

The Wall Daubed with Untempered Mortar

A Sermon

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"Because, even because, they have seduced My people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar: say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and you, O great hail-stones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it. Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing with which you have daubed it?" [Ezekiel 13:10-12](#).

EZEKIEL was sent to arouse the people of Jerusalem to a sense of danger. This task was in itself difficult enough since he had to deal with a slumbering people who were carnally secure. But the difficulty was much increased by the fact that a large number of base pretenders to prophecy, both male and female, sprang up at that time and exercised great influence among the people. They imitated the Prophet's speech. They came forward with their lies and prefaced them with the solemn words, "Thus says the Lord," pretending to have a commission from the Lord of Hosts.

Thus the people of Jerusalem scarcely knew which to believe—Ezekiel prophesying terrors—or these pretenders saying, "Peace, peace." Their evil hearts always leaned to the side of the false prophets because they flattered them grossly. They heaped to themselves teachers who, for a piece of bread, prophesied as they desired. You may well believe that the Prophet's blood often boiled within him as he saw his own labors spoiled, and the souls that he loved so well so fearfully deluded by the baseborn hirelings who wore a rough mantle to deceive. He was not of those who could be content to deliver his message and let others alone, as we nowadays are bid to do, but he turned upon the deceivers and denounced them with terrible earnestness because he saw them to be wolves in sheep's clothing devouring the flock.

Now, in these days we are somewhat similarly circumstanced. The true servant of God in his ministry dares not prophesy smooth things to unconverted men and women. He is the bearer of glad tidings to such as turn unto the Lord, but while "the burden of the Lord" is upon him concerning the impenitent, and such as believe not on the Lord Jesus Christ, he has heavy tidings for those who live estranged from God. These he warns of a fearful

looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation. He sees before them an eternity of utter destruction and he proclaims the day of vengeance of his God.

To deliver these mournful warnings boldly and fearlessly is no easy work, and to bring men to receive them is a labor impossible apart from the power of the Holy Spirit! Men love present pleasure and license and they hate to be told of the day when these things shall be required of them. Why toll the funeral knell when men love merry peals? Nor is this all, for as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do false prophets withstand us. Even at this hour there are those who oppose us—those who are always speaking smooth things to the people. With Satan at their head, that arch-master and prince of deceivers, there is a great company abroad in the world who are always saying, "It shall not be so. You shall have pleasure though you sin. You shall have rest though you disobey, and it shall be well with you at the end even though you reject the Gospel of Christ."

Not in so many words, but in effect this is the loud proclamation of the messengers of Satan who are permitted to buffet us. A Prophet's courage is still needed by preachers of the Word of God! O may we be able to say with Wesley—

"My life, my blood, I here present,
If for Your truth they may be spent:
Fulfill Your sovereign counsel, Lord
Your will be done, Your nature adored!

Give me Your strength, O God of power!
Then let wind blow, or thunders roar,
Your faithful witness will I be
"Tis fixed! I can do all through You."

Tonight we shall try, and may our puny power be strengthened by the power which comes from on high, to talk with any who may have been lulled into a state of false peace by anything to which they have listened of late, or who may have fallen into evil security simply by their own desires—their wishes being fathers to the deceitful hope that there is peace for them while yet they are living in sin.

I. Not taking up your time with any kind of preface, I shall advance at once to the text and you will notice that THE TEXT SPEAKS OF A WALL. It is a remarkable fact that the most ungodly men who persist in sinning with a high hand nevertheless are very pleased if they can find some defense for their sin. These men of Jerusalem were exceedingly gratified when they could get some wall, no matter how rotten it might be, behind which they might shelter themselves.

