

War! War! War!

A Sermon

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“Fight the Lord’s battles.”—[1 Samuel 18:17](#).

WE shall not take these words in their literal application, as coming from the lips of Saul, when he gave David his elder daughter, Merab, to wife; but shall accommodate the passage, and use it as an exhortation given to the church of Christ, and to every Soldier of Jesus: “Fight the Lord’s battles.” If this exhortation be not found in the selfsame words, coming from the lips of Jesus, nevertheless the whole tenor of the Word of God is to the same effect—“Fight the Lord’s battles.”

At the present crisis, the minds of men are exceedingly agitated with direful prospects of a terrible struggle. We know not whereunto this matter may grow. The signs of the times are dark and direful. We fear that the vials of God’s wrath are about to be poured out, and that the earth will be deluged with blood. As long as there remains a hope, let us pray for peace, nay, even in the time of war let us still beseech the throne of God, crying, that he would “send us peace in our days.”

The war will be looked upon by different persons with different feelings. The Italian will consider, all through the controversy, his own country; the Sardinian will be looking continually to the progress or to the defeat of his own nation; while the German, having sympathy with his own race, will be continually anxious to understand the state of affairs. There is one power however, which is not represented in the congress and which seems to be silent, because the ears of men are deaf to aught that it hath to say. To that power all *our* sympathies will be given, and *our* hearts will follow it with interest; and all through the war, the one question that we shall ask, will be “How will *that* kingdom prosper?” “You all know to which kingdom I refer—it is the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon earth; that little one which is even at this time growing, and which is to become a thousand, which is to break in pieces all the monarchies of earth, and to seat itself upon their ruins, proclaiming universal liberty and peace, under the banner of Jesus Christ. I am sure that we shall think far more of the interests of religion than of anything else, and our prayer will be, “O Lord, do what thou wilt with the earthen pitchers of men’s monarchies, but let thy kingdom come, and let thy will be done on earth, even as it is in heaven!”

While, however, we shall anxiously watch the contest, it will be quite as well if we mingle in it ourselves. Not that this nation of England should touch it; God forbid. If tyrants fight, let them fight; let free men stand aloof. Why should England have aught to do with all the

coming battles? As God has cut us off from Europe by a boisterous sea, so let us be kept apart from all the broils and turmoils into which tyrants and their slaves may fall. I speak now, after a spiritual manner, to the church of Christ. I say, "Let *us* mingle in the fray; let us have something to do. *We* cannot be neutral; we never have been. Our host is ever in hostility to sin and Satan. "My voice is still for war." The senate of Christ's church can never talk of peace. For thus it is written: "The Lord will have war."

This will bring us to the text, and here I shall consider first of all, *the Lord's battles*; we are not to fight our own; secondly, *the Lord's soldiers*; and thirdly, *the King's command*, "Fight the Lord's battles."

I. First, THE LORD'S BATTLES, what are they? Not the garment rolled in blood, not the noise, and smoke, and din of human slaughter. These may be the devil's battles, if you please, but not the Lord's. They may be days of God's vengeance but in their strife the servant of Jesus may not mingle. We stand aloof. Our kingdom is not of this world; else would God's servants fight with sword and spear. Ours is a spiritual kingdom, and the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds.

What are God's battles? Let us here carefully distinguish between the battles of God, and our own. Oh, my brethren and sisters in Christ, it is not your business to fight your own battles, not even in defense of your own character. If you be maligned and slandered, let the slanderer alone. His malignity will but be increased by any attempt that you shall make to defend yourself. As a soldier of Christ you are to fight for your Master, not for yourself. You are not to carry on a private warfare for your own honor, but all your time and all your power is to be given to his defense and his war. You are not to have a word to speak for yourselves. Full often, when we get into little tempers, and our blood is roused, we are apt to think that we are fighting the cause of truth, when we are really maintaining our own pride. We imagine that we are defending our Master, but we are defending our own little selves. Too often the anger rises against an adversary not because his words reflect dishonor upon the glorious Christ, but because they dishonor us. Oh! let us not be so little as to fight our own battles! Depend upon it, the noblest means of conquest for a Christian in the matter of calumny and falsehood, is to stand still and see the salvation of God. Sheathe thine own sword, put away all thine own weapons, when thou comest to fight thine own battle, and let God fight for thee, and thou shalt be more than conqueror.

