

The Unbroken Line Of True Nobles

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon teaches that God's providential plan ensures a continuous, unbroken succession of faithful servants who uphold and advance His kingdom through successive generations.

Scripture: Psalm 45:16, Matthew 19:29, Joshua 1, 1 Kings 11:43, 1 Samuel 3, Hebrews 13:8

Topics: "Divine Providence", "Christian Legacy"

Description

In 'The Unbroken Line Of True Nobles,' C.H. Spurgeon explores the divine promise of spiritual succession, assuring believers that God continually raises up new generations to carry forward His kingdom. He reflects on biblical history and the Church's ongoing renewal, encouraging Christians to embrace change with faith and hope. This devotional sermon offers comfort to those mourning loss and challenges all to invest in the future of the Church.

Transcript

BY C. H. SPURGEON,

"Instead of your fathers shall be your children, whom you may make princes in all the earth." Psalm 45:16.

WERE you ever perplexed by being drawn with almost equal force in two directions? I have been so. There is a bond which reaches from the cemetery which holds me very fast and, therefore, I desired again, this morning, to have made use of the solemn visitation which so suddenly removed one of our friends from us. But this is the beginning of the week set apart for prayer for the young, and I have felt duty bound to take a part in the celebration and to assist to stir up Sunday school teachers and the members of the Church in general to pray for the blessing of God upon the rising generation.

Now these mourning friends expect a consoling word from me—and these children demand that I plead for them, also! I realized the scene in my study. What was I to do? Between two subjects I might arrive at none and that was not a desirable conclusion. I watched, looked and prayed, and at last I resolved to yield myself to both influences, and I have as nearly as possible done so by selecting this text—"Instead of your fathers shall be your children, whom you may make princes in all the earth."

The text begins with, "Instead." It is a sad word. I do not enjoy the sound of it. "In stead"—well, then, we must expect to lose some if others are to come in their stead. Alas, these funerals will be repeated, new graves must be dug! New friends will arise, but we dread the exchange. Would it not be more pleasant to

keep the old workers? Would it not be safer to have the same comrades in the day of battle? What a grand Old Guard the veterans would make! "Instead"! It is a prophecy that some must go that others may come! That some must decay, that others may flourish! That some must die that others may succeed them!

Our trembling faith hardly likes the change here hinted at, for we are apt to think that those who are to stand "instead" will be very slow in coming. Where are we to find men to fill the vacant places? By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small? Indeed, there are some saints so eminently blessed of God that we ask ourselves the question, "Who can stand in their stead?" Moses! May Moses live forever, for who but he can rule and guide so great a multitude and, with mingled meekness and authority, conduct so great an army through the wilderness? Who but he can have such power with God as to stand between Israel and the Divine anger?

We hear a whisper of Joshua as his successor, but good as Joshua may be, we can hardly endure to see the leadership change hands. And Elijah, too, that bold iron Prophet, that man of fire and thunder. "I, only," said he, "am left." Shall we lose him? From where shall there come another? No, if it pleases the Lord, we would rather keep Elijah. We do not like that word, "instead," even though we hear that there is an Elisha to follow Elijah. Too frequent is the fear that the one who comes instead will be a poor substitute and succeed only in name! After high hills come deep valleys, the second crop seldom equals the first and so great Grace and ability seldom continue long either in a family or in an office.

We know that Solomon died and was succeeded by Rehoboam—a wise man by a fool! We know, also, that Eli, good man and true priest of God, had most ungodly Phineas to succeed him. We would, therefore, keep Eli, if possible, and see Solomon forever on the throne. But it cannot be so and, therefore, it is of no use sitting down idly to fret over the future and lament the past! All our sorrow over changes caused by the mortality of our race will not alter it, for God has ordained that one must depart and another come in his place.

But, listen, I think that the word instead, if we listen to it with another ear, will sound out a note of gladness! If one falls, there is another to fill up the gap in our ranks. Comrades, is not this good news? If one laborer is taken from the vineyard, there is still a man in reserve to supply his place—does not this cheer you? We are encouraged by the belief that when the Lord supplants one set of servants by others He does not, after all, diminish the display of His love and Grace

and power! No, rather He shows His independence of any one company of men and His power to use whom He pleases! After all, He puts the same spirit upon the newcomers and the power remains the same though the weapon wielded differs.