Some are such outrageous offenders that they can sin boldly with a brazen face and scorn to invent an excuse, but 999 out of every 1,000 prefer to have some kind of apology, some sort of hope, some refuge to which, in the hour of danger they can fly. Men look about them to discover some sort of wall or other behind which to shelter from conscience and Divine threat. I suppose this is because conscience is not quite dead in any man. In some men it has been so drugged and chloroformed that it never seems to act with anything like vigor, and when it speaks it is only with a still small voice and not at all with the thunder which its voice ought to have to the mind of men. Yet that little relic of conscience which with a microscope you can detect in all men, needs to be pacified—and men are glad if by any lie, however barefaced, they can create an excuse by which they may go on quietly in their sins.

Sing men a soft song of peace in sin and safety out of Christ, and they will cry your name up to the skies! You shall have a ready market, for every man will be a buyer. Perhaps the greatest wall behind which men in London shelter themselves is that of utter indifference to anything like Divine Truth. To men of all classes the great bread and cheese and jacket question is the grand question of the day, "What shall we eat? What shall we drink? And how shall we be clothed?" Let a man attend to his business and what other care need he have? Let the working man go about his toil and give a fair day's work for a fair day's wage, and what has he to do with the world to come? Let the merchant meet his bills and keep clear of the bankruptcy court, and what has he to fear as to the court of Heaven? Why need he worry his head about dying and rising again from the dead?

The mass of mankind, though they will put up with religion and will even show some sort of interest in it, and some decent respect thereto, yet have no more sense of its reality or its power than the swine that feed at a trough. Look at these dense masses thronging the thoroughfares of this huge city, and answer me—Are not the most of them like the stones in Jordan's bed, dead and lifeless as to spiritual things? What care they for Heaven or Hell? What care they about the precious blood of Jesus, or about the power of the Holy Spirit? It is a great deal more important question to them what horse won the Derby, or what turf speculator gained thereby, than to ask who is going down to Hell, or who has an interest in the precious blood of Christ.

Some silly dancer at the opera. Some new invention. Some novel trick of magic. Some fresh anything or nothing, and the world is all agog! But as to things which will outlast sun and moon and stand fast when yon blue Heaven, like a scroll, has been rolled up and put away—these all important things our wiseacres think but trifles—and they continue trampling God's eternal Truth beneath their feet as swine trample pearls! And they rush madly after the bubbles of this world as though they were all that men were made to hunt after. This is the wall behind which many men hide. "It really does not matter. It will be all

right at the last. Why make so much ado about it? Let a man mind his business and take what comes."

Alas! Alas, for an age given up to eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage! Has it never heard of Noah's flood, or of that greater deluge which so soon will sweep them all away? The great hailstones and tempest of last Friday fluttered them a little, but they went to their sports again when the flashes of lightning had ceased. Numbers, however, are not quite so stupid, so besotted, so blind, so brutalized as to put up with this. They have a heart which palpitates with a measure of spiritual fear and will not be silenced by gross material considerations. Like a crying child their conscience will be heard. Like a horse-leech it ever cries, "Give, give," and will not be content.

Who comes next? Who is the anointed one of Satan to quiet this spirit? Who will yield a quietus to an alarmed mind? See yonder priest pointing to the wall of ceremonies behind which many rest so contentedly? Were you not christened? Oh, the blessedness of that christening—a thing which is as gross a piece of evil as ever was practiced by Mohamed—which has no more warrant in the Word of God than the baptism of bells or the burning of Hindu widows! And yet this idle farce, this wicked mockery, this godfathering and godmothering, no ordinance of God's, but an invention of the Pope of Rome—this is a soul-saving thing, supposedly—and regenerates the children that are subjected to it! Behind this wall of baptismal regeneration, crowds find a temporary rest.

And then comes the confirmation, another rite of imbecility! A rite, again, which has no Scriptural warrant, but is a piece of nonsense and falsehood from beginning to end. Then follows what priests call a "Sacrament," a blessed ordinance if rightly used to those who are saved, but a dreadful perversion if administered to unsaved persons with the idea that through bread and wine, which can only enter into the stomach, Divine Grace can be communicated to the heart—as if spirituals could be wrapped up in carnality—as if the infinite Grace of the blessed Father could be brought to us by cakes which the baker bakes in the oven, or wine that runs forth from the winepress trod from the grapes of earth!