Again, we must recollect that there is such a thing as fighting the battles of our own sect, when we ought to be fighting *God's* battles. We imagine that we are maintaining the church when we are only maintaining our section of it. I would always be very tender of the honor of the Christian body to which I belong, but I would rather see *its* honor stained, than that the glory of the entire church should be dimmed. Every soldier ought to love the peculiar legion in which he has enlisted, but better to see the colors of that legion rent to tatters,

than to see the old standard of the cross trampled in the mire. Now I trust we are ready to say of our own denomination, Let its name perish, if Christ's name shall get ought of glory thereby." If the extinction of our sect should be the conquest of Christ and the promoting of his kingdom, then let it be wiped out of the book of record, and let not its name be heard any more. We should, I say, each of us defend the body to which we belong, for we have conscientiously joined it believing it to be the nearest to the old standard of the church of Christ, and God forbid that we should leave it for a worse. If we see a better, then would we sacrifice our prejudices to our convictions, but we cannot leave the old standard so long as we see it to be the very standard which floated in the hand of Paul, and which was handed by him through divers generations, through Chrysostom to Augustine, from Augustine to Calvin, and so on through the glorious race of mighty men who have not been ashamed of the gospel of Christ Jesus. But yet I say let our name. and let our sect, and let our denomination be absorbed, and let it sink, so that the battle of the Lord may but be well fought, and the time of Christ's triumph hastened.

"Fight the *Lord's* battles." Then what are these? These are battles with sin and battles with error, and battles with war, and battles with worldliness. Fight ye these Christian. and ye shall have enough to do.

The Lord's battle is first of all with *sin*. Seek grace to fight that battle in your own heart. Endeavour by divine grace to overcome those propensities which continually push you towards iniquity. On your knees wrestle against your besetting sins. As habits appear endeavor to break them by the battle-axe of strong resolution wielded by the arm of faith. Take all your lusts as they bestir themselves to the foot of the cross, and let the blood of Jesus fall upon those vipers and they must die. The blood of Christ shall spill the blood of sin. The death of Christ shall be the death of iniquity, the cross of Christ shall be the crucifixion of transgression. Labour with yourselves to drive the Canaanites out of your hearts. Spare none, let no petty lust escape. Put down pride and sloth, and lust, and unbelief and you have now a battle before you which may fill your hands, and more than fill them. Oh! cry unto God your strength, and look unto the hills from whence cometh your help, and then fight on again, and as each sin is overcome, each evil habit broken off, each lust denied go on to the rooting up of another, and the destruction of more of them, until ail being subdued, body soul and spirit shall be consecrated to Christ as a living sacrifice, purified by his Holy Spirit.

And while this battle is being fought, ay, and while it is still fighting, go out and fight with other men's sins. Smite them first with the weapon of holy example. Be yourselves what you would have others be. be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. Be yourselves clean ere ye can hope to be the purifiers of the world; and then, having first sought the blessing of God, go out into the world and bear your witness against sin. Let your testimony be unflinching; never let a sin pass under your eye without rebuke. Slay utterly young and old;

