

The Farewell

by J.C. Philpot

The sermon explores the concept of 'faring well' and 'faring ill' in a spiritual sense, emphasizing the importance of experiencing the power and presence of God in one's life.

Scripture: Psalm 107:7, Matthew 26:39, 2 Corinthians 13:11, Galatians 6:14, Titus 2:12

Topics: "Christian Living", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

J.C. Philpot preaches on the concept of 'farewell' from 2 Corinthians 13:11, reflecting on the spiritual implications of faring well or ill. He delves into the characteristics of those who fare ill, including enemies of God and backsliding believers, contrasting them with the blessings of faring well in God's grace. Philpot emphasizes the importance of spiritual appetite, resignation to God's will, and walking in the footsteps of Christ as key elements of faring well in the Christian journey. He concludes with a heartfelt farewell, expressing his desire for the congregation to remain steadfast in faith and avoid straying from the truth.

Transcript

Preached at Zoar Chapel, London, on Thursday

Evening, August 10, 1843, by J. C. Philpot

"Brethren, farewell." 2 Corinthians 13:11

I cannot say that 'Anniversary', 'Funeral', or 'Farewell' Sermons are much to my taste; and whenever I have attempted to preach with a view to such occasions, it is but rarely that I have had any liberty of soul or of speech. I learned a lesson on this subject not very long before I left the Establishment, which has much prevented me from even making the attempt. The circumstance I allude to was this. Easter Sunday was drawing near; which is, as you know, in the Church of England, the Anniversary of the resurrection of Christ. On the Saturday evening immediately preceding it, I took a walk, as I was accustomed to do; and was led to meditate on the coming Lord's Day, when these words fell with some weight upon my mind—"The power of his resurrection." I thought the words were very suitable for the occasion, and I seemed led into a train of sweet and comfortable meditation upon them; so that I fully expected I had a text for the following day, from which I could speak with some liberty and feeling. But when the morrow came, the text was entirely taken away; in fact, scarcely a single idea upon it remained, so that I was obliged to speak from some other words. A few Lord's days afterwards the text returned to my mind, and I was then enabled to speak from it with some sweetness. From this occurrence I gathered that it was not the will of

the Lord that I should preach sermons suited to 'particular occasions'; and from that time to this, I have very rarely attempted it. But after the great attraction with which you have heard me, and the full assemblies which have gathered together, during my visit in this place, I think I should be lacking in right feeling, if I left you without expressing in some way or other my wishes and desires in bidding you "farewell."

My text is a very short one, as it contains only two words; but in speaking from it, I mean to make it shorter still, and take only one word; but in so doing, I feel if the Lord shall lead me into the experimental meaning of that one word, "Farewell," we shall have enough to occupy us during the time we are assembled together this evening.

Though it is but one word to which I have restricted myself, yet in fact, it is composed of two, "fare" and "well." To fare well, spiritually understood, is to have everything that God can make us happy in. The simple, or I should rather say, the compound word "fare-well," if indeed it is a spiritual faring well, comprehends all that we can desire for time or for eternity.

But while there is a faring well, there is such a thing also as faring ill. And as oftentimes we see truth better by contrast, we will, with God's blessing, speak first a little of what it is to fare ill; and then of what it is to fare well.

I. What is it, then, to fare ILL? In examining what it is to fare ill, we shall look at it in two points of view.

First. At the characters who fare ill throughout; and secondly, at the children of God, who at certain times and seasons are in the same predicament, and appear to fare ill.

A. We will look at the characters who fare ill THROUGHOUT. Who are they? We may describe them in one word, as the enemies of God. For whatever worldly prosperity may attend them; whatever their carnal hearts may enjoy of pleasure, and so-called amusement; whatever riches they may heap up to themselves, or whatever they may gain of this world's applause, being the enemies of God, they must fare ill. But let us come to particulars. Who are these enemies of God?

1. They are all those who are "dead in trespasses and sins;" that is, all who live and die in that state, and who will ultimately descend into the gulf of eternal perdition. They are all those whose hearts are altogether buried in the world, whose whole mind, soul, and affections are occupied with the things of time and sense. These universally may be said to fare ill, for they have not a single thing in them of which God approves, nothing whatever that can take them safely out of time into eternity; but, on the contrary, they have everything in them against which God has proclaimed his eternal displeasure, and everything which will one day hang like a millstone round their necks, to sink them into a dreadful eternity.