Sometimes the change is manifestly for good. Eli was followed by Samuel, a great improvement upon Eli, after all. We remember, too, that Moses, albeit there was never a man born of woman greater than he, was yet followed by a hero more fitted for the new phase of Israel's history than Moses would have been. I can hardly conceive of Moses, sword in hand, slaying Canaanites at his advanced age! That was fitter work for Joshua and though, in some respects, Joshua was an inferior man to Moses, yet he was more suitable for his times and more adapted for the peculiar work which the armies of the living God had to do.

Courage, my Brothers and Sisters, our sons may be superior to ourselves! There is room for them and let us hope they will be. Our sons, at any rate, may be fitter for the work which they will have to do than we should be if our lives could be extended into another age. I doubt not we may say without personal vanity that we have been better men for this age than our grandchildren would have been had their lives been

protracted into this present time—and so shall our children and grandchildren go beyond us, if the Lord enable them—in fulfilling the growing demands of the ripening ages. God knows best and when He puts one man instead of another, I have no doubt that His infinite wisdom perceives that there is abundant cause for the change.

For life to display fresh developments instead of the old is the law both of nature and of Grace—whether we are glad or sad, it must be so. Therefore let us accept the Divine arrangement and act accordingly. To help us in this matter, let us consider the promise before us—"Instead of your fathers shall be your children." This may be viewed in a light which will reveal its gracious recompense. Secondly, we shall regard its eminent fulfillment. Thirdly, we shall look at its happy encouragement, for it has a very bright side. And fourthly, we shall remember its practical requirements. Into this last we shall throw our strength, in the hope that, by the Divine blessing, holy effort for the coming generation may be awakened.

I. First, in the promise of our text let us observe ITS GRACIOUS RECOMPENSE. I read you the Psalm just now. Now, in this sweet song you noticed that the bride is commanded to forget her own people and her father's house. Very naturally this would be painful to her and, therefore, the rest of the Psalm is occupied with cheering her by a sight of the recompenses which she may expect. Instead of your fathers, whom you, O bride of Christ are to forget and to forsake, shall be your children, equally dear to you, who shall occupy that place in your heart which has been left empty by your forgetting your father's house.

Do you not see that her husband's heart is so full of love to her that while he takes her right away from old connections and makes it a condition of his desiring her beauty, that all these shall be forgotten? Yet he assures her that new associations shall be formed which shall yield more than equal solace to her. "Instead of your fathers shall be your children." The practical lesson is this—many Christians, when they are converted to God, are members of irreligious families—and from the moment of their conversion they cease to have any real heart-fellowship with their relatives, who in many cases treat them unkindly and give them the cold shoulder or worse.

Dwelling with them after the flesh, they have to come out from among them after the Spirit and be separate, and no longer touch the unclean thing. However kindly disposed they may be, and Grace will make them more so, and induce in them a double affection to their kin, yet they feel that the possession of Grace by them and the non-possession of it by their friends, sets a great gulf between them. Let them not lament nor sigh, though their foes should be the men of their own household, for there are abundant recompenses available. You are to be introduced, my Friend, into another household and you are there to form other acquaintances and other intimate connections, for to you shall be fulfilled the promise of the Savior, "No man has left father or mother or children that shall not receive in this life a hundredfold, and in the world to come life everlasting."

Do not look back to those evil companionships and ensnaring loves! Forget the fleshpots of Egypt and the associations of Goshen. Let them go, they will do you no good! And now throw yourself into the work of Christ. In the converts whom you shall lead to Jesus, in the desponding saints whom you shall cheer, in the disciples whom you shall instruct and in the brotherhood of which you shall become a member—you will find ample room for all the affections of your soul, till you shall be able to say of the Church of God—

"My soul shall pray for Zion still, While life or breath remains, There my best friends, my kindred dwell, There God my Savior reigns."

The law of recompense works, also, in another quarter and comes in to compensate for the separations caused by death. As the fathers die, one after another, those of like years feel that they are left almost alone. To them, then, shall it be true, "instead of your fathers shall be your children." Do not give way to idle regrets and say, "All who joined the Church with me are gone, all those who were the companions of my manhood are now taken away. I am left alone and the cause is weakened." No, my Brothers and Sisters, keep your hearts young and make yourselves indispensable to the young people around you! The old soldier must let his heart go out towards the recruits and he must make friends of the young warriors. Instead of lamenting that you are lonely, as I have known some do, and looking down upon everything that is of the present time as though it could not possibly be so good as in your own days, throw yourself into the present, project yourself into the future and love the children for the fathers' sake!

