

The Peace of the Devil and the Peace of God

A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, AUGUST 3, 1890,

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"When a strong man armed keeps his palace, his goods are in peace." [Luke 11:21](#).

"The Lord will give strength unto His people, the Lord will bless His people with peace."
[Psalm 29:11](#).

PEACE is a condition of things greatly to be desired. To dread no outward disturbance and to feel no inward storm—who does not desire such a state? Peace has been called a pearl and rightly, for it is precious and smiles with soft, mild radiance bedecking the heart that wears it. It is, indeed, a pearl of great price—he that has it has more than riches. If his peace is, in very deed, the true pearl, he who wears it in his breast is one of the favored sons of God. There may be some few people in the world who do not love peace, but we love not their spirit. Certain stormy natures delight in tempest and, like sea birds, ride on the crests of raging billows. Men of the Byron type are restless and an atmosphere of peace suits them not. Their spirits, like thunderbolts, rush onward, finding pleasure in the crash with which they force their willful way.

I need not go out of my way for such, for in vain we speak to those who will not hear. The most of us were cast in another mold. We are not ravens and cannot remain forever on the wing. But, like the dove of Noah, we seek rest for the soles of our feet and we fly here and there until we find the olive leaf of peace. How often, amid the disturbances of this troubled world, have we cried, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away and be at rest!" We were not reared like eaglets on stern crags among the callow lightning—we listen to the turtle's voice and love the brooks that warble music as they flow. I know that many of you sigh for rest—you labor that you may enter into it. If you have found the rest which Jesus gives, your heart is sure to sing—

"Forever here my rest shall be
Close to Your bleeding side:
This all my hope, and all my plea—
For me the Savior died."

Peace and rest are two names for a flower which buds on earth, but only found full-blown in Heaven! Yet even the faint perfume of the unopened blossom excites our strong desire. Gently does the Savior attract us to Himself by that sweet call—"Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Every precious thing in this world is sure to be counterfeited. If the government mint issues gold and silver money, rogues will be found to make spurious coin. The more a thing is cried up, the more is there need of caution that you are not taken in with base imitations of it. Satan is the cunning ape

of God and whatever God does, he tries to do the same with his enchantments. Therefore, while there is a peace more precious than the gold of Ophir, there is another peace which is worse than worthless! When a soul is borne up upon the waters of false peace, its case is hopeless till that peace is dried up and the soul is stranded in self-despair.

I thought this morning I might do you some service if I tried to set forth the two peaces, the peace of the devil and the peace of God. May God the Holy Spirit give discerning hearts to all of you, that you may not be deceived by the poisonous imitation of the waters of peace! May you discern the counterfeit and reject it with indignation! And may you find the true peace at the feet of the Prince of Peace! Oh, for "the peace of God, which passes all understanding"! For my part, I should dread to give peace to anyone, upon any subject at the expense of the Truth of God. A temporary hope is ill purchased at the cost of cruel disappointment.

A poor woman was the loving mother of an only son. He was very dear to her. He fell sick, indeed, he was sick unto death but the mother could not bear to think so. She scraped together the necessary fee for a physician and, oh, the peace of heart she had when the trusted man came downstairs and said to her, "Your son will recover. There is no grave cause to fear. Nurse him carefully and very soon he will be at his post again." The mother was restful of heart, for she believed the doctor. Within a single day her son died and those hours of false peace were the wormwood and the gall of her affliction. It was a sad, sad pity to have raised her hopes for she cried, "Oh, if I had known that he was going to die, I should not then so bitterly have felt his loss! But I am grievously disappointed. How could the doctor tell me he would

live?"

The physician was either greatly mistaken, or else wished to soothe the mother's manifest anguish. If the latter was the case, his untruthfulness was not wise. I cannot follow the same course. It is a pity to create a peace which is baseless. It is lamentable to me that anyone of you should be slumbering in peace when a great danger is near which will cause that peace to vanish as a dream when one awakes. Avoid that peace which will prove deceptive in the present and ruinous in the future—long for that which will keep your heart and mind today and forever. Follow me, I pray you, while I speak of the two forms of peace set forth in my two texts.