Yet are there thousands of people, no, millions of our fellow men, not Romanists either, so they say, who think that the christening and the confirming, and the "Sacrament," and perhaps the priestly burial at the last will make it all right. Has not God declared, "Incense is an abomination unto Me. Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates"? And in saying that He is plainly showing that outward ceremonies, apart from a gracious heart, He could not bear! Outward ordinances, even when most gorgeous, are nothing when compared to walking and living righteously.

To walk before God in holiness—this is acceptable to Him. Not the visible, not the symbolical, not the outward, but the inward, the spiritual, the heart worship—this it is which God accepts. Go and rend your hearts, not your garments. Seek the bread which came down from Heaven, not the baker's wafers! Think of Christ, and not of your own doings. Draw

near to Him and not to the outward altars of wood and stone. Bow before the Priest in the heavens, and not before pretenders here below! Confess to the Lord, and not to prying confessors! This sacramental theory, which is now forced upon us in England under the name and sanction and authority of the National Church—this is a wall, a bowing wall, and a tottering fence—behind which hundreds seek to find shelter, but which, as the Lord my God lives, in the day of His coming He will sweep away and not a vestige thereof shall be left!

In the day when He comes to judge the earth in righteousness, woe unto those who cry, "We have eaten and drunk in Your Presence," for what is this? Where has God required it at your hands? Woe yet seven times to those who have deluded the people! Their judgment is heavy and it tarries not. There are but few among you, dear Friends, perhaps, who care for this sacramental theory. You are not idiots and therefore you sneer at it, but you may be building another wall, namely, that of self-righteousness. This is the more popular wall by far! How many have been piling up their wall, and gathering their wood, their hay, their stubble with which to erect a defense to screen themselves from God by their own doings?

They pray so regularly! They read the Bible so constantly! They attend a place of worship with such precision! They owe no man anything! They have a contribution for the cause of charity. They give a donation for anything that is being done by the Church of God—and these are their confidences. They have done this and that, and the other. Like the Pharisee of old they have fasted twice in the week. They have paid tithes of all they possess. It is all in vain that this grand old Book thunders out against self-righteousness—self-righteousness still lives! It is all in vain that God declares that by the works of the Law there shall no flesh living be justified—men will persist in trying to be justified by the works of that Law which can only curse them, and cannot save them!

This Book declares again and again that we are justified by faith, that we must be saved through the righteousness of Christ—its great teaching is this—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved." But for all that man goes his way and declares that he will force a path to Heaven, even up the steep and blazing sides of Sinai, and will do what God declares to be impossible, namely, lay another foundation beside that which God has laid in the work and Person of His dear Son!

O my Hearers, if you are sheltering behind your good works, I pray that you may be delivered from the delusion and that you may find no refuge there, for only Christ can save you! The wall will fall, daub it as you will—it must come down—it is no refuge for a perishing sinner—

"What is all righteousness that men devise? What but a sordid bargain for the skies? But Christ as soon would abdicate His own, As stoop from Heaven to sell the proud a throne." II. And now, secondly, WHENEVER A MAN TRIES TO BUILD A WALL BEHIND WHICH

TO SHELTER HE ALWAYS FINDS A VOLUNTEER BAND OF READY ASSISTANTS. If he were laboring to build upon the

foundation which God has laid, a great company would rise against him, but whenever he begins to put up a structure of his own, crowds come to help him. What a multitude there are who will assist a rebellious spirit to build his mud wall of false security! For instance, a man who is easy in his pleasures—how many will help him to continue at his ease? "He is right," says one. "You are a good fellow," says another. And they both try to keep him in countenance by their company.