I know when I was much younger than I am now, I used to think the men in office were such marvelous saints, but then I did not mix with them, I only looked up to them from a distance. At Prayer Meetings and communions I thought there never were such excellent people in the world as those pillars of the Church. Somebody said to me the other day that he did not meet with such good old men now as we used to know in our youth, and I told him that the men were quite as good, but we were in among them and, therefore, had less of the superstitious awe of our youth. And I added that I was, myself, surprised to find them as good as they now are since our view of them is so much nearer and so much more daring.

No Prophet has honor in his own country, nor among men of his own age! Distance lends enchantment in many cases. We have as good men among us now as ever lived, but we know more about them than of those who have departed, and we criticize them more severely. We are, none of us, able to fully compare the past generations with this present one, because we were not in those generations as we are in this. Men at a great distance may appear to be absolutely perfect, but when we get close to them, spots are manifest and our judgement changes. Never let us fall into that silly state of mind in which we say, "the dear good men are all gone. The faithful are all dead." There are dear good men still alive and there are more coming!

Do not let us fear that the Almighty will run short of servants! Let us not dream that He with whom is the residue of the Spirit will allow His cause to droop for lack of qualified ministers, elders, deacons, or other workers. On the contrary, let us say, "Bless the Lord, whose mercy endures forever!" We have learned that instead of the fathers shall be the children. And we will take as much delight in the young saints who are growing up as in former years we took in those mature, judicious, well-instructed saints whom the Lord, our heavenly Father, has taken Home. Let this suffice to show that the text promises a recompense!

II. Secondly, let us view our text historically in ITS EMINENT FULFILMENT. Brothers and Sisters, as long as God has had a people in the world there have been changes. In God's garden as in ours, plants of this year have been succeeded by those of the next. "As the days of a tree are the days of My people, says the Lord." As soon as the leaf is formed in the spring, if you watch it, there is a new leaf beneath it for the next spring. This year's leaf opened gradually, grew, came to perfection and then it began to decay. And there is now on the branch a new leaf-bud which is pushing it off and that is what our sons are doing with us. We must drop off from the tree of mortal existence and it is right we should— and we need not complain—for God has provided some better things for us.

It has been the law in the world and the law in the Church that one set of laborers should follow the other—and they have done so without fail. It is with the Church as with the sea—each wave dies, but there is another wave behind it. Sometimes the wave appears to retreat rather than advance, but frequently the

next wave rolls up gloriously. So must it always be and we must not despair that the waves die, for the sea does not die and the tide is still advancing. You may, perhaps, have seen an olive tree in growth. I have studied it carefully, for it has the charm of Gethsemane about it. It looks like an embodiment of sorrow and fruitfulness.

An olive is twisted like a thousand snakes. It seems as if in an agony, yet it has a cheerfulness about it, too, for when the tree grows old the young shoots spring up from its roots, keeping it always young. I have no doubt it is to this that the Psalmist refers when he says, "Your children round your table like olive plants." The shoots spring up around the old olive and so it lives again! And when these die, fresh shoots appear and the tree still brings forth fruit in old age! The

Church of God never dies, for when one, after another, we finish our course, others spring out of the ever-living root and so the blessed succession of Grace is kept up in the world.

Now, look back a moment. That was a grand age when Patriarchs walked through the earth, when Abraham and Isaac and Jacob towered above the sons of men. They died and the Church was in captivity in Egypt, downtrodden and afflicted, yet were there among them those who sighed and cried unto the Lord and, therefore, He looked down upon the tribes with pitying eyes. Then there came great rulers like Moses and Joshua to deliver the chosen Seed—and when these departed the Judges were raised up! Time would fail us to tell of Gideon, Barak and Samson, who each one, in his turn, delivered Israel.

When the judges passed away, God exalted the man after his own heart to lead His people and the kings ruled in righteousness. When these turned aside, the light of Israel was not quenched, for the Prophets bore witness and when the lamp of Prophecy burned dim, there were confessors who, all through the period between the Old and the New Testament, still remained faithful to the commands of God. Then blazed forth the light of our Lord Jesus and His Apostles! And before the last Apostle had been taken away, the martyr flames lit up the world. When persecution had ceased and heathenism had conquered Christianity by debasing her doctrines, the Reformers shone out with their gracious brilliance and these have been succeeded constantly by Evangelists, one after the other, who have moved the people and maintained, through the Divine Spirit, the Gospel testimony to this day.