I. First, there is THE DEVIL'S PEACE. The foul spirit keeps things quiet in the heart over which he rules—"When a strong man armed keeps his palace, his goods are in peace." The heart of man is not lawfully Satan's palace, but he has made it so by capture. In his pride he loves to dwell in the midst of this captured stronghold so that he may vaunt himself over the Most High from whom he has taken the heart of His creature. Satan values a conquered human heart as a palace—he takes pleasure in domineering over the soul which he has forcibly torn away from God. That he may dwell securely, he covers himself with armor and

he keeps constant watch and ward. Hence the house is quiet, for his watchful power puts down every token of mutiny against his tyranny.

The Psalmist describes the dreadful peace of the wicked in Psalm seventy-three—"There are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men." Everything goes smoothly with the man who is left in this fatal condition—"Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish." Though it would seem that they are really prospering, it is not so—they are set in slippery places and they will be cast down unto destruction. There is really nothing enviable in the condition of the godless, but everything pitiable. They cry, "Peace, peace," where there is no peace. What peace can there be to those whose rebellions are so many? Satan makes conscience lie still that his power may be confirmed over the heart of the ungodly.

I may be speaking to some here who are in good health, have a fair trade and enjoy credit with their neighbors and therefore they have an earthly peace and care nothing about being at peace with God. My design shall be to disturb that peace, for if it is the peace of the devil. The sooner it is broken the better for the soul. This peace is often merely outward. Men put on the air of peace when they do not feel it in their hearts. You will often meet with irreligious men who tell you that they are perfectly happy and then ask—What do they want with Christ? They feel themselves all right—what need have they of a new birth? They are getting on so well without God's blessing that they do not care to seek it. Their laughter is loud, their jests are endless, their cares sit lightly upon them.

They appear to have no anxiety for the faults of the past, the temptations of the present, or the recompenses of the future—and yet this peace is all external. The crust of ice is hardly strong enough to bear a fly. Follow them to their beds and see their fear! Listen to them in a thunderstorm—see them at sea in a tempest and you will find that they are the victims of an awful dread. Some display a peace of sheer bravado. They want to seem happy and therefore they put on the mask of the merry Andrew. The plowboy, when he goes through the churchyard, is afraid of ghosts and therefore whistles to keep his courage up—and many who are loaded with apprehension try to conceal it by those flippant songs in which they boast of "driving dull care away." In the secret of their soul that same dull care sits on the throne of their hearts and is not to be driven away by the ballad, the fiddle or the dance.

Those are often the slaves of misery who figure as the children of mirth. Is it not so with many? When they speak of pleasure, it is from the teeth outward, for there is no Artesian well of joy springing from the depths of their soul. They hold themselves up as the mirror of pleasure while their heart is breaking with unutterable pain. In all who have not come to Christ and found peace through His precious blood, their peace is false. Let them say what they will of it, it has no foundation or justification. They have no peace with God for it is written, "There is no peace, says my God, to the

wicked." The great God is the high contracting party with whom peace must be made and if He disowns it, in vain will a man pretend to possess it!

A sinner may say, "I am at peace as to God" but if this comes of forgetting or ignoring Him, it is a sorry sham. If a man has to forget God before he has peace, that fact betrays a fatal secret. If the man, on remembering God, is troubled, then his peace is a mere writing on the sand. Such peace is false peace and what true man will solace himself with that which is false? Better know that we are at war, if it is so, than dote upon a peace which is a fool's paradise and only exists in fancy. I had rather be wounded in a thousand spiritual conflicts than be soothed into eternal destruction by a false peace! Let my hopes be slain by the sword of the Truth of God rather than nourished on the bread of lies. God forgive that we should prophesy smooth things for ourselves while the pen of justice is signing our death warrant!

One prayer I often pray—"Lord, let me know the worst of my case." And though there is no great pleasure in such a petition, I would suggest that all of you should offer it. It can do you no harm. Pray with the Psalmist, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there are any wicked ways in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." See to it that you are not liars unto your own souls. To many this peace comes through ignorance. They do not know those terrible Truths which would make peace impossible. They know not that sin is a deadly viper and therefore they toy with it as with a bird.