"Oh," says one, "never care because one of those Puritan fellows has been troubling your conscience!" "Do not listen to him," answers another. And so they help to daub the wall and plaster it till it looks as neat and substantial as if it were built of polished stones. When these people get together you would really believe, to hear them talk, that they were the only wise people in all the world and that the men who give due consideration to religion and the next world are positively mad, or infected with irrational fanaticism! If they happen to be of the educated class, it is wonderful how learned they become in matters of which they know nothing! As for boastful talkers, how they weigh us all and do up our motives in parcels, as grocers do their goods!

We have sometimes met with men, wise in their own conceit, as ignorant of religion as the chairs they lolled upon. They in the grandest manner denounce the Puritans and sneer at "those hypocrites" who are always talking about another world. It is observable that the more their intellects become disturbed by wine or beer, the more they consider themselves capable of passing judgment upon eternal realities—in fact, a man half drunk is altogether infallible! Meanwhile the men who believe that there is a God, and who love Him and wish to serve Him. The men who believe that there is another state and wish to be prepared for it, are noted down as mere simpletons, or crafty men who would make a gain of godliness. We do not accept the verdict, but appeal to the judgment to come.

Meanwhile we can well understand how this unanimity in folly helps to daub the wall when a man has once put it up! All his friends come in to help him with their commendations, emulating one another in their Babel building. Another company of scoffers will loudly boast themselves and cry, "Yes, you are all right in continuing in neglect of God and of Divine Truth because the saints are no better than they should be. I remember what So-and-So did once—he was a deacon! And I know the inconsistencies of Mr. Zealous, and he is one of the parsons." Ah, when they get hold of a few inconsistencies of professors, how they daub their wall with them! Truly they eat the sin of God's people as men eat bread!

Then they say in their assemblies, "These men talk about Divine Truth, but they are all liars! They speak to us religiously but they are moved by selfish motives, and in private they are as bad as we are." So by bespattering others they comfort themselves. Like hyenas and wolves they delight to dwell among the desolations of former splendor. Behold these

men—they pull down the characters of others and then, piling the stones one upon another—they shelter behind the wall which they have constructed! If they would let their reason speak, they would know that if everybody else should be hypocrites, that will make Hell none the cooler to them when they are condemned to lie there! And that if others should be inconsistent with their religion, that should be no excuse to them for neglecting it, but rather a warning to them, that they, at least, should be honest in their seeking unto God.

Yet any filth, especially such filth as this, will do to make untempered mortar with which to daub the bowing walls behind which the sinner's conscience skulks in hopeless hope of rest. These poor creatures can make bricks without straw, and frame confidences out of vanities. Alas for them! They who will be deceived shall be given over to delusion. A numerous body of daubers gather at the sign of the "Sneerer," in Atheist Street—and with their doubts, or their supposed doubts of inspiration and biblical authenticity—are ready to daub and plaster any amount of wall an inch thick. What a splendid barrow-load of untempered mortar that Bishop of Natal brought us from the Zulus! And then the "Essays and Reviews," like industrious hood-men, brought a fine heap of the same precious commodity!

Many skeptics almost screamed with delight when they discovered that now, now, now, there was some excuse for not obeying God—some reason for being in rebellion against Him—because certain figures did not seem to tally and arithmetic was arrayed against Revelation! Years before that they ground up the rocks and tried to make a cement out of them, but the business did not answer. Now they revive old infidelities, like old Babylonian bricks made of chopped straw, and pass them off as new productions of the infernal brickfield. The stock doubts are those which were used 200 years ago, new faced, but still the same.

Certain men will treasure up worn-out sophisms and produce them with remarkable dexterity, just when a man's mind is beginning to be aroused, and so manage to send him to sleep again! How strangely ready are men to make Biblical difficulties into excuses for impenitence! Did I hear a man say, "I will not believe in Jesus because I cannot see how the Israelites could have multiplied so quickly in Egypt"? If so, I reply, "You fool! Will that make your doom any lighter when you will be called for judgment before God's great bar? Or will that be any reason for your sinning against the light you already have, because you do not happen to comprehend everything which is recorded in Sacred Writ?" Perhaps God never meant you should comprehend all His Word. What would it improve you if you solve all mysteries? Would that soften your heart?

