

Everybody's Sermon

by C.H. Spurgeon

God preaches to us every day through similitudes, using everyday experiences to teach us spiritual lessons.

Duration: 46:17

Scripture: Exodus 20:12, Deuteronomy 32:2, Psalm 121:1-2, Isaiah 28:10, Isaiah 45:22, Hosea 1:6, Matthew 13:34-35

Topics: "General Revelation", "Fear Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that even those who are not able to spend much time in nature can still learn from God's creation. He gives examples such as a baker who sees the oven as a reminder of the coming judgment day. The preacher also encourages sinners to open their eyes and be receptive to the messages that God may put in their path. He urges them to consider the Lord as their Creator and to fear and serve Him. The sermon concludes with a personal anecdote about how God spoke to the preacher through the barrenness of winter.

Transcript

The Prince of Preachers Charles Haddon Spurgeon has been called England's greatest contribution to the spread of the gospel in the 19th century. One of his contemporaries said that the chief secret of Spurgeon's attractiveness was the fact that, in every sermon, no matter what the text or the occasion, he explained the way of salvation in simple terms. Spurgeon's messages remain one of the great treasure houses of Christian literature, still bringing the light of the gospel and the comfort of the scriptures to hungry souls long after the preacher has passed into glory.

This is Charles Kelsch inviting you to listen to a message from the Prince of Preachers. C. H. Spurgeon preached this message on July 25, 1858, at the Music Hall of the Royal Surrey Gardens. It is entitled, Everybody's Sermon.

The text is found in Hosea chapter 12 and verse 10. I have multiplied visions and used similitudes. When the Lord would win His people Israel from their iniquities, He did not leave a stone unturned, but gave them precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little.

He taught them sometimes with a rod in His hand, when He smote them with sore famine and pestilence and invasion. At other times He sought to win them with bounties, for He multiplied their corn and their wine and their oil, and He laid no famine upon them. But all the teachings of His providence were unavailing, and whilst His hand was stretched out, still they continued to rebel against the Most High.

He hewed them by the prophets. He sent first one and then another. The golden-mouthed Isaiah was followed by the plaintive Jeremiah.

While at his heels in quick succession there followed many far-seeing, thunder-speaking seers. But though prophet followed prophet in quick succession, each of them uttering the burning words of the Most High, yet they would have none of His rebukes, but they hardened their hearts and went on still in their iniquities. Among the rest of God's agencies for striking their attention and their conscience was the use of similitudes.

The prophets were accustomed not only to preach, but to be themselves as signs and wonders to the people. For instance, Isaiah named his child Maharshal al-Hashbaz, that they might know that the judgment of the Lord was hastening upon them. And this child was ordained to be a sign, for before the child shall have the knowledge to cry, My father and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.

On another occasion the Lord said unto Isaiah, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot. And the Lord said, Like as My servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and a wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia, so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, to the shame of Egypt.

Hosea the prophet himself had to teach the people by a similitude. You will notice in the first chapter a most extraordinary similitude. The Lord said to him, Go, take unto thee a wife of Hortum's, for the land hath committed great Hortum, departing from the Lord.

And he did so, and the children begotten by this marriage were made as signs and wonders to the people. As for his first son, he was to be called Jezreel, for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu. As for his daughter, she was to be called Lo-Ruhamah, for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel, but I will utterly take them away.

Thus, by divers significant signs, God made the people think. He made His prophets do strange things, in order that the people might talk about what He had done, and then the meaning which God would have them learn should come home more powerfully to their consciences and be the better remembered. Now it struck me that God is every day preaching to us by similitudes.

When Christ was on earth, He preached in parables, and though He is in heaven now, He is preaching in parables today. Providence is God's sermon. The things which we see about us are God's thoughts and God's words to us.

And if we were but wise, there is not a step that we take which we should not find to be full of mighty instruction. O ye sons of men, God warns you every day by His own word. He speaks to you by the lips of His servants, His ministers.

But besides this, by similitudes He addresses you at every time. He leaves no stone unturned to bring His wandering children to Himself, to make the lost sheep of the house of Israel return to the fold. In addressing myself to you this morning, I shall endeavor to show how every day and every season of the year, in every place and in every calling which you are made to exercise, God is speaking to you by similitudes.