Brethren, I believe that the history of the Church in modern times is like that of olden times. The Apostles were our Patriarchs, the Reformers were our Moses and Joshua and the great preachers since have been as judges! And now we look for the King, Himself, even He that shall sit upon the throne of David and shall reign forever and ever! View history as you will, there is a continuity in it. In the darkest times there has shone forth some bright, particular star, yes, and in secret places, in holy hearts and gracious families there has remained more of the Divine life and light than the pages of historians have recorded.

There has always been a remnant according to the election of Grace. When the Church moaned and said, "God has forsaken me, my God has forgotten me. The fathers, where are they?" God had not forsaken her—He had kept for Himself His thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal. And there has arisen a leader just in the nick of time to seize the banner and to rally the wavering host, for as God lives and the Spirit still abides in the Church, and Jesus is with us always, even to the world's end, the succession of Grace shall never cease! Glory be to the name of the Most High!

III. Thirdly, having seen, concerning our text, its eminent fulfillment, let us for a second or so view it in ITS HAPPY ENCOURAGEMENT. Brothers and Sisters, God's promise is the ultimate hope of the Christian and of the Church at large, and here we have it—"Instead of your fathers shall be your children." Lean on

the Divine shall, for it is as sure as the Everlasting Covenant. As you have to leave the Ark of the Lord behind you and you can no longer carry it upon your shoulder, God will provide successors. "Jehovahjireh, the Lord Will Provide."

You have believed that word in reference to your family and your own livelihood—believe it in reference to God's family and His cause. God has provided, already, for Himself a Lamb for His Passover—you may depend upon it He will provide what is a vastly smaller thing—a line of men who shall ever keep that Passover Lamb before the eyes of His people! We are sure, O Lord, that You will do as You have said—

"Fathers to sons shall teach Your name, And children learn Your ways; Ages to come Your truth proclaim, And nations sound Your praise." Do not give way to distrust about the present or the future, for Jesus lives and walks among the golden candlesticks, trimming all the lamps and shining through them! The stars are in His right hand, by Him kindled and by Him renewed with immortal flame. You have the Spirit of God still dwelling in the Church to call whomever Jesus wills and to anoint them with holy oil that they may go forth in the Master's name.

My Brethren, to have doubt about this would be unpardonable because we are coming towards an epoch where all the promises declare a victory. Do they not all travail with a glorious day of Grace? We are bound to exert ourselves for the spread of the Gospel, for we know that Christ must have the pre-eminence everywhere. "As truly as I live, says the Lord, all the earth shall be filled with the Glory of the Lord." We have received the Word from God's mouth, "He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet." We are not taking a leap into the dark! We are not "shooting Niag-

ara"—we are marching into light—the day has broken, the shadows are fleeing, the brightness is increasing, the noontide is at hand and, perhaps, before this century ends, we may have passed into the supreme brilliance of that millennial period in which Christ Jesus shall reign gloriously among His ancients!

If He bids us wait and wait we may, we would cheerfully march on, for our faces are to the sunrise and every hour brings Glory nearer. At any rate, in such an hour as we think not, behold, the Bridegroom comes! And when He comes our victory has come with Him. Let us not yield to despondency. If the line of battle wavers, or our ranks are broken by the enemy, remember the reserves, the grand reserves which our Captain is holding back! And remember the King, Himself, is coming who never fights but to conquer! He, whose Presence means triumph, is on His way! Mark the signal and "Hold the fort, for He is coming," whose coming shall close your warfare and commence your triumph!

IV. I must now come to view the text, as to ITS PRACTICAL REQUIREMENTS. "Instead of your fathers shall be your children." Well then, if we stand instead of our fathers, what manner of persons ought we to be? I will not call to mind your immediate sires, though it were no dishonor to many of you if I did so. I will not recount the family ancestry with which God has blessed us. No imperial blood is in our veins nor blue blood of nobility. Descended from the King of kings, each saint possesses a nobler pedigree than earthly princes! To be the child of godly parents is one of the greatest honors in the world.