let not one escape. Speak sometimes sternly if the sinner be hardened in his sin, speak gently, if it be his first offense, seeking not to break *his* head but to break the head of his iniquity—not to break his bones or wound his feelings, but to cut his sin in twain, and leave his iniquity dead before his eyes. Go ye forth where sin is the most rampant. Go down the dark alley, climb the creaking staircase; penetrate the dens of iniquity where the lion of the pit lies in his death lair, and go ye and pluck out of the mouth of the lion two legs and a piece of a ear, if that be all which you can save. Count it always your joy to follow the track of the lion, to beard him in his den, and fight him where he reigneth most secure. Protest daily, hourly, by act, by word, by pen, by tongue, against evil of every kind and shape. Be ye as burning and shining lights in the midst of darkness, and as two-edged swords in the midst of the hosts of sin. Why, a true Christian who lives near to God, and is filled with grace and is kept holy, may stand in the midst of sinners and do wonders. What a marvellous feat was that which Jonah did! There was the great city of Nineveh, having in it six score thousand souls that knew not their right hand from their left, and one man went against it—Jonah—and as he approached it he began to cry, “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” He entered the city—perhaps he stood aghast for a moment at the multitude of its population, at its richness and splendor, but again he lifted up his sharp shrill voice, “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” On he went, and the crowd increased around him as he passed through each street, but they heard nothing but the solemn monotony, “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown;” and yet again, “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” And on he went, that solitary man, till he caused convulsion in the midst of myriads, and the king on his throne robed himself in sackcloth and proclaimed a fast, a day of mourning and of sadness. Yet on he went, “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,” “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,” till all the people bowed before him, and that one man was the conqueror of the myriad. Ah! believer, if you will go out and do the same, if you will go into the streets, the lanes, the by-ways the houses, and into the privacies of men, and still with this continued cry against sin and iniquity, say to them, “Look unto the cross and live, look unto the cross and live.” Though there were but one earnest man in London who would continue that monotony of “Look unto the cross and live,” from end to end this city would shake, and the great leviathan metropolis would be made to tremble. Go forth then, believer, and cry against sin with all thy might.

And even so must we cry against *error*. It is the preacher’s business Sabbath after Sabbath, and week-day after week-day, to preach the whole gospel of God and to vindicate the truth as it is in Jesus from the opposition of man. Thousands are the heresies which now beset the church. O children of God! fight the Lord’s battles for truth. I am astonished, and yet more astonished when I come to turn it over, at the want of earnestness that there is in the Protestantism of the present age. How do you imagine that Cardinal Wiseman pays for all his splendours, and that the Romish church is supported? Fools and slow of heart, ye find

them much of their wealth. If he is to preach in any place, who is it that crowds the chapel full, and pays for admission? The Protestants; and the Protestantism of England is the paymaster of the Pope. I am ashamed that sons of the Reformers who have Smithfield still in their midst unbuilt upon, should bow themselves before the beast, and give so much as a single farthing to the shrine of the devil's firstborn son Take heed to yourselves, ye Protestants, lest ye be partakers of her plagues; touch her not, lest ye be defiled. Give a drachm to her, or a grain of incense to her censors, ye shall be partakers of her adulteries and partakers of her plagues. Every time you pass the house of Popery let a curse light upon her head: Thus saith the Lord:—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."—Revelation 18:4-8. How soft some men's minds are growing how effeminate in the battle. I hear then speaking of Puseyism,—and what is that but Popery made worse than it was before by being more despicable and deceivable than even Popery itself. Do ye not hear men talk of the Puseyites in these days and say, "Ah! well, they differ a little from us." Do not the evangelical party in the Church of England seem at the present moment to make common cause and party with the Puseyite? Else how is it that the great preachings have been alternatively conducted by High and Low Church? It is all very well with that Church when it is separated from her heretical sons, and a great gulf fixed, but all that helps to bridge that gulf must mar her glory and destroy her power. We must have no truce, no treaty with Rome. War! war to the knife with her! Peace there cannot be. She cannot have peace with us—we cannot have peace with her. She hates the true Church, and we can only say that the hatred is reciprocated. We would not lay a hand upon her priests; we would not touch a hair of their heads. Let them be free; but their doctrine we would destroy from the face of the earth as the doctrine of devils. So let it perish, O God, and let that evil thing become as the fat of lambs. Into smoke let it consume: yea into smoke let it consume away.

We must fight the Lord's battles against this giant error, whichever shape it takes; and so must we do with every error that pollutes the church. Slay it utterly; let none escape. "Fight the Lord's battles." Even though it be an error that is in an Evangelical Church, yet must we smite it. I love all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, but, nevertheless, I cannot have any truce any treaty with divers errors that have crept into the church, nor would I have you regard them with complacency. We are one in Christ; let us be friends with one another; but let us never be friends with one another's error. If I be wrong, rebuke me sternly;

I can bear it, and bear it cheerfully and if ye be wrong, expect the like measure from me, and neither peace nor parley with your mistakes. Let us all be true to one another, and true to Christ; and as soon as we perceive an error, though it be but as the shadow of one, let us root it out and drive it from us, lest it plague the whole body, and put leprosy into the entire fabric of the church. No peace with sin. no peace with falsehood. War, war, war without deliberation: war for ever with error and deceit!