They are scarcely conscious that they have committed any sin worth mentioning, but if the light of God's Law were turned upon them they would see that they are guilty before God and exceedingly vile. They are not innocent, as they suppose, but guilty before the living God! Let the Holy Spirit work in a man a sense of sin and an expectation of judgment to come and I guarantee you he will have no more peace till he has fled for refuge to the hope set before him in the Gospel! If any of you are wrapped up in a peace woven in the loom of ignorance, I pray God it may be torn to shreds! "But," cries one, "Where ignorance is peace, 'tis folly to be wise." No, no! But where peace is founded on ignorance, it is folly begetting folly!

Oh, be wise, and drink not the fool's cordial! Know your true condition even though that knowledge may cost you present loss of rest. To keep men ignorant is one of Satan's devices because they are then easier to govern—he dreads that you should go where the Gospel is preached! If any of you are under Satan's dominion, you are here this morning against your tyrant's wishes. If he could have his way you would never come within earshot of God's Word! Even now he will try to make you feel drowsy and inattentive lest the arousing Gospel should awaken you. O my Hearers, shun the ignorance which fosters false peace and the false peace which would make you content without the knowledge of God!

The devil greatly rejoices because in these days so many ministers do not preach the Gospel—Satan is glad if he can poison the stream at the fountainhead! He rejoices if he can

make the preacher of the Gospel a mere moral essayist, or a talker of his own inventions, for then those who go to hear him will be in no danger of being driven by trouble of mind to fly to Christ. I pray you, if you are wrapped in a peace that will not bear the light of day, bestir yourselves and escape from your perilous condition!

With many, however, it is not so much ignorance as thoughtlessness. Multitudes of persons know, if they would know, but they make no use of their knowledge for they never think. What a pity to perish forever from lack of consideration! A man has a letter given to him. He puts it in his pocket and does not open it. He goes out tomorrow for his day's pleasure and he promises himself that he will open the letter on Tuesday, when the Bank Holiday is over. Suppose in that letter there should be a warning of some plot against his life, or information of his mother being at the point of death, or of the sudden illness of a favorite child? What will he say to himself if he opens that letter too late? The Bible is to many a man God's unopened letter. Alas, how little do men search the Scriptures! If they do read them, they do it mechanically and do not think over their warnings.

Why will not men think? Thoughtlessness is one of Satan's great nets in which he entangles many. If the devil can keep you from thinking, he will keep you from believing! If he can keep you in the giddy whirl of vicious pleasure, or even of idle levity, he can make sure of you. Possibly he can effect his purpose by getting you absorbed in politics, or parish matters, or science, or business. Little does he care which, so long as he can draw you off from thinking of God and of your soul and of eternal things. Oh, that I could draw a mighty bow and shoot some piercing shaft which would go over the wall and carry death to that traitor, False-Peace! How gladly would I blow a blast most loud and break the spell of the Father of Lies and bring you from under his fatal fascination!

This peace, in many cases, is also the result of carnal security. Men say, "Well, well. We have not been much troubled yet and why should we care? We have lived in sin and we have not suffered for it. In fact, we have prospered through our contempt of scruples." Of old, men said, "Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were." And today they cry, "No deluge of fire has broken out upon us. These Christians say that the earth and all the works of men will be burned up and the very elements will melt with fervent heat! But we see no likelihood of it! In the heavens there is no sign of the Son of Man—no cloud, no Great White Throne—no token of the Judgment! Everything goes on calmly enough—why need we disturb ourselves?"

Thus, like the sluggard in the Proverbs, they ask for a little more slumber. They are willingly ignorant that once upon a time, in the olden days, it was so upon this earth and men married and were given in marriage. And they ate and drank and were drunken—and as it was told them, so it happened—for the Flood came and swept them all away! "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them." Beware, O men of this generation, lest this happen unto you, also, and the deluge of fire be upon you before

you have escaped to Christ who alone is the Ark of souls! Will things always be as they have been? Can you be sure of it? Are you not warned that it will not be so? Your eyes are not so clear as once they were! Your limbs are not so vigorous as once they were. If there is no change in the world, there is a great change in you during the last few years!

Before tomorrow's sun has risen you may lie upon the bed of death! Therefore, I pray you, set it not to your seal that you have much goods laid up for many years—for this night your soul may be required of you. In a moment shall you be troubled—the Avenger shall leap through the window, though you think you have made fast the door—and you shall not escape. O Sirs, shall not my voice disturb your wicked slumbers, or must you sleep on till the trumpet shall awaken you, not to hope, but to condemnation? Soon shall He come who now would save you, but then must condemn you to the place of everlasting banishment! O Lord, have mercy upon those who are bewitched by carnal security! Break the enchantments of the deceiver.