If our salvation depended upon our answering all the difficulties of the Bible, it might be a fair excuse for us if we did not understand it. But as our salvation depends upon our believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, and submitting ourselves to the Divine will, there can be no excuse for us, whatever our merely critical doubts and difficulties may be—for there is no doubt about the existence of God in the mind of a reasonable man—and there should be no doubt about the Deity of Christ in any man's mind who has once read the four

Evangelists. If hearing the Divine command to come to Christ and live, you do not come to Christ and live—you may daub your wall with untempered mortar, but it will not stand in the day when God shall let loose the messengers of His justice and bid them beat upon your defenseless head.

If the wall is built of ceremonies, how many are busy daubing that! What multitudes of books are streaming from the press, books of ability, too—all going to show that salvation is infallibly connected with a mechanical process, conducted by specified officials—and not a spiritual work independent of all outward performances! And if you choose to give yourselves up to the fiction that salvation is by forms and ceremonies, you have only to lay the foundation and there will be many who will compliment and applaud you—and take pleasure in daubing the wall with their little daub of untempered mortar.

The priests will bespatter you with arguments from tradition and quotations from the fathers! Their votaries will daub you with soft speeches upon your zeal and discretion. The most impotent of all falsehoods is, by the deep cunning of its friends, made to go upon its belly like a serpent and to deceive men and women as the old serpent deceived our mother Eve. I shall not, however, tarry upon this. It is sufficiently plain that if you will but build a wall of that sort, there will be plenty who will help to daub it.

III. But now, in the next place, THE WORD OF GOD DECLARES THAT THIS WALL WILL NOT STAND. "It shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and you, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it." You had an illustration of this last Friday. First there came a heavy deluge of rain. Then huge hailstones descended with enormous force and a terrific tempest swept over the face of the earth. The wall to which Ezekiel alludes is one of the cob walls in the East, daubed with bad mortar which had not been well tempered, that is to say, not well mixed with the straw which they use in place of the hair which we use in England.

When the rain comes it softens the whole structure of such a wall, melts it, and washes it quite away. Such a deluge as that is coming before long to try and test every human hope. It comes to some men when they enter upon times of spiritual trial. It is a blessed thing to have this test in this life, for although the trial is dreadfully severe, and although the true and the false seem to be in confusion, yet it may lead to a blessed result! I would not give a farthing for your religion if you have never doubted about it! If you have never had a shaking to and fro in your soul till it seemed that every bone and muscle in your mental anatomy was strained, you never will believe thoroughly.

When these times come, all the daubing with untempered mortar will be swept away by the overflowing shower and the hailstones which come down upon it! But blessed shall he be whose work shall endure! But if the test comes not thus it will usually come at death. Oh how many, when dying, have been alarmed with the things which cheered them most before! How have their joys changed to miseries! And their hopes that once were like angels,

cast off their masks and stood as devils before them beckoning them to destruction! Men have counted themselves rich, but as in the miser's dream the gold he clutches dissolves into thin air—so has their spiritual wealth all passed away. They reckoned that they were saved and near to Heaven, when lo, their vessel struck upon the awful rock and was dashed to pieces, and they themselves were cast away even at the harbor's mouth!

Soul, if you do not believe in Jesus—if your heart has never repented of sin, if you have never clung to a bleeding Savior—I tell you death will go hard with you! Those foaming billows of the river Jordan will not deceive you. Death will play no merry tune in your ears and sing you no siren song. That skeleton will be honest with you—will pull off the visors, and take up the glass and make you see yourself a rotten hypocrite! If you have been resting upon anything but Christ, death will make you quiver! And if death does not do it—for some men die like lambs, and, like sheep are they laid in the grave (but the worm shall still feed upon them)—if death does not do it, the judgment shall!