2. Again; All who are attempting to establish their own righteousness; all who are looking to anything in self to recommend them to the favor of God; all who are despising the blood of the Redeemer, and scorning Christ's imputed righteousness- all of these, however high they may stand in a profession of religion, will surely fare ill; for they mock the only true God, reject the only way of salvation, and have not fled to the only refuge and hiding-place set forth in the gospel.

3. Again; All professors of doctrinal truth, who have never spiritually felt the power of truth upon their hearts, fare ill; and they will fare ill to all eternity, unless God is pleased to work a change in them. There is nothing so deceitful as having "a form of godliness," while the "power" of it is denied; nothing so delusive

as having a name to live, while the soul is dead before God. If there is one hypocritical character more than another, whom the man of God should point out, it is he who, with a profession, is destitute of vital godliness; that has the form of doctrinal truth in the judgment, but who never has experienced the power of that truth in his soul, humbling him in the dust, and raising him up to a spiritual knowledge of Jesus Christ.

4. Again; All who profess the truth, but live ungodly; all that with a seared conscience walk in fleshly lusts, and through their misconduct bring a reproach upon the name and cause of Jesus Christ, fare ill, for they clearly manifest that they know nothing of "the grace of God," which teaches us, that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." (Titus 2:12.)

B. But secondly. The children of God, though they cannot fare ill as to their eternal safety; though they are secure in Christ Jesus, and bound up in "the bundle of life" with the Lord the Lamb, yet may and frequently do in this time-state fare ill. And when do they fare ill?

1. Sometimes they fare ill thus. Their hearts get buried in the things of time and sense; the world comes in with its charms or its business, and draws away their thoughts and affections from better things. Instead of their souls going after the Lord, in unutterable pantings, to enjoy a sense of his love and blood, their carnal mind goes after created things, madly seeking to derive some pleasure or profit from them.

My friends, many a tree outwardly flourishing has rot and touchwood inside; and so, many a child of God, though he may not have deviated from the outward observance of things that he once knew in power, and may seem to occupy his original position; yet he has lost the sweetness, unction, and savor of them in his heart. His affections are not now in heaven; the world has laid a secret hold on him; and instead of the life and power of God's word being felt in his soul, the dust of carnality, idolatry, and earthliness occupy his heart.

But directly we lose the power and savor of divine things in the soul, we fare ill- nothing can make up for the unction and savor of divine truth in the heart. The clearest experience, the soundest creed, the most consistent conduct, the most regular attendance on the means, will never make up for the life, feeling, power, and presence of God in the soul. So, however a man (a child of God I am speaking of) may not appear outwardly to have backslidden from God, yet if his heart is secretly going out after idols; if he has lost the unction and power of the blessed Spirit on him, he fares ill, though none but God and his own conscience, or a discerning soul here and there, may perceive the difference.

2. Again. The people of God fare ill, when they substitute a sound doctrinal creed for the experimental teachings of the Spirit in their hearts. And this is a very possible case- it is not confined to those who are dead in a profession, but it is an evil that even God's people may be drawn into. They have had sufficient experience to separate themselves from those who are dead in a doctrinal profession; but having lost the savor and sweetness of that experience out of their heart, and not being able to go back into the world, or herd with dead professors, they have been led to substitute the doctrine of truth for the power of truth, and walk in the outward light of the word instead of coming to the inward light of God's countenance, to live under his smiles, or breathe their souls out after his manifested favor.

In a word, God's people fare ill whenever they do not experience the power or presence of the Lord in their hearts. They fare ill, when anything religious or irreligious, inward or outward, in the church or in the world, affords pleasure or satisfaction short of and independent of the Lord. Directly they sit down or take rest anywhere, or in anything but at the feet of Jesus, and in his blood and love, they evidence a loss of spiritual health, and fall sick of that lethargy or paralysis which is the disease of those that are at "ease in

Zion."

II. But we pass on to consider the other branch of the subject, and to show what it is to "fare WELL." All God's people will eventually fare well. They all stand complete in Christ- nothing can touch their eternal safety; for they are all complete in him, "without spot, or blemish, or any such thing." In this point of view, they must all in the end and forever fare well.

But when we come to the matter of experience, we often find that those very times when God's people think they are faring ill, are the seasons when they are really faring well; and again, at other times, when they think they are faring well, then they are really faring ill.