And yet again, it is the Christian's duty always to have war with *war*. To have bitterness in our hearts against any *man* that lives is to serve Satan. We must speak very hardly and sternly against error, and against sin; but against men we have not a word to say, though it were the Pope himself: I have no enmity in my heart against him as a man, but as *anti-Christ*. With men the Christian is one. Are we not every man's brother? "God hath made of one flesh all people that dwell upon the face of the earth." The cause of Christ is the cause of humanity. We are friends to all, and are enemies to none. We do not speak evil, even of the false prophet himself; as a man, but, as a false prophet. we are his sworn opponents. Now, Christians, ye have a difficult battle to fight, because ye fight with all evil and hostility between man and man: you are to be peacemakers. Go wherever you may, if you see a quarrel you are to abate it. You are to pluck firebrands out of the fire, and strive to quench them in the waters of lovingkindness. It is your mission to bring the nations together, and weld them into one. It is yours to make man love man, to make him no more the devourer of his kind. This you can only do by being the friends of purity. Peace with error is war with man: but war with error is peace with man. Smite error, smite sin, and you have done your best to promote happiness and union among mankind. Oh, go, Christian, in the Spirit's strength, and smite your own anger—put that to the death, smite your own pride—level that, and then smite every other man's anger. Make peace wherever you can; scatter peace with both your hands. Let this be the very air you breathe; let nothing drop from your lip but words of healing, words of tenderness, words which shall abate the strife and noise of this poor distracted world. And now you have a battle before you,—a battle against sin and against error, and then, also, a battle against strife,—the battle of love.

II. And now FOR THE LORD'S SOLDIERS: who are they that are to fight the Lord's battle? Not everybody. The Lord has his army, his church: who are they? The Lord's soldiers are all of his own choosing. He has chosen them out of the world; and they are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world. But if you want to know the Lord's soldiers, I will tell you how you may ascertain whether you are one. When the Lord Jesus enlists a soldier in his church, the first thing he does with him is, he tells him that he must first take off every rag of the old garments that he was wont to wear. "Now," saith Jesus to him, "thy rags must be relinquished; thy sins and thy self-righteousness must both be forsaken. Here is the regimental, here is the inner garment of my imputed righteousness, and here is the outward garment of divine sanctification. Put on these, and thou art mine. But in thine own robes,

I will have nothing to do with thee, thou shalt still continue an heir of wrath, and I will not enlist thee among the heirs of grace.” As soon as a man has his rags taken off, it Christ has enlisted him, the next thing he is required to do is, to wash. He is washed, from head to foot, in a matchless bath of blood; and when washed, he is arrayed, and clothed upon with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. This done, he is taken into the midst of the army and introduced to his comrades, and he is led to love the whole army. “Well,” says one, “I love my own rank.” Do you? Then you do not belong to it, if you do not love the other ranks too. He who is a true soldier of Christ, wears his regimentals, and he loves the whole army. He keeps to his own regiment, and he likes its banner—the flag that has braved so often the battle and the storm; still he loves the whole army, however much the colors may differ. He loves all them that serve the Lord Jesus Christ. “By this also ye shall know whether ye be his disciples, if ye love one another, even as Christ has loved you.”

Once brought into the army, there is one mark whereby you may know Christ’s soldier, namely, that he is not his own. If you meet him, he will say, “From head to foot I belong to my Captain, every inch of me; and what is more, I have given up goods and chattels, wife and children, time and talents, everything to him. I am not my own, I am bought with a price.” He is a consecrated man. Come, then, put these questions to yourselves. Have you been washed in the blood of Christ? Do you boast in the imputed righteousness of Christ? And are you clothed about with the sanctification of his Spirit? Have you given up everything for his cause, and for the love you bear his name are you willing to live or willing to die, as he shall please, if you may but promote his honor? Well, then, you are his soldier, and therefore I shall not need to draw any further lines of distinction; but go to the third point, which is—

III. THE EXHORTATION—“Fight!” “Fight the Lord’s battles.” If you are the soldier of the heavenly King; “To arms! to arms!” “Fight the Lord’s battles.”

