardon. "Kiss the Son lest He be angry, and you perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little." "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." That is the way of reconciliation—to put your trust in Him. And if you do put your trust in His dear Son, you are reconciled to Him! You shall be maintained out of His palace, and then, I trust, you will live to His Glory. Amen and amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Psalm 119:49-64.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ch-spurgeon/good-cause-for-great-zeal/>

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