1. For instance, when their souls are bowed down with trouble, it often seems to them that they are faring ill. God's hand appears gone out against them- he has hidden his face from them; they can find no access to a throne of grace; they have no sweet testimonies from the Lord that the path in which he is leading them is one of his choosing, and that all things will end well with them. This they think is indeed faring ill; and yet perhaps they never fare better than when under these circumstances of trouble, sorrow, and affliction. These things wean them from the world. If their heart and affections were going out after idols, they instrumentally bring them back. If they were hewing out broken cisterns, they dash them all to pieces. If they were setting up, and bowing down to idols in the chambers of imagery, affliction and trouble smite them to pieces before their eyes, take away their gods, and leave them no refuge but the Lord God almighty.

If you can only look back, you will often see that your greatest sweets have sprung out of your greatest bitters, and the greatest blessings have flowed from the greatest miseries, and what at the time you thought your greatest sorrows you will find that the brightest light has sprung up in the blackest darkness, and that the Lord never made himself so precious as at the time when you were sunk lowest, so as to be without human help, wisdom, or strength. So that when a child of God thinks he is faring very ill, because burdened with sorrows, temptations, and afflictions, he is never faring so well.

2. Again. A child of God fares well when he is enabled, in whatever circumstances and under whatever trials of mind he may be, to carry his case to the Lord, and spread it out at his footstool. We know, from painful experience, that the spring of prayer seems at times well near dried up in our hearts. We feel at times as though we never knew what it was to possess "a spirit of grace and of supplications," or to have access to God; as though we never knew what it was to pour out our hearts before him, or tell him our trouble. Whenever, therefore, we are enabled to take our case to the Lord, and spread it out (whatever it may be) at his footstool; not to resort to any unlawful means; not to go down to Egypt, or lean upon Assyria; not to trust to an arm of flesh; but under all circumstances, to lay our case simply and perseveringly before the Lord, looking to him alone to appear, we fare well. The darkest clouds in due time will break, the most puzzling enigmas will sooner or later be unriddled by the blessed Spirit interpreting them, and the darkest providences cleared up; and we shall see that God is in them all, leading and guiding us "by the right way, that we may go to a city of habitation." (Ps. 107:7.)

3. The children of God fare well when they have a SPIRITUAL APPETITE AND RELISH FOR DIVINE TRUTH, when they are really in earnest for divine things, and "As the deer pants after the waterbrooks," so their souls pant after the Lord. When they experience these hungerings and thirstings after the Lord's presence and manifested favor to their souls, they fare well. But we know that many times it is otherwise with us. We have often no more appetite or relish for the truths of the gospel than if we had never tasted

anything of their sweetness, nor felt anything of their power. How often the Bible is to us a sealed book, and the truths of the gospel veiled in the thickest darkness! How often the testimony of the word concerning Jesus and the way of salvation are as completely hidden from our view as though there were no God, no Jesus, no heaven to desire, no hell to fear!

So that when eternal things are really present to the mind, and we feel their solemn weight and power in the conscience; when the world is under our feet; the presence of God earnestly sought; the Bible opened up with some sweetness and power, and the blessed truths of the gospel relished with a keen appetite, we may then indeed be said to fare well. And thus the Lord's family, who have traveled long in the wilderness, and know by painful experience what a parched desert it is, when they come to some stream, bubbling unexpectedly forth, find that their long and wearisome journey only makes the water dearer and sweeter to their taste.

4. We fare well when in all things we can RESIGN OURSELVES INTO THE HANDS OF GOD. There are many times when we cannot so resign ourselves; when we have a will of our own, some darling idol to grasp, some beloved plan to accomplish, some object in view which is contrary to God's will and word. But when we are enabled to yield ourselves up into the hands of the Lord that he may work his will in us, when we are brought solemnly to say, "Not my will, but yours be done;" and resign ourselves as clay into the hands of the Potter, desiring to feel his heavenly fingers molding us, so that we may be vessels of honor fit for the Master's use, we then fare well; for this is to walk in the footsteps of Christ, and follow his blessed example, when he said, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," yet bowed his head to the will of his Father, and said, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as you will." (Matt. 26:39.)