Some, again, have a peace that comes of superstition. "Well," they say, "we know that this is true which has been spoken, but it does not bear upon us. We are all right—we were made members of Christ, children of God and heirs of the kingdom of Heaven in our infant baptism! We have been confirmed and we have partaken of the holy communion. We have attended our church, or we have gone to our meeting-house with much regularity. Therefore we feel that for us there is a sure hope." O Souls, beware of saying, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these." Joab, in the day when Solomon executed the vengeance of God against him, instead of confessing his fault and seeking mercy, hoped for safety in the sanctuary and therefore stood with his hands upon the horns of the altar.

The tidings came to the king, "He is by the altar." But the stern sentence was given, "Fall upon him, and bury him." And so he perished in the Holy Place where God's sacrifice was known to be offered. So will you die if you do not trust in the Lord Jesus—even though your hands should lie upon your Baptism and your Lord's Supper. No outward performance can enable you to dispense with inward repentance and faith. If your heart is not right with God you shall perish with the sacramental bread in your mouth and go from the baptismal waters to the fires of Hell! Beware of the peace which is drawn from the stagnant pool of superstition—it will carry death into your soul.

Alas, there is a peace which does not lie in believing too much, but in believing too little! Unbelief brings false peace to thousands. If Satan can persuade you that, after all, these things are not so. If he can lead you to disbelieve your Bible. If he can lead you to think that there is no God, or that, if there is a God, He takes no account of men and will never call them to judgment—then the arch-deceiver will make sure of you and keep his goods in peace! I charge you, beware of that peace which is founded upon the denial of those Truths of God which your own conscience teaches you. Sin must be punished and if your peace is

built upon the supposition that it will not be so, your foundation is even less to be depended upon than the sand. Hazard not your soul upon a lie!

I fear that many are kept in peace through companionship. Hand joins in hand—the man would be troubled, but he meets his old friend who is a skeptic—and he laughs his fears out of him. The woman gets home and talks with what she calls, "her friends," who are as godless as herself—and she is by their tattle confirmed in her carelessness. O Sirs, your friends cannot deliver you if you lose your souls through their means! Choose rather as friends those who roughly tell you solemn truths than those who with excess of sweetness would flatter you to your everlasting undoing.

Once more, dear Friends, I say this—and may God make it come with power to some—peace caused by the devil is often the awful prelude of the last tremendous storm. One who described to me the earthquake in the south of France said, "That morning when we rose, I never saw more lovely weather. Everything smiled deliciously across the blue Mediterranean and the azure sky was without a cloud. Suddenly, without a moment's warning, a tremor seized the earth and there was a great cry of men and women in their fright." It usually happens, before tremendous convulsions of Nature, that there is an ominous calm. You must have noticed, a few minutes before a storm, how awfully still everything becomes. The air is motionless, the birds sit mute upon the bough—not a leaf is stirring, all is silent expectation.

Deceive not yourself—with wings of flame the tempest is hurrying on and while you speak it bursts upon you— casting all things into confusion and amazement. Before the last dread hurricane of doom a soul may be asleep and all around it there may be a deep calm. Beware of the treacherous peace! Beware of insensibility! Your unfeeling state should warn you that you are given over to destruction. In the higher and colder latitudes, when men feel a sleepiness stealing over them, their companions stir them up and rub them and will not let them slumber—for to sleep is to wake no more. The man pleads, "Let me sleep a half-an-hour and I shall be so refreshed." Alas, if he sleeps he shall do ill, for he will grow rigid in the death which frost brings to one! Go on, wise friends, and compassionately shake him! Hurry him to and fro, or rub him vigorously till he grows sore!

I cannot get hold of you at this present hour with my hands, nor would I wish to give you a bodily shaking, but oh, that I could do this spiritually and wake you up! I cannot leave you to sleep your soul into perdition! Come, Woman, you must bestir yourself, you must quit this fatal stupor, this deadly peace or else you will pass away from the world of hope, and wake up in the dungeon of despair! I have now spoken as much as I think wise upon this terrible subject—may the Holy Spirit bless it to you all! It is not my speaking—it is your thinking which is now needed. The Lord move you to holy thought!