But I ask you to look back to your spiritual ancestry, your fathers after the spirit, your predecessors in the faith of the Lord Jesus. Oh, my Brothers and Sisters, what manner of people ought we to be, who as Christian men and women have succeeded the heritage of martyrs? Who have taken up a cause pleaded by Apostolic lips? Who have followed upon men of whom the world was not worthy? Our ancestors were made what they were by the Grace of God and the Church of God may well glorify God in them! Their sufferings and heroic fortitude, their labors and their dauntless courage have left us under solemn

obligations. Shall we be coward sons of heroic sires? Shall we be sluggards and slovenly in a work which they carried out so well?

They built with gold, silver and precious stones—shall we degrade their work by heaping thereon wood, hay and stubble? I charge you, Brethren, take good heed unto your ways by the remembrance of where you came. Thus would I speak to all Believers, for the Church is one and indivisible. Each tribe of the one Seed has its own history and I leave my Brethren of various denominations to speak to their own. I will now address myself specially to those who are known as Baptists. As for us, the baptized followers of Christ, our ancestry as a body of Christian men is not to be despised. Albeit that the name of Anabaptist has been made the football of reproach because it was wrongfully associated with fanatical opinions, we may rest assured that the more history is understood, the more apparent will it be that those who were the most humiliated were thus treated because they were before their times. They bore the brunt of battle because they led the way!

God forbid that I should induce you to glory in them and so to wear borrowed laurels! Of all pride, I think that to be the most idle which hides its own nakedness beneath the tattered banners of ancestry. I do but dwell for a moment upon our past history to excite you to yet more earnest deeds! Prove yourselves to be these men's sons by doing their deeds! Otherwise you are bastards and not sons. In every effort for civil and religious liberty, our fathers were at the front! In the utterance of those Divine Truths of God which have made tyrants and priests quake for fear, they have been among the boldest! Our fathers, for holding to Baptism as the Lord ordained it, suffered at the hands of men who knew no mercy. Their beliefs were misrepresented and themselves regarded as monsters rather than men.

In this country they were, in the matter of time, both first and last at the stake! On this very spot where you now sit, long before there were any Lutherans or Calvinists, we read that, "three Anabaptists were burnt at the Butts at Newing-ton." Our sires were Protestants before the Protestants! They were part of a long line of men who stood firm when the mass of the Church turned this way and that! They were, in fact, the most bold and thoroughgoing of all the adherents of the Apostolic and Scriptural Church and, therefore, they were persecuted by prelates and abhorred by priests. When I hear Ritualists talking of their ancient Church, I blush to think that Englishmen should claim kinship with the Roman Antichrist, whose yoke our fathers tore from off their necks!

The pedigree of every Anglican priest must, of necessity, have flowed through the Dead Sea of Popery. Our limpid streamlet runs not through that slough of filthiness, but comes down pure from earliest ages! Our doctrines and ordinances remain as they were delivered unto us by our Lord! Neither have we desired to add the traditions of men to them.

"Hold fast, therefore, your confidence which has great recompense of reward." Do not give up your principles, my Brothers and Sisters, for the Church and the world will need them. Nobody can fight the battle against Sacramentarian-ism like the man who puts the ordinances in their Scriptural position as belonging to Believers and to Believers only. As long as Baptism is given to those who are unregenerate, the figment of baptismal regeneration will find a foothold!

We must unflinchingly keep to our testimony that religion is a personal thing and that only those who have faith in Jesus can partake in the privileges of His House. Birthright membership and vows of sponsors must, alike, be the subjects of our protest. By your sires who were drowned by the hundreds for refusing homage to a superstitious rite, men who neither feared Luther nor the Pope, and were hated of all men

and even by Reformers because they occupied a standpoint still bolder, clearer, and more advanced than all others, I beseech you, Brothers and Sisters, hold fast your Christian liberty and never cease to testify to all the Truth which God has taught you!

May our Brothers and Sisters who differ from us, come to us in this matter, for we cannot go to them—we are spellbound by the plain teaching of Scripture and dare not move so much as a hair's breadth. May the Lord yet give to all His saints to know the "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." If we are instead of our fathers, let us endeavor to continue their testimony undiminished in force and untarnished in clearness. Our Brethren of other denominations must bear their testimony to what truth they know and we are the last to deny them this liberty or to despise their cooperation. But, after all, our own duty is that which we must look to—that we may be found faithful "in that day."