5. We fare well when we are DEAD TO THE WORLD, and the world is dead to us; when it loses its hold upon our affections; when the perishing objects of time and sense do not interweave and intertwine themselves around every thread of our heart; when we can look on the world, and say in the expressive language of the apostle, "By whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. 6:14.) What a picture is this! That the world had no more charms for him than it would have for a person on the cross, expiring in agony; and as we would naturally turn away our eyes with loathing from a malefactor writhing on a cross, so he spiritually turned away his eyes from a perishing world. But who of us can come up to this experience? How rarely are we even in this state, to find our hearts really separated from the world, and drawn away not merely from its company, but also from its wretched spirit. But when we feel ourselves in some measure drawn away from it, and our heart and affections fixed where Jesus sits at the right hand of God, we may then be said to fare well.

6. When we are enabled in any degree to WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF CHRIST; when, instead of returning railing for railing, we contrariwise return blessing; when one cheek is smitten, to turn the other; when we can bear injuries and insults, and instead of resenting them, we feel our hearts drawn out to forgive them; then indeed we may be said to fare well. But, alas! we find, on the contrary, so much of that other spirit in us, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth;" blow for blow, word for word, look for look; as though we could not bear the slightest measure of reproach, or anything approaching to contempt. Yet how sweet it is, when instead of this miserable spirit, we have the least measure of the mind of Christ; when instead of envy, jealousy, wrath, and every cursed and devilish working, even against the people of God, our hearts are so melted down into love and affection to them, that we can bear with those things that most cut our flesh, and are most contrary to our natural feelings.

7. We fare well when FAITH is in exercise; and this we learn by knowing the power of unbelief. When unbelief is powerfully at work, then indeed we fare ill; we can overcome no temptation, resist no sin, forgive no injury, bear not a straw to lie across our path, nor the weight of a thread upon our mind. But when the soul is favored with a living faith, and the Author of that faith is pleased to draw it out into blessed exercise, that indeed is a faring well. This blessed faith overcomes the world, purifies the heart, brings a sweet sense of heavenly realities into the soul, and draws upwards, all the affections of the soul.

8. We fare well also, when HOPE, that sister grace with faith and love, is in spiritual exercise; when gloom and despondency do not possess the mind; when the clouds of darkness and doubt, which hovered over the soul are dissipated, and some blessed gleams of life, light and love shine out of the Mediator's fullness into the heart. The mariner would fare ill did he go out to sea without his anchor; for when the storm came, and blew on a lee-shore, he would have nothing to hold his ship from running aground. But if he had cast anchor, as long as that held fast in the ground, he would fare well, whatever storms might rise, or winds blow. So, with the soul that is enabled to cast anchor on Christ, to rest on his covenant engagements, love, blood, and glorious righteousness, as long as the anchor holds, it will ride out every storm.

9. Again. When LOVE is spiritually felt; when it flows out toward the blessed Lord, and is fixed upon him, then indeed the soul may be said to fare well. When instead of having the heart divided, and so found faulty; instead of having a thousand roving imaginations, and oftentimes base lusts, hovering over us like birds of prey, and snatching off in their talons every spiritual feeling, these vultures are driven away.

10. And when, too, in spite of all the darkness that may have abounded in the mind, all the difficulties of the narrow path, all the backslidings committed, and all the snares in which the feet have been entangled, the soul feels all right for eternity, then indeed it may be said to fare well; for it is bound for a blessed eternity, for a land where tears shall be forever wiped away from all faces.

The Apostle's short and simple prayer to God for those to whom he was writing was, that they might "fare well." It was the desire of his heart, that they might enjoy those rich spiritual blessings that God alone could communicate; and in uttering this parting word, he breathed out with it the genuine wish of his soul. And its being couched in the form of a petition and not an exhortation, shows that there is not anything in us that can cause us to fare well; that it is not to be produced by any good deeds or good words of ours, not to be brought about by our own prayers, not merited by our own exertions; but that it is wholly and solely the gift of God, for he only can make us, under every circumstance, and in every time and place, really to fare well.

The living family, then, will not be attempting to cause themselves to fare well; but will be continually looking up to the Lord to make it fare well with them; they will be seeking his blessed face, and casting themselves from time to time at his footstool, that he would cause all things to work together for their spiritual good, that it may fare well here and hereafter with their souls.

But what different views people have of faring ill and faring well! If I were to go into the street, and ask the first man I met with what it was to fare well, he would tell me, no doubt, that to enjoy health of body, to have riches and respectability, and be surrounded with worldly comforts, would be to fare well; while at the same time he is, in the sight of a holy God, only filling up the measure of his iniquity, and will at last, if grace prevent not, sink into an awful eternity.