Every day God speaks to you by similitudes. Let us begin with the early morning. This morning you awakened, and you found yourselves unclothed, and you began to array yourselves in your garments.

Did not God, if you would but have heard Him, speak to you by similitude? Did He not as much as say to thee, Sinner, what will it be when thy vain dreams shall have ended? If thou shouldst wake up in eternity to find thyself naked, wherewithal shalt thou array thyself? If in this life thou dost cast away the wedding garment, the spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ, what wilt thou do when the trump of the archangel shall awaken thee from thy clay-cold couch in the grave, when the heavens shall be blazing with lightnings, and the solid pillars of the earth shall quake with the terror of God's thunder? How wilt thou be able to dress thyself then? Canst thou confront thy Maker without a covering for thy nakedness? Adam dared not. And canst thou attempt it? Will he not affright thee with his terrors? Will he not cast thee to the tormentors, that thou mayst be burned up with unquenchable fire, because thou didst forget the clothing of thy soul while thou wast in the place of probation? Well, you have put on your dress, and you have come down to your families, and your children gather round your table for the morning meal. If you have been wise, God has been preaching to you by a similitude then.

He seemed to say to thee, Sinner, to whom should a child go but to his father? And where should be his resort when he is hungry but to his father's table? And as you feed your children, if you had an ear to hear, the Lord was speaking to you, and saying, How willingly would I feed you! How would I have given you of the bread of heaven, and caused you to eat angels' food! But thou hast spent thy money for that which is not bread, and thy labor for that which satisfieth not. Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good. Let thy soul delight itself in fatness.

Did he not stand there as a father, and say, Come, my child, come to my table. The precious blood of my son has been shed to be thy drink, and he has given his body to be thy bread. Why wilt thou wander hungry and thirsty? Come to my table, O my child, for I love my children to be there, and to feast upon the mercies I have provided.

You left your home, and you went to your business. I know not in what calling your time was occupied. That we will say more, before we shall have gathered up the ends of your similitudes this morning.

But you spend your time in your work. And surely, beloved, all the time that your fingers were occupied, God was speaking to your heart, if the ears of your soul had not been closed, so that you were heavy and ready to slumber, and could not hear His voice. And when the sun was shining in high heaven, and the hour of noon was reached, mightst thou not have lifted up thine eye, and remembered, that if thou hadst committed thy soul to God, thy path should have been as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day? Did he not speak to thee, and say, I brought the sun from the darkness of the east, I have guided him, and helped him to ascend the slippery steep of heaven, and now he standeth in his zenith, like a giant that hath run his race, and hath attained his goal? And even so will I do with thee.

Commit thy ways unto me, and I will make thee full of light, and thy path shall be as brightness, and thy life shall be as the noonday. Thy sun shall not go down by day, but the days of thy morning shall be ended, for the Lord thy God shall be thy light and thy salvation. And the sun began to set, and the shadows of evening were drawing on.

And did not the Lord then remind thee of thy death? Suns have their setting, and men have their graves. When the shadows of the evening were stretched out, and when the darkness began to gather, did he not say unto thee, O man, take heed of thine eventide, for the light of the sun shall not endure for ever. There

are twelve hours wherein a man shall work, but when they are past, there is no work nor device in the night of that grave whither we are all hastening.

Work while ye have the light, for the night cometh wherein no man can work. Therefore whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might. Look, I say, to the sun at his setting, and observe the rainbow hues of glory with which he paints the sky, and mark how he appears to increase his orb as he nears the horizon.

O man, kneel down and learn this prayer. Lord, let my dying be like the setting of the sun. Help me, if clouds and darkness are round about me, to light them up with splendor.

Surround me, O my God, with a greater brightness at my death than I have shown in all my former life. If my deathbed shall be the miserable pallet, and I expire in some lone cot, yet nevertheless grant, O Lord, that my poverty may be gilded with the light that Thou shalt give me, that I may exhibit the grandeur of a Christian's departure at my dying hour. God speaketh to thee, O man, by similitude, from the rising to the setting of the sun.

And now, Thou slith Thy candle, and Thou sittest down. Thy children are about Thee, and the Lord sends Thee a little preacher to preach Thee a sermon, if Thou wilt hear. It is a little gnat, and it flyeth round and round about Thy candle, and delighteth itself in the light thereof, till, dazzled and intoxicated, it begins to singe its wings and burn itself.