The next practical point is this—if others are to come instead of us, what are we doing for them? Looking at ourselves as occupying the present time, how far are we good links between the present and the future? Others are to come instead of us—are we taking care as much as lies in us that those who come in the place of us shall be fit men to maintain the interests of God's Truth? Oh, Brethren, let us, as a Church, love the young! Let us labor, by God's Grace, to gather in a multitude of young converts! Let us pray God to bless our schools of every sort and the teaching among the rising youth, as far as that teaching is according to His mind and will! A Church which does not believe in the conversion of children, a Church that, in fact, scarcely believes in the conversion of anybody, is likely to die out! But a Church that lives for converts, even as parents live for their children, will be the joyous mother of a numerous progeny and become stronger and stronger.

I would to God we were all stirred up, not merely the teachers in the school, but all of us, to seek the conversion of the young and to aim by every means in our power to set God's Truth before them and lead them in His way. The Church ought to look to the tuition, the training and the culture of her children. All those who are brought to Christ in youth should be peculiarly watched over by us. It is said that Alexander gathered together his valiant army principally through training children from their very birth to the pursuits of war. He took little children as soon as they could run alone and placed them in a camp where their playthings were swords and their amusements were found among armor, spears and shields.

These born soldiers grew up knowing of nothing and caring for nothing but for Alexander, Macedon and fighting. Thus would we, by God's Grace, train our sons to live alone for Christ, His Truth and the souls whom He has redeemed. O that our sons might be men of war from their youth for Jesus! We need workers who have been in the vineyard from the first hour of the day—these are the backbone of successful Christian husbandry. There is necessity for far more attention to training and Christian edification than has, until this time, been usual—and the sooner this is felt, the better. We need men whose earliest feats of mental strength are shown in the gymnasium of the Church, young athletes trained for war, ready for exploits and waiting to take their place in the Lord's battles at their fathers' side! We shall have a grand era when the Church learns to train her youth in holy enterprises and to employ them early for the Lord.

We know, too, that if we are to have good successors, our young friends must acquire a noble carriage from their childhood. That is a great word—"whom you may make princes in all the earth," and we must not be content to come short of it. What? Make our young converts princes? Yes, so says the text—and it is to be done, by God's Grace, if they are imbued with heavenly principles by the Holy Spirit—and if we set before them the example of our princely Savior and if each one of us shall try to make his own life right

royal in dignity of purpose and aim.

The nobility of the text is of a rare sort—"princes in all the earth." Why, a man may be a prince in his own country, and have no power out of it—but a man of high Christian character is a prince in all the earth and we would have all our children such! That ancient schoolmaster, Jacob Treboniue, whenever he went into his school, was accustomed to take off

his hat to his boys. When asked why he did so, he replied, "Because, Sir, I do not know what learned doctors and great men I may be teaching." He was quite right, for Martin Luther was one of the boys in his school and I would have taken off my hat to Martin Luther if I had been his schoolmaster! I, perhaps, would have chastised him as well, but taken off my hat, at any rate, out of respect to the man concealed in such a boy!

Who knows but among those whom we teach for Jesus, right royal spirits may be concealed? And it is ours to try, by the Grace of God, to train those choice spirits that they may be yet more noble. I have read a story which shows how poor, ragged children may be nobles. A minister was once called in to examine a school. The master said to him, "Question the boys all through the Catechism, for they know it thoroughly." "But," he said, "do you think they understand it?" The schoolmaster smiled and bowed his head in assent. "Try them, Sir." The minister asked one of the shoeless little boys to repeat the commandment, "Honor your father and your mother," and he did so promptly. "Do you understand it, my lad?" said the minister.

"Yes, Sir, I think I do." "What does it mean?" "Well, Sir, last week I went over the mountain with some gentlemen to show them the way and I had no shoes. And the stones were so sharp that they made my feet bleed and the gentlemen gave me some money to buy a pair of shoes. When I went home I recollected that mother needed shoes, too, and so I gave her the money to buy a pair for herself." That lad was surely one of the princes in all the earth! And if children, by the Grace of God, are taught to do the same and if we, ourselves, shall each one cultivate a noble spirit of disinterested love, we shall give proof that the Holy Spirit has made us princes in all the earth!

Oh, Brothers and Sisters, when I think of what the Church of God can do for her young converts when God helps her, I am amazed and full of delight! She is a mother whose sons are, each one, born in king's palaces and each one joint heirs with the Prince Emanuel! All her children shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be their peace. To make a man a prince you ought to give him not only a noble carriage but a rich endowment. He will be wretched unless he has some means with which to exercise the liberality which dwells in his heart. If I were addressing the young man who has lately been converted, I would say, "My Son, take this Bible in your hands. It is the best treasure and you will be a prince if you will make it your own by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Here is an endowment for you which shall make you richer than Croesus of old!