But were I to go to some poor child of God, who is depressed by poverty, suffering under ill health, afflicted with grievous trials, exercised with sore temptations, harassed by the devil, and continually plagued and

perplexed by his own corrupt heart; and ask him, "What it is to fare well?" he, I believe, would answer, "To fare well would be to enjoy the life, light and love of God in my soul; to have testimonies from the Lord that I am his; to find Satan put under my feet; to experience the blood of sprinkling on my conscience; to taste a sense of pardoning love; to walk in the light of God's countenance; to find the Lord with me in all my sufferings; to feel that I am safe in his hand, and that at last he will land me safe in a blessed eternity."

Now these two people would give a very different answer to the question; and yet perhaps to the eye of sense, one of them might be enjoying the height of prosperity, while the other might be in the depths of adversity; the one possessing health, and all that the world could offer, yes, as the Psalmist says, "His eyes standing out with fatness, and having more than heart could wish;" while the other might be pitied as the most miserable wretch alive; and yet really be the man whom princes might envy, and kings delight to honor, and a jewel that shall one day shine brightly in the kingdom of God.

But suppose the Lord himself were to put the question to your hearts (instead of my putting it) in some solemn manifestation, as he came to Solomon by night, and ask you, "What you most desired?" if he were to come to us spiritually in that manner, and say, "I will answer your petition and your request, what is it your soul most desires? Your body perhaps is afflicted with disease; shall it be health? You are distressed with poverty; shall it be riches? You are despised and scorned; shall it be honor? If ignorant and uneducated; shall it be learning? Is everything in providence against you; shall it be everything in providence for you? Shall all these things be given to you, and all summed up and concentrated as an answer to your petition?"

If God has touched your heart with his finger, you would answer, "No, Lord; I cannot be satisfied with these. Rather give me poverty and affliction with your blessing- only give me a sufficiency to carry my poor body through life, and I am contented, whatever else you deny me. But do not deny me spiritual blessings; give me a manifestation of your presence; deny me not the guidance and leading of your hand; deny me not a sense of your love and of your power; deny me not a testimony that you are leading me safely through the waste howling wilderness, and will present me faultless before your face forever."

You may say, when I thus put the question, "These are my desires, these are the objects which my heart is really fixed upon, and the things which I sincerely feel I want to have." But let me now put another question, and that is, "If so, are these things what you breathe out from time to time into the bosom of God?" It is very well, when the question is put, to answer, "These are my desires:" but you know we read, "The sluggard desires, and has not." Whenever God implants them in the soul, you will not be content with merely expressing a few desires; but there will be solemn pantings and breathings of your heart into the bosom of God that he would lead you effectually into the experience of the truth; there will be in your conscience from time to time "a spirit of grace and supplication;" and you will be restless, discontented, and dissatisfied with everything short of God's manifested presence. There will be a turning from the creature, and all that the creature can present, and a cry and a sigh rising up into the ears of the Lord, telling him that nothing but himself will content your soul; that his favor in providence will not content you; that you must have Himself, and that nothing but himself can really satisfy your heart. If a man is here, he is faring well, whatever may be his exercises, temptations, or distresses, for the Lord is guiding him in the footsteps of the flock, and opening his heart to receive the truth in the love and power of it.

But when the Lord is really leading our souls in this path, everything seems to be against us. True religion is such a mystery. When we think we are faring well, we are often faring ill; when we think we are faring ill, we are often faring well; when we think that now we have got into an easy, smooth, and comfortable path,

it is then leading us wrong; and when we say, 'The path is so rugged and intricate; we are so perplexed, and so little able to see the way that we fear we are out of the track altogether,' that is the very time when the Lord is leading us in the right way.

Sometimes when we say, 'Now the Lord will appear,' the Lord does not appear at all; and when we are saying, 'The path is so dark that we can scarcely hope the Lord can appear;' in a moment he will take away the cloud, and make his appearance. When we are ready to say, 'The case is so desperate, we can hardly expect a remedy,' that is the very time for the remedy to come. When we may say, 'This is just the eve of a deliverance,' the deliverance is put farther back, and the soul sinks deeper into a sense of guilt and misery; and when we may say, 'We are so black and polluted, such awful sinners, such horrible creatures, that the Lord cannot look on us,' that is the very moment when he may smile into the heart. When we may think we are getting on at a rapid pace in spirituality and holiness, making wonderful advances in the divine life, and getting almost to the pinnacle of creature perfection, we discover through some terrible inward slip, that we are on the wrong path, and have been drawn aside by self-righteousness and pharisaical pride.