Thou seekest to put it away, but it dashes into the flame, and having burned itself, it can scarcely fan itself through the air again. But as soon as it has recruited its strength again, madlike it dashes to its death and destruction. Did not the Lord say to thee, Sinner, Thou art doing this also? Thou lovest the light of sin.

O, that Thou wert wise enough to tremble at the fire of sin, for he who delights in the sparks thereof must be consumed in the burning. Did not Thy hand seem to be like the hand of the Almighty, who would put Thee away from Thine own destruction, and who rebukes and smites Thee by His providence, as much as to say to Thee, Poor silly man, be not Thine own destruction. Whilst Thou seest perhaps with a little sorrow the death of the foolish insect, might not that forewarn Thee of Thine awful doom, when after having bedazzled with the giddy round of this world's joys, Thou shalt at last plunge into the eternal burning, and lose Thy soul so madly for nothing but the enjoyments of an hour? Doth not God preach to Thee thus? And now it is time for Thee to retire to Thy rest.

Thy door is bolted, and Thou hast fast closed it. Did not that remind Thee of that saying, When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us, and he shall answer and say unto you, I know not whence ye are. In vain shall your knocking be then, when the bars of immutable justice shall have fast closed the gates of mercy on mankind, when the hand of the almighty master shall have shut his children within the gates of paradise, and shall have left the thief and the robber in the cold chilly darkness, the outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Did he not preach to Thee by similitude? Even then, when Thy finger was on the bolt, might not his finger have been on Thy heart? And at night-time Thou wast startled. The watchman in the street awoke Thee with the cry of the hour of the night, or his tramp along the street. O man, if Thou hadst ears to hear, Thou mightest have heard in the steady tramp of the policeman the cry, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.

And every sound at midnight that did awaken Thee from Thy slumber and startle Thee upon Thy bed might seem to forewarn Thee of that dread trump of the archangel, which shall herald the coming of the Son of man. In the day he shall judge both the quick and the dead, according to my gospel. O that ye were wise, that ye understood this, for all the day long, from dewy morning till the darkness of the even tide and the thick darkness of midnight, God evermore doth preach to man.

He preacheth to him by similitudes. And now we turn the current of our thoughts and observe that all the year round God doth preach to man by similitudes. It was but a little while ago that we were sowing our seeds in our garden, scattering the corn over the broad furrows.

God hath sent the seed time to remind us that we too are like the ground and that He is scattering seed in our hearts each day. And did He not say to us, Take heed, O man, lest thou shouldst be like the highway whereon the seed was scattered, but the fowls of the air devoured it? Take heed that thou be not like the ground that had its basement on a hard and arid rock, lest this seed should spring up and by and by should wither away when the sun arose, because it had not much depth of earth. And be thou careful, O son of man, that thou art not like the ground where the seed did spring up, but the thorns sprang up and choked it.

But be thou like the good ground whereon the seed did fall, and it brought forth fruit, some twenty, some fifty, and some a hundredfold. We thought when we were sowing the seed that we expected one day to see it spring up again. Was there not a lesson for us there? Are not our actions all of them as seeds? And are not our little words like grains of mustard seed? Is not our daily conversation like a handful of the corn that we scatter over the soil? And ought we not to remember that our words shall live again, that our acts are as immortal as ourselves, that after having laid a little while in the dust to be matured they shall certainly arise? The black deeds of sin shall bear a dismal harvest of damnation, and the right deeds which God's grace has permitted us to do shall through His mercy, and not through our merit, spring forth a bounteous harvest in the day when they who sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Doth not seed-time preach to thee, O man, and say, Take heed that thou sowest good seed in thy field? And when the seed sprang up, and the season changed, did God cease then to preach? Ah, no! First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear, at each its homily. When at last the harvest came, how loud the sermon which it preached to us! It said to us, O Israel, I have set a harvest for thee. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. And he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. If you have an opportunity to journey into the country during the next three weeks, you will, if your heart is rightly attuned, find a marvelous mass of wisdom couched in a cornfield.