"Give to your children the Gospel, the glorious Doctrines of Grace. Give to them the Precepts of Christ and the blessed inspiring example which He has left behind Him. Give them a hallowed example in your own life and you have done infinitely more for them than if you had left them an annual income to be measured by millions. You shall make them princes in all the earth if, by God's Grace, you lead them to Jesus and He endows them with the Spirit of all Grace, so that they are rich in faith and zealous for good works."

I was so glad last Monday that I do not know whenever I have been as glad—there were two young sisters and two young brothers of this Church, two of them connected with this Sunday school, who were going abroad as missionaries! The Prince of Wales set out on his journey on Monday and so did two princes and

two princesses out of this Church! I felt more confidence in sending my princes out, I am bound to say, than the Royal mother did in sending her son! Perhaps in the last day of account India will have more to say of our princes than even of our future king. It is a grand thing for a Church to have missionaries bred and born in her! We aspire to it and already the blessing is coming! Young men, young women in the Tabernacle, we are looking for more of you to be our princes in all the earth!

We have some in India, we have some in Spain, we have some in other lands who are preaching Christ, but we want to have princes in all the earth! I shall never be completely satisfied till, looking over a map, I shall recollect, "Brother So-and-So is there. Sister So-and-So is there turning the heathen to Christ and conquering the land for Jesus!" To the utmost bounds of the habitable globe may a princely offspring go forth from all the Churches of the living God! And may we take our full share of the blessed privilege!

The last word is this—looking to my young friends who may be present this morning, as I have already looked back to our sires and down upon ourselves, I say to them, are you prepared to take your fathers' places? It was with great joy that, at the cemetery last Friday, when I buried my beloved Brother, Henry Olney, I saw so many of our young men present. The hope of the Church—honorable men, too—I believe worthy to succeed their sires. I thanked God and I took courage as I came out of the cemetery gate as I saw many of them walking together in Christian brotherhood. Younger

Brothers and Sisters, I trust you will be worthy of your sires, even if you do not excel them. I beseech you, since you are the Church's hope, do not disappoint us!

Young men and young women, consecrate yourselves early to God and let it be thorough, out-and-out consecration—you will never regret it. There sits behind me a Brother who could tell you, if he were well enough, how his early days were happy in his Master's service and how, now, when he speaks with somewhat trembling accents, his heart rejoices in the Lord whom he has loved so long. Young men, follow in his footsteps! Young women, be you, also, fully devoted to Christ! By way of warning, I must add, let none of you suppose that because you come of pious parents you will be saved. Remember Abraham had for his son an Ishmael.

The line does not run according to blood and natural descent, but according to the will of God. Alas, there are some, too—I met one the other day, I feel the arrow in my heart at this moment—there are some who utterly forsake the Lord God of their fathers and turn aside to skepticism and sin. When a young man glories in infidelity and chooses for his companions loose fellows of the baser sort, his descent from saintly fathers will bring upon him sevenfold guilt. It were better for him that he had never been born, than leave an ancestry which God has blessed, to turn aside to be an enemy of the Cross of Christ!

Perhaps someone may say, "Ah, but Ishmael had not a good mother—she was Hagar, the bondwoman." My solemn answer is—Esau had the same mother as Jacob and was born at the same birth—yet Esau shared not in spiritual privileges as Jacob did. Trust not in your descent! Rely not upon a mother's tears or a father's piety. Seek the Lord, my sons, my daughters, or you will not taste His love. "My son, give Me your heart," says Jesus—not your father's heart, but your own! Yield yourselves as living sacrifices unto God and then, instead of the fathers, shall be the children! I stand among you like an officer in the midst of his regiment and, as one and another falls, I entreat you to close up your ranks!

My Brothers and Sisters, my Children! Do not permit the good cause at the Tabernacle to fail! You will not, I am sure. I am persuaded better things of you though I thus speak. Whoever dies, stand ready, you younger men, to take their places! As you get older, ask for more Grace to qualify you, not merely to be

private members, but to be leaders among us, that to this Church may be fulfilled forevermore the promise of the text, "Instead of your fathers shall be your children, whom you may make princes in all the earth." God bless you, my beloved companions in the army of the Lord, young and old, for Christ's sake! Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Psalm 45. HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—45, 422, 145.

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