There is a judgment which comes to all men at the moment when the spirit leaves the body. Ah, you who despise God, you will think of Divine Truth in another way in that hour when your naked spirits shiver in the balances of Justice and God weighs you finally to decide your fate forever! Right or wrong you will find it no child's play, then! Nor will it be child's play when, after you have suffered for awhile, the dreadful trumpet sounds! The trumpet which earth and Heaven wait to hear, when the graves yield up their dead, and death and Hell yield up the dead that are in them—when your spirit comes back to the body in which it once lived, and sinned, and died.

Alas for your vain confidence in that tremendous hour! O Sirs, then the walls which are not based upon the Rock of Ages will stand you in but sorry stead. You will flee away from your good works then, and from your ceremonies, and from all those indulgences and unbelief in which you once found comfort. You may flee from them, but you shall not flee from Him who sits upon the Throne! From His hands shall flash the thunderbolts! From His Heaven shall you fall, O you great hailstones, and down to the nethermost depths your condemned, despairing spirit, must descend! This is God's Word—this is God's Truth! Reject it not. Accept it! Fly to the refuge which the Gospel provides, and may the Holy Spirit save you evermore.

IV. And now my last point—and I shall not keep you any longer—is this: ACCORDING TO THE TEXT, IF WE SHALL BE FOUND LOST AT THE LAST, IT WILL BE AN EVERLASTING REPROACH TO US THAT WE ONCE ACCEPTED THE FALSE HELPS OF OUR FRIENDS. "Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing with which you have daubed it?"

And who will say this? Imagine, but for a moment, a spirit cast away into the land of darkness and everlasting nightshade! There it dwells with kindred souls and a voice is heard falling on its ear—"Where is the daubing with which you have daubed it?" That voice may

proceed from many lips. It may come from the lips of Jesus. "I said to you, 'Come unto Me and live,' but you would not come. You refused the refuge which I presented to you. You chose your own works, and rested in ceremonies of your own devising—and now where is the daubing with which you have daubed it? Where are your good works and your prayers now? Lost Soul, you would not have My blood—where are your good works and your self-righteousness now? You would not come and trust in Me alone—where are your christenings and your confirmations and all your inventions? Now that you are cast away without hope, what do you think of them? Where is the daubing with which you have daubed it?"

I could imagine such a voice as that coming from a faithful minister, or other Christian laborer who may have honestly pointed out to you the one and only way of salvation. You shall hear ringing through those halls of woe the voice that addressed you tonight! If you perish, your memory shall make you remember the very tones I use! I told you you would perish if you did not trust in Christ, but you sought salvation somewhere else, and you shall hear me saying, then, to you, "Where is the daubing with which you have daubed it?" Some of you young women may hear the voice of that dear mother in Israel who has sought to bring you to Christ, whose loving tenderness you have made so light of. Some of you shall listen to a father's voice, whose earnest warnings you have despised.

Each one educated within the Gospel's pale shall hear the voice ringing from the servants of God who sought your good—"Where, after all, are your hopes? Where are your delusions and your false trusts?" "Where is the daubing with which you have daubed it?" And there shall come another voice, with quite another tone—a hoarse and horrible voice—a voice full of malice and of grim laughter which shall say, "Where is the daubing with which you have daubed it?" You shall understand it to be the voice of him who once deceived you—the fallen spirit—Satan! Ah, how he will rejoice! How he will make merry with you when he shall have led you away from the Cross to the crucifix! How he will rejoice when he shall have enticed you from Christ to the parish priest!