Why, I could not attempt for a moment to open the mighty mines of golden treasure which are hidden there. Think, beloved, of the joy of the harvest! How does it tell us of the joy of the redeemed if we, being saved, shall at last be carried, like shocks of corn, fully ripe into the garner? Look at the ear of corn when it is fully ripe, and see how it bendeth toward the earth. It held its head erect before, but in getting ripe, how humble does it become! And how does God speak to the sinner and tell him that if he would be fit for the great harvest, he must drop his head and cry, Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner! And when we see the weeds spring up amongst the wheat, have we not our Master's parable over again of the tares among the wheat? And are we not reminded of the great day of division, when He shall say to the reaper, Gather first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.

But gather the wheat into my barn. O yellow field of corn, thou preachest well to me, for thou sayest to me, the minister, Behold, the fields are ripe already to the harvest. Work thou thyself, pray thou the Lord of harvest, to send forth more labourers into the harvest.

And it preaches well to thee, thou man of years. It tells thee that the sickle of death is sharp, and that thou must soon fall. But it cheers and comforts thee, for it tells thee that the wheat shall be safely housed, and it bids thee hope that thou shalt be carried to thy Master's garner, to be His joy and His delight for ever.

Hark, then, to the rustling eloquence of the yellow harvest. In a very little time, my beloved, you will see the birds congregated upon the housetops in great multitudes. And after they have whirled round and round and round, as if they were taking their last sight of old England, or rehearsing their supplications before they launched away, you will see them, with their leader in advance, speed across the purple sea to live in sunnier climes, while winter's cold hand shall strip their native woods.

And doth not God seem to preach to you, sinners, when these birds are taking their flight? Do you not remember how He Himself puts it? Yea, the stork in heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming. But my people know not the judgment of the Lord. Doth He not tell us that there is a time of dark winter coming upon this world, a time of trouble, such as there has been none like it, neither shall be any more, a time when all the joys of sin shall be nipped and frostbitten, and when the summer of man's estate shall be turned into the dark winter of his disappointment? And doth He not say to you, sinner, Fly away, away, away to the goodly land where Jesus dwells, away from self and sin, away from the city of destruction, away from the whirl of pleasures and from the tossing to and fro of trouble? Haste thee like a bird to its rest, fly thou across the sea of repentance and faith, and build thy nest in the land of mercy, that when the great day of vengeance shall pass o'er this world, thou mayest be safe in the clefts of the rock? I remember well how once God preached to me by a similitude in the depth of winter.

The earth had been black, and there was scarcely a green thing or a flower to be seen. As you looked across the field, there was nothing but blackness, bare hedges and leafless trees, and black, black earth wherever you looked. On a sudden God spake, and unlocked the treasures of the snow, and white flakes descended until there was no blackness to be seen, and all was one sheet of dazzling whiteness.

It was at that time that I was seeking the Saviour, and it was then I found Him, and I remember well that sermon which I saw before me. Come now, and let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as snow.

Though they be red like crimson, they shall be whiter than wool. Sinner, thy heart is like that black ground, thy soul is like that black tree and hedgerow without leaf or blossom. God's grace is like the white snow.

It shall fall upon thee till thy doubting heart shall glitter in whiteness of pardon, and thy poor black soul shall be covered with the spotless purity of the Son of God. He seems to say to you, Sinner, you are black, but I am ready to forgive you. I will wrap thy heart in the ermine of my Son's righteousness, and with my Son's own garments on, thou shalt be holy as the Holy One.

And the wind of today, as it comes howling through the trees, many of which have been swept down, reminds us of the Spirit of the Lord, which bloweth where it listeth and when it pleaseth. And it tells us to seek earnestly after that divine and mysterious influence which alone can speed us on our voyage to heaven, which shall cast down the trees of our pride and tear up by the roots the goodly cedars of our

self-confidence, which shall shake our refuges of lies about our ears and make us look to Him who is the only covered from the storm, the only shelter, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. Ay, and when the heat is coming down, and we hide ourselves beneath the shadow of the tree, an angel standeth there and whispereth, Look upwards, sinner, as thou hidest thyself from the burning rays of Saul beneath the tree.

So there is one who is like the apple tree among the trees of the wood, and he bids thee come and take shadow beneath his branches, for he will screen thee from the eternal vengeance of God and give thee shelter when the fierce heat of God's anger shall beat upon the heads of wicked men. And now again, every place to which you journey, every animal that you see, every spot you visit, has a sermon for you. Go into your farmyard, and your ox and your ass shall preach to you.

The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib. But Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider, that very dog at your heels may rebuke you. He follows his master.