Here I would observe, that there are some people who are very fond of looking on, and not fighting. Perhaps five out of every six of our church do little but look on. You go to see them, and you say, “Well, what is your church doing?” “Well, we bless God, we are doing a great deal; we have a Sabbath-school, with so many children; our minister preaches so many times, and so many members have been added to the churches. The sick are visited; the poor are relieved.” And you stop them, and say, “Well, friend, I am glad to hear that you are doing so much; but which work is it that you take? Do you teach in the Sabbath school?” “No.” “Do you preach in the street?” “No.” “Do you visit the sick?” “No.” Do you assist in the discipline of the church?” “No.” “Do you contribute to the poor?” “No.” Yet I thought you said you were doing so much. Stand out, sir, if you please, you are doing nothing at all. Be ashamed! Your master does not say, “Look on at the Lord’s battles;” but “Fight” them. “Ah,” says one. “but then, you know, I contribute towards the support of the ministers he has to do that.” Oh! I see, you have made a mistake; you thought that you belonged to the

English government, and not to Christ's government. You have been paying for a substitute, have you? You are not going to fight in person; you are paying, to keep a substitute to fight for you. Ah, ye have made a great mistake here. Christ will have all his soldiers fight. Why, I am not kept to do the fighting for you: I wilt endeavor to encourage you, and nerve you to the battle; but as to doing your duty, no, I thank you. The Romanist may believe that his priest does the work for him; I do not believe any such thing in my case, nor in the case of your ministers. Christ did not serve you by proxy, and you cannot serve him by proxy. No, "he his own self bare our sins in his own body," and you must work for Christ in your own body, your own self, with your own heart and with your own hands. I do hate that religion which another man can do for you. Depend upon it, it is good for nothing. True religion is a personal thing. O soldiers of the heavenly King, leave not our lieutenants and your officers to fight alone. Come on with us; we wave our swords in front. Come comrades, on! we are ready to mount the call, or lead the forlorn hope. Will you desert us? Come up the ladder with us. Let us show the enemy what Christian blood can do, and at the sword's point let us drive our foes before us. If you leave us to do all it will all be undone; we want all to do something, all to be laboring for Christ. Here, then, is the exhortation to each individual Christian—"Fight the Lord's battles."

And now, I will read you over the code martial—the rules which Christ, the Captain, would have you obey in fighting his battles.

Regulation I.—NO COMMUNICATION NOR UNION WITH THE ENEMY!

"Ye are not of the world." No truce, no league, no treaty, are you to make with the enemies of Christ. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing."

Regulation II.—NO QUARTER TO BE GIVEN OR TAKEN!

You are not to say to the world, "There! believe me to be better than I am"—and do not ever believe the world to be better than it is? Do not ask it to excuse you; do not excuse it. No parley with it whatever. If it praises you, do not care for its praise; if it scorns you laugh in its face. Have nought to do with its pretended friendship. Ask nothing at its hands; let it be crucified to you, and you to it.

Regulation III.—NO WEAPONS OR AMMUNITION TAKEN FROM THE ENEMY ARE TO BE USED BY IMMANUEL'S SOLDIERS, BUT ARE TO BE UTTERLY BURNED WITH FIRE!

If you beat them, and you find their guns lying on the ground, spike them and melt them; never fire them off:—that is to say, never fight Christ's battles with the devil's weapons. If your enemy gets angry do not get angry with him; if he slanders you, do not slander him. One of the devil's long guns is slander: spike it and melt it; do not attempt to use it against the enemy. All kinds of bitterness—these are firebrands of death which Satan hurls against us: never hurl them back at him. Remember you Master. "When he was reviled he reviled

not again.” Never meddle with the enemy’s weapons, even if you can. If you think you can crush him by his own mode of warfare, do not do it. It was all very well for David to cut off Goliath’s head with his own sword; but it would not have done for him to try that, until he had first of all split his head open with a stone. Try to get a stone out of the brook of truth, and throw it with the sling of faith, but have nothing to do with Goliath’s sword; you will cut your fingers with it, and get no honor.

Regulation IV.—NO FEAR, TREMBLING, OR COWARDICE!