II. Now we come to the second part of our discourse upon which we hope to speak with far greater pleasure. The Psalmist says, "The Lord will bless His people with peace." Here

we have THE LORD'S PEACE. I trust numbers of you are now enjoying it! A man of God lay dying, but he was very calm—more—he was supremely happy! He filled the house with cheerfulness. All who came to see him, knowing that he was about to die, as he well knew himself, went away edified and comforted by the interview with this thrice-happy man.

One said to him, "Friend, how is it that you have such peace?" He answered, "I can see no ground or cause for it save this—it is written, 'You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.'" Was not that a satisfactory reply? There is a weight of argument in it. If your mind is stayed on God He will keep you in perfect peace. You could not keep yourself in perfect peace in the hour of tribulation, or faintness, or decay—but the Lord can keep you. When heart and flesh fail, God will be your joy! Then shall you receive Christ's legacy—"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." I love that text because of the double view it gives of the Peacemaker. Here is a dying Savior making His will and saying, "Peace I leave with you." Here is the living Savior stretching out His hands and saying, "My peace I give unto you." He has not only left it in His will, but He has given it with His hands.

Now, Beloved, the peace that we should desire to possess is, first of all, a peace which is a blessing—"The Lord will bless His people with peace." False peace is a curse, but to be soundly at peace with God is an unalloyed blessing and it brings no sorrow with it. To fall back upon the Father's bosom and say, "I know that He Himself loves me and I know that I love Him"—to look up to Jesus and to say, "He loved me and gave Himself for me"—to feel the moving of the Holy Spirit and to yield ourselves up to His influences—this is peace unspeakable! To have no quarrel with God. No, to have no difference between His will and your own—this is a delightful experience!

Men may hate me, but if my God loves me, what does it matter? I may feel the cut of sharp, ungenerous words, but if my God speaks peace unto me, who can make trouble? "He will speak peace unto His people and to His saints." This is joy, indeed! Do you know it? It is not only a blessing in itself, but it is a blessing in its consequences. There is no man so humble as the man that is at perfect peace with God—he marvels at the blessing he enjoys! There is no man so grateful. There is no man so courageous. There is no man so little affected by the world. There is no man who bears suffering so patiently. There is no man who is so ready for Heaven as the man who is at perfect peace with God and knows it! The peace of God, which passes all understanding, is a sacred guard to the soul—it shall keep our hearts and minds by Jesus Christ.

The value of peace as keeping the heart and mind is exceedingly great. It wards off all sorts of evils and preserves us unto the day of the Lord's appearing. The more you enjoy peace with God the better. False peace is as stupefying and deadly as opium. Even the smallest drop of this sleeping mixture may be mischievous to the spirit and you may soon imbibe so much of this false confidence that it may deaden the conscience and create a fatal

hardness of heart. But of God's own peace you may drink to the full and no harm will come of it! You may be as happy in the Lord as possible and be all the better for it. Get strong faith and even full assurance and it will never make you idle—it will be a blessing and only a blessing to you all your days. "The Lord will bless His people with peace."

Note, next, that this peace only comes from God. "The lord will bless His people with peace." You cannot get that peace apart from the Lord himself—it is of no use to try to work it out yourself. You say, "I will get better. I will keep the Law, I will do this and do that"—you will never dig peace out of the soil of your own works. You cannot spin peace out of your own heart, as a spider spins her web. You must go to the Lord for peace and there is only one way in which you can go to Him—Jesus says, "I am the way." Go to the Father through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit! Trust the Father, rest in Christ, yield to the Holy Spirit and you shall have the peace that God gives!