So that at last we seem brought to this point, to have no wisdom of our own to see the way, and to have no strength to walk in the way when seen, but that we must be guided every step by the Lord himself; and thus we sink down into creature nothingness and creature emptiness, and feel no more merit in our heart, lip, or life, why God should save us, than there is in Satan himself; and thus we sink so low that none but God himself can lift us up. And this is the very time when God usually appears, and most singularly displays his mercy, love, and grace.

Now, it is by walking in this trying path that we learn our utter ruin, and learn to prize God's salvation. The power of saving truth is only prized by those whom God is thus teaching. Others are satisfied with shadows, but those that are deeply exercised in their mind, must have the substance. Those who have had their false refuges destroyed, their lying hopes broken, and a thousand difficulties and perplexities surrounding them, as the Lord opens the eyes, and brings his truth before them, want the power and application of this truth to their heart. Nothing suits or satisfies them but the unction of the Spirit, and the dew of God's power and presence resting on and felt in their souls. They can no longer be satisfied with the mere form, no longer rest for salvation on a few notions, no longer hang their eternal all upon the good opinion of the creature.

And thus, by this painful work in their souls, they learn that they have no more religion than God works in them; that they can only know what God teaches them; that they can only have what he communicates to them; and that they are wholly and solely dependent upon him to guide and keep them every moment of their lives. Worldly men indeed despise them, mere professors hate them, the devil harasses them, their names are generally cast out as evil, and universal charity, which has a good opinion of all, has not a single, good word for them. That they are such a mystery to others is no wonder, when they are such a mystery to themselves. How they hold on they cannot tell; but they find they cannot move unless God moves them. How they pray is a mystery, yet at times they feel the spirit of prayer alive in their bosoms. How their souls are kept pleading and waiting for the Lord at the footstool of his mercy is a mystery, yet they cannot deny that this is the experience of their hearts. So that when they come to look at the way in which the Lord has led them, from first to last, it is all an unfathomable mystery.

Why God should have chosen them in Christ is a mystery; why he should have quickened their souls when "dead in trespasses and sins," is a mystery; why he should have wrought a sense of contrition in

their hearts is a mystery; why he should have given a sense of his love to them is a mystery; why he should have preserved them from error, while thousands have been entangled in it, is a mystery; and why he should keep them day by day, and hour by hour, without suffering them to disgrace his cause, deny his truth, turn their back on God, or go into the world, is a mystery. And yet they find that they have and are all these things; so that the greatest mystery of all is, that they are what they are.

Thus, do they fare well, because God takes care they shall fare well; he manages all their concerns, he watches over them by night and by day- he waters them continually, and he guides and leads them until he brings them to his heavenly kingdom.

But, in the full sense of the word, they will never entirely fare well, until they drop their mortal bodies into the dust, until the "old man" is completely annihilated, the root of sin forever perished, and their immortal souls united with their glorified bodies before the throne of the Lamb, shall sing to all eternity the high praises of their God. Then they will fare well, because they will have nothing then to make them fare ill; sin, which is now their burden, will be known no more; all their sorrows and pains will be turned into joy; and the tears, which now often run down their cheeks, will then be all wiped away. They will then fare well, because they will see him as he is in whom their hearts are fixed, and will be swallowed up in the eternal enjoyment of his bliss and glory.

With what better word, then, can I conclude than "Farewell!" And in uttering that word, I desire to breathe it from my heart, "Brethren, fare well!" May your hearts be kept alive to divine things; may you never wander from the truth; never seek for happiness from the things of time and sense; never lean on an arm of flesh; never trust to your own righteousness; never get into an openly backsliding state, and go after idols; never be entangled by secret lusts and besetting sins; and never bring a disgrace upon the cause of God and truth.

May you, then, fare well; I will not add the word "finally," in the words of the text, "finally, brethren, fare well." I will not then say "finally," though the Lord only knows whether we shall ever see each other again in the flesh. But I simply breathe forth the desires of my heart for your temporal and spiritual welfare; and conclude with the words of the Apostle, "Brethren, farewell."

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