“The children of Ephraim, being armed, turned their backs in the day of battles” but Christ wants no cowardice of you. Fear not. Remember, if any man be ashamed of Christ in this generation, of him will Christ be ashamed in the day when he comes in the glory of his Father and all his holy angels. “I say unto you, fear not him that can kill the body, but after that hath no more that he can do; but fear him who is able to cast both body and soul into hell; I say unto you, fear him.”

Regulation V.—NO SLUMBERING, REST, EASE, OR SURRENDER!

Be always at it, all at it, constantly at it, with all your might at it. No rest. Your resting time is to come, in the grave. Be always fighting the enemy. Ask every day for grace to win a victory, and each night sleep not unless you can feel that you have done something in the cause of Christ—have helped to carry the standard a little further into the midst of the enemy’s ranks. Oh! if we did but attend to these regulations how much might be done! But because we forget them, the cause of Christ is retarded and the victory is along.

And now, before I send you away, I would call out Christ’s soldiers, and drill them for a minute or two. I see sometimes the captains marching their soldiers to and fro, and you may laugh and say they are doing nothing; but mark, all that manoeuvring, that forming into squares, and so forth, has its practical effect when they come into the field of battle. Suffer me, then, to put the Christian through his postures.

The first posture the Christian ought to take, and in which he ought to be very well practiced, is this. DOWN UPON BOTH KNEES, HANDS UP, AND EYES UP TO HEAVEN! No posture like that. It is called the posture of prayer. When Christ’s church has been beaten every way else, it has at last taken to its knees, and then the whole army of the enemy has fled before us, for on its knees Christ’s church is more than conqueror. The praying legion is a legion of heroes. He who understands this posture has learned the first part of the heavenly drill.

The next posture is: FEET FAST, HANDS STILL, AND EYES UP! A hard posture that, though it looks very easy. “Stand still and see the salvation of God.” I have known many men who could practice the first position who could not practice the second. Perhaps that was the hardest thing that the children of Israel ever did. When they had the sea before them and Pharaoh behind them, they were commanded to stand still. But if you must learn to stand still when you are provoked, to be silent when you are mocked, to wait under adverse

providences, and still believe that in the darkest hour the sun is not dead, but will shine out again. Patient waiting for Christ's coming, may we all learn this.

Another posture is this: QUICK MARCH, CONTINUALLY GOING ONWARD! Ah! there are some Christians who are constantly sleeping on their guns; but they do not understand the posture of going onward. Quick march! Many Christians seem to be better skilled in the goose step of lifting up one foot after another and putting them down in the same place, rather than going onwards. Oh! I would we all knew how to progress—to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Never think you are doing anything unless you are getting forwarder—have more love, more hope, more joy, and are extending your sphere of usefulness. Soldiers of Christ, Quick march!” Speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward.” Let them not go back; let them not stand still. On, on, on, soldiers of Christ! Go forward!

Another posture is one that is very hard to learn indeed. It is what no soldier, I think, was ever told to do by his captain, except the soldier of Christ: EYES SHUT, AND EARS SHUT, AND HEART SHUT! That is when you go through Vanity Fair. Eyes shut, so as not to look upon temptation; ears shut, so as not to regard either the praise or the scoffs of the world; and heart shut against evil, with the great stone of precept. “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.” Roll a stone at the door of your heart, that sin may not come out of it. That is a hard posture; but you will never fight the battles of the Lord till you know how to maintain that.

And then there is another posture: FEET FIRM, SWORD IN HAND. EYES OPEN; LOOKING AT YOUR ENEMY, WATCHING EVERY FEINT THAT HE MAKES, AND WATCHING TOO YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO LET FLY AT HIM SWORD IN HAND! That posture you must maintain every day. Guard against the darts of the enemy; hold up your shield, and be ready to run on him and give him a deadly wound. I need not explain that. You that have to do with business, you that are in the ministry, You that are serving God as deacons and elders, you know how often you have to ward off the dart and look well at your enemy, and meet him sword in hand, ready to rush in whenever your time shall come. Let no opportunity—let no occasion pass by. Wound your enemy whenever you can; slay sin, slay error, and destroy bitterness, as often as ye have opportunity so to do.