O dear Hearers, if you could come and talk with me and I could comfort you, it might be of no use to you. If you could go to some full-fledged priest and he could absolve you, it might only be one of the darkest of delusions. But if you go to God and get His peace, that peace is solid and abiding—it is founded on eternal Truth! It is guaranteed by the God of holiness! It is judged to be sound by the Judge of all the earth! Here we have peace from lips that cannot lie, peace from a heart which cannot change, peace through the blood which has made a full atonement! I pray you, seek this peace and make sure of it. You see how spiritual it is, for you must come to God for it and you can only come to Him in spirit and in truth. You see how little it depends upon externals, upon chapel-going, or church-going—it is only by a spiritual approach to God that this blessing can be obtained. Come to the Lord and Giver of peace. Come to Jesus who is our peace! Oh, may the Divine Spirit lead you to come to Jesus now, at this moment, for in coming to Him you shall receive rest! Plead now this promise—"The Lord will bless His people with peace."

This peace comes only to His own people—"The Lord will bless His people with peace." He will never bless those with peace who remain in rebellion against Him. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Say, are you one of His people? Are you loyal to the Prince Emmanuel? If so, the Lord has bought you with His precious blood and you are His. The Lord will bless His blood-bought people and cause them to be His by power as well as by price. Do you rest in Christ alone? Is the atoning Sacrifice your soul's great hope? If so, you have been begotten again unto that lively hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and the Lord will bless with peace His people who have risen with His own dear Son.

If you have the faith of God's elect, you are one of His elect! If you have done with self, the world and sin as the main desire of your heart, you are among His people. If you yield yourself to God to live unto Him, then you are one of His people and the Lord will bless you with peace. The more closely you cling to the Lord Jesus, the more clear and full will

your peace be. Do you belong to Him so that He can call you one of His people? "Well," says one, "I belong to the Church." That is a secondary matter. Many are in the visible Church who do not belong to God. "Oh, but I belong to such-and-such a place of worship well known for spiritual life." So you may, and yet not be one of the Lord's people, for tares grow among the best of the wheat.

Say, O Heart, do you trust alone to Jesus the Savior? Have you given yourself over to the Lord, to be your own no longer? Are you affianced unto Christ, your all to be His and yourself to be His bride? Then the Lord will bless you with abundance of peace. Here is a practical statement, see if it is not true. Notice, again, that this is peace in the time of tempest and peace after storm. Read over again this 29th Psalm—it is the Psalm of the thunderstorm. Hear how the voice of God thunders through it from end to end. The great cedars of Lebanon are split, the mountains are moved, the wilderness of Kadesh is shaken and the trembling hinds drop their young in their fright! The whole earth rocks beneath the tremendous Voice and is lit up with flames of the lightning of the Lord. Yet the Psalm ends with those gracious words—"The Lord will bless His people with peace."

Some of us enjoy our greatest peace when the Lord is abroad and the thunders roll like drums in the march of the God of armies. We feel a rapture as we perceive that our Father is very near and is speaking so that we hear His voice. In spiritual storms that voice is our comfort and after the tempests are over the Lord speaks a sweet hush to the hearts of His children. He allays our fears while He whispers, "It is I, be not afraid." Brothers and Sisters, you will have many a tempest between here and Heaven, but before the tempest, through the tempest and after the tempest, "The Lord will bless His people with peace."

As I turned my text over last night, it seemed to me to be a very wonderful passage. It is a sort of revolving text, like a gun which is always loaded and may be perpetually discharged. It is a flowing fountain, ever beginning with fresh streams. "The Lord will bless His people with peace." We have had peace with God those 40 years, yes, but we have a promise of peace for today. Suppose we should live another 40 years? We shall still have the same promise—"The Lord will bless His people with peace." I should like an everlasting check from some millionaire running thus—"So often as this check is presented at the bank, pay the bearer what he asks." Few persons possessed of such a document would fail to put in an appearance at the bank! We should be regular visitors!

O you children of God, you have such a promissory note in the text before you! The Lord has endless, boundless peace within Himself and when you have long enjoyed peace with Him you may go to Him again and say, "Lord, renew my peace. I am troubled, but You are unmoved—bless me with Your peace." When you are rich and find that riches bring cares, bring these to your God who will bless His people with peace. When you are poor, do the same. When children are born to you and with them come family cares, take the new burden to the Lord, for He gives peace. And if the children die and you weep as your young

shoots are cut off, still turn to the Lord and believe that He will bless you with peace. If you grow sick, yourself, and the tokens of a deadly disease appear upon you, still be calm, for He will bless you with peace. When you must go upstairs and lie down upon your last bed to rise no more, then, even then, the Lord will bless you with His ever-living peace! And when you wake up at the sound of the last trump the Lord will still keep you in perfect peace.