How he will rejoice when he shall have allured you from the Bible to the traditions of men! How he will rejoice when he shall have charmed you away from the heavenly Messenger to defile yourself with the pleasures and frivolities of this world. He who was your deceiver here shall become your tormentor hereafter, and he will say, "Your Church attendance and your Chapel attendance, your baptism, your "Sacrament"-taking, your readings of the Bible—where are these now? Your hearts were not right in the sight of God any more than mine, and you are damned as I am."

Ah, I pray you escape for your lives, lest the arrows of Satanic malice pierce you through and through when the walls of your false hope are overthrown! There shall be heard amidst that thick darkness and horrid gloom, that never shall be broken by a ray of light, another voice which once you knew. Perhaps the husband shall hear the voice of the wife who shall say, "Ah, where is the daubing with which you have daubed it? You would not let me go to

the House of God! You laughed me out of my religion! I was once a young unmarried woman who cared for the things of God in some respects. You courted me and enticed me away from my father's God, and then you laughed me out of my prayers and Sunday worship. You have laughed me into Hell, but you cannot laugh me out of it again."

There will be one railing upon the other, the friend upon the friend, and those who have sinned together, grossly sinned, piercing each other through and through with bitter recollections, and taunting jeers. "Ah," says one, "you took me to the beer house. I came a young man fresh from the country to work in that carpenter's shop and you were the man who introduced me to that ungodly club, and laughed the nonsense out of me, as you said, but now where is the daubing with which you have daubed it? You said Tom Paine understood the whole matter and that you could prove as easily as that twice two make four that there was no truth in the Bible—but where, now, is the daubing with which you have daubed it? Find me now but a drop of cold water to cool me upon this bed of flame! Come here, now, and stop this palpitating heart, you loud-voiced jester whose wit was liable to set the table on a roar! Where is the daubing with which you have daubed it?"

Recriminations will be exchanged among the lost and will occasion much of that weeping and gnashing of teeth which is their portion. This is probably the reason why the rich man would not have his brothers come into the place of torment. Ah, how terrible the meeting of the betrayer and the betrayed—the seducer and his victim—the priest and his dupe! How pitiful the vicious and their pupils! Unbelievers and their followers! As glowing ashes heaped together increase the heat, so will companies of sinners inflame each others miseries. "Bind them up in bundles to burn them" is a sentence terrible, indeed! O my Hearers, tempt not your own destruction! Be warned to escape before your false refuges shall be your shame and scorn eternally!

And then, last of all, your own conscience, from which you never can escape, which is, perhaps, the worm that never dies—and the flame which kindles the fire of remorse that never shall be quenched—your conscience will say to you, "Where is the daubing with which you have daubed it?" A man cannot have a worse tormentor than a guilty conscience. This, like a bloodhound, follows at his heels remorselessly. Its deep baying is not to be silenced and its ferocity cannot be appeased. To be sick at heart forever! Forever a disappointed man! Forever self-accused and self-condemned! O that men were wise enough to dread such a fate! I pray you, unconverted Friends, do not commit spiritual suicide! Do not murder your own souls! Condemn not yourselves to despair and remorse, but by God's good Grace turn unto Him and live!

I am afraid of some for you good people who come here regularly and are not converted. Perhaps you think you are Christians while you are not. Or perhaps you even profess to be Christians but the life of God is not in you. Be you not deceived! Members of this Church,

take heed that you are not deceived! Yes, I say to myself, be sure, Preacher, that you take heed lest you yourself become a castaway!

Brothers and Sisters, we must be right here! We cannot bear to have any question in this matter! We must, since this has to do with eternity, and with an immortal soul, make sure work here. Down with these rotten walls! With one mighty heave let every man lend a shoulder and hurl them over! Down with every false confidence, and then come to the foundation which Christ has laid and build upon it and say—

"You, O Christ, are all I need,
More than all in You I find."

If we build there we shall build well, but if we build elsewhere, the great hailstones, and the overflowing shower and the total destruction will overwhelm us! As you remember this, may God help you to escape from ruin, for Jesus' sake.