There is one other posture, which is a very happy one for the child of God to take up and I would have you remember to-day. HANDS WIDE OPEN, AND HEART WIDE OPEN, WHEN YOU ARE HELPING YOUR BRETHREN, a hand ready to give whate’er the church needs, and an eye ready to look up for help when you cannot give help with your hand, and ready to guide the hand whenever help is wanting; and a heart open to hear the tale of another’s want, to “rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep.”

Above all, the best posture for Christ's church, is that of PATIENT WAITING FOR THE ADVENT OF CHRIST, a looking-forward for his glorious appearance, who must come and will not tarry, but who will get unto himself the victory.

Now, it you will go to your houses, and if divine grace shall help you to put yourselves through this form of drill, you will be mighty in the day of battle to put down the enemy.

And now suffer the word of exhortation, very brief, but hot and earnest. O Christian men and women, the more ye think of it the more will ye be ashamed of yourselves, and of the present church, that we do so little for Christ. Some eighteen hundred years ago, there were a handful of men and women in an upper room; and that handful! of men and women were so devoted to their master end so true to his cause, that within a hundred years they had overrun every nation of the habitable globe; yea, within fifty years they had preached the gospel in every land. And now look at this great host gathered here to-day. Probably there are not less than two or three thousand members of Christian churches, besides this mixed multitude and now what will you do in fifty years time? What does the church do in any year of its existence? Why, hardly anything at all. I sometimes wonder how long God will allow the church to be cooped up in England. I fear that we shall never see the world converted, till this country is invaded. If it should ever happen that our hearths and homes should be invaded, And that we should be scattered, north, south, east and west, all through the world, it will be the grandest thing that ever happened for the church of Christ. I would go down on my knees and pray night and day that it may not happen *for the nation's sake*; but nevertheless I sometimes think that the greatest disaster that can ever occur to our nation, will be the only way in which Christ's church will be spread. Look at it. Here you have your churches in almost every street, and despite the destitution of London, it is not destitute if you compare it with the nations of the world. Oh, ought we not as ministers of Christ to pour out in legions? and ought not our people to go everywhere in the habitable world, in ones, and twos, and threes, preaching the gospel? But would you have us leave wife, and house, and children? *I* would not have you do it; but if ye would do it then would Christ's power be seen, and then would the might of the church return to it once again. They were men without purse or scrip that went everywhere preaching the word, and God was with them, and the world heard them and was converted. Now we cannot go if we are not sent, and perhaps it is only reasonable that flesh and blood should not ask more. but still if the life of (hod were in the church, it would never stop in England long; it would send forth its bands and legions, rolling along in one tremendous stream; a new crusade would be preached against the heathen nations, and the sword of the Lord and of Gideon would smite the stoutest of our foemen, and Christ would reign, and his unsuffering kingdom then would come. Oh that the church had power with men, and power with God! Dear brothers and sisters, look out and see what you can do, every one of you. Do something to-day. Do not let this Sunday go without every one of you trying to be the means of winning a soul to God.

Go to your Sunday Schools this afternoon; go to your preaching stations; go to your tract district each one in his sphere; go to your families, your mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters; go home and do something to-day. "Fight the Lord's battles." You can do nothing of yourselves; but God will be with you. If you have the will to serve him, he will give you the power. Go today, and seek to heal some breach, to put away some enmity, to slay some sin, or to drive out some error; and God being with you this shall be a happier day to your soul, and a holier day to the world than you have seen in all your experience before.

I will have one blow, and then you may go. Sinner! I remember that thou art here this morning as well as the saint. Sinner! thou art not Christ's soldier; thou art a soldier of Satan; thou wilt have thy pay soon, man, when thou hast worn thy sword out, and worn thine arm out in fighting against Christ. Thou shalt have thy pay. Look at it and tremble. "The wages of sin is death," and damnation too. Will you take these two, or will you now renounce the black old tyrant, and enlist under the banner of Christ? O that God would give you the earnest money of free grace, and enlist you now as a soldier of the cross. Remember, Christ takes the very dregs to be his soldiers. Every man that was in debt, and every man that was discontented, came to David, and he became a captain over them. Now, if you are in debt this morning to God's law, and cannot pay, if you are discontented with the devil's service, jaded and worn out with pleasure, come to Christ, and he will receive you, make you a soldier of the cross, and a follower of the Lamb. God be with you and bless you, from this day forth, even for ever!

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