"There remained a rest for the people of God." This is always the heritage of His believing ones—"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Whatever shall befall our race according to the dark page of prophecy. Whatever of terror shall break forth throughout the endless ages of the yet-to-be, the Lord will bless His people with peace! Take this Truth of God home to your heart and live upon it and you may dwell perpetually in the Presence of the King. I have done when I have said the following words. First, let us enquire whether we are resting on a false or a true foundation. Am I addressing a stranger to this Tabernacle, here today for the first time? I would not wish to do you anything but real good and yet I should like to search you to the foundation.

Is your hope built on a false peace? Then I would like to overthrow it and leave no stone upon another. Refuges of lies must be swept away before refuges of Divine Grace will be sought. If you take shelter behind "a bowing wall and a tottering fence," I would desire to find a hand towards sending it over, for it will go before long, and it had better go while you can seek another shelter. You will never be on a right foundation until you are off the wrong one. As long as your happiness and peace are false and yet are fair to look upon, you will not seek true peace! Therefore, I would break the idols to shivers! Will you look to this? Will you give over being too secure? May I ask you to accept nothing as a ground of comfort which is not true?

Do not believe in a security which is only of temporary value. Believe eternal Truth and seek eternal life. Do not wrap yourself about with a comfort which you dare not prove and test. If you dare not examine it to the very bottom, away with it! If it will not bear the closest search, leave it to those who can afford to run great risks, for you cannot. If you dare not think about your state, you can be sure that there is something wrong with it. Walk in the light of God and have no fellowship with unfruitful hopes which are works of darkness. May I entreat you, when you have laid these things to heart, to seek at once to have close dealings with God? Do not say, "I will begin searching the Scriptures." That is a good thing in itself, but if you rest in Scripture reading and do not go to God Himself, your Bible may be made a stumbling stone for your soul!

Do not say, "I shall attend more religious services." This, also, may be well, but religious services will ruin you if you put them in the place of personal dealings with God! Your living soul has personally to do with the living God. Come to HIM this morning if you have never been before. Come at once. Delay no more! Do you shrink? Do you want an introduction? Do you need a friend to go with you to Heaven's high court? Behold, the Son of God waits

to be your Mediator and Intercessor! Come to the Father through the Son and you will in no wise be cast out! Get a hope, O my Hearer, which will last you to the last! Get a hope which you can die with! I charge you by the living God and by Christ

Jesus, who will surely come to judge the quick and dead, get a confidence which will endure the test of death, judgment, and eternity!

Seek to have "boldness in the day of judgment." No small matter this. Make sure work for the day of trial. How can you be sure unless your trust is built upon the Foundation which God Himself has laid? Behold the All-Sufficient Sacrifice! Rest in the Divine Expiation, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. "But can we be sure?" cries one. There are thousands of us who possess the assurance of a child-like faith. We could not rest a minute if we were not sure in such a matter! I could not be content with a salvation which did not give me certainty in my soul, for sin is real and I must have real pardon—my trouble of heart is real and I must have real confidence in a Savior! My inward sinfulness is real and I must have a real new birth unto holiness.

In the day when I took hold of Christ Jesus my Lord, I found in Him such real peace that I knew and was persuaded that He is able to save. If any call me a dogmatist, I plead guilty to the charge. I must dogmatize when I am sure! I cannot live without being certain! Doubt in this matter is death! I accept my Lord's Atonement! I rest on it and I find peace to my soul. "If," "but," "perhaps"—those are daggers in my heart! Where is the comfort to any soul in what he does not know to be true? The sap and substance of consolation lie in the certainty of the truth believed. If you are not sure, never rest till you are! Once know assuredly that God is good to Israel and that He will bless His people with peace and then go on to enjoy as much of that peace as your soul can hold!

Sing both by day and by night. "Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say, Rejoice." As for me, I know whom I have believed and the resolve of my soul is to magnify my Lord, world without end—

"Down from above the blessed Dove
Is come into my breast
To witness Your eternal love,
And give my spirit rest.
My God, I'll praise You while I live,
And praise You when I die,
And praise You when I rise again,
And to eternity."

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON— [Psalm 73,29](#).