A stranger will he not follow, for he knows not the voice of a stranger. But ye forsake your God and turn aside unto your crooked ways. Look at the chicken by the side of yonder pond, and let it rebuke your ingratitude.

It drinks, and every sip it takes, it lifts its head to heaven, and thanks the giver of the rain for the drink afforded to it. While thou eatest and drinkest, and there is no blessing pronounced at thy meals, and no thanksgiving bestowed upon thy father for his bounty, the very horse is checked by the bridle, and the whip is for the ass. But thy God hath bridled thee by his commandments, and he hath chastened by his providence.

Yet art thou more obstinate than the ass or the mule. Still thou wilt not run in his commandments, but thou turnest aside willfully and wickedly, following out the perversity of thine own heart. Is it not so? Are not these things true of you? If you are still without God and without Christ, must not these things strike your conscience? Would not any one of them lead you to tremble before the Most High, and beg of Him that He would give you a new heart and a right spirit, and that no longer you might be as the beasts of the field, but might be a man full of the Divine Spirit, living in obedience to your Creator? And in journeying you have noticed how often the road is rough with stones, and you have murmured because of the way over which you have to tread.

And you have not thought that those stones were helping to make the road better, and that the worst piece of road, when mended with hard stones, would in time become smooth and fit to travel on. And did you think how often God has mended you, how many stones of affliction He has cast upon you, how many wagonloads of warnings you have had spread out upon you? And you have been none the better, but have only grown worse. And when He comes to look on you to see whether your life has become smooth, whether the highway of your moral conduct has become more like the king's highway of righteousness, how might He say, Alas! I have repaired this road, but it is none the better.

Let it alone until it becomes a very bog and quagmire, until he who keeps it thus shall have perished in it himself. And thou hast gone by the seaside, and has not the sea talked to thee? Inconstant as the sea art thou, but thou art not one half so obedient. God keeps the sea, the mountain-wave sea, in check with a belt of sand.

He spreads the sand along the seashore, and even the sea observes the landmark. Fear ye not Me, saith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at My presence, which hath placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it? Though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail. Though they roar, yet can they not pass over it.

It is so. Let thy conscience prick thee. The sea obeys him from shore to shore.

And yet thou wilt not have him to be thy God. But thou sayest, Who is the Lord, that I should fear him? Who is Jehovah, that I should acknowledge his sway? Hear the mountains and the hills, for they have a lesson. Such is God.

He abideth forever. Think not that he shall change. And now, sinner, I entreat thee to open thine eyes as thou goest home to-day.

And if nothing that I have said shall smite thee, perhaps God shall put into thy way something that shall give thee a text, from which thou mayest preach to thyself a sermon that never shall be forgotten. Oh, if I had but time, and thought, and words, I would bring the things that are in heaven above, and in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth, and I would set them all before thee. And they should every one give their warning before they had passed from thine inspection.

And I know that their voice would be, Consider the Lord thy Creator, and fear, and serve him. For he hath made thee, and thou hast not made thyself. We obey him, and we find it is our beauty to be obedient, and our glory ever to move according to his will.

And thou shalt find it to be the same. Obey him while thou mayest. Blessed happily, when this life is over, all these things shall rise up against thee, and the stone in the street shall clamber for thy condemnation, and the beam out of the wall shall bear witness against thee, and the beasts of the field shall be thine accusers, and the valley and hill shall begin to curse thee.

O man, the earth is made for thy warning. God would have thee to be saved. He hath set hand-posts everywhere in nature and in providence, pointing thee the way to the city of refuge.

And if thou art but wise, thou needest not miss thy way. It is but thy willful ignorance and thy neglect that shall cause thee to run on in the way of error. For God hath made the way straight before thee, and given thee every encouragement to run therein.

And now, lest I should weary you, I will just notice that every man in his calling has a sermon preached to him. The farmer has a thousand sermons. I have brought them out already.

Let him open wide his eye, and he shall see more. He need not go an inch without hearing the song of angels and the voice of spirits wooing him to righteousness, for all nature round about him has a tongue given to it when a man has an ear to hear. There are others, however, engaged in a business which allows them to see but very little of nature.

And yet even there God has provided them with a lesson. There is the baker who provides us with our bread. He thrusts his fuel into the oven, and he causes it to glow with heat and puts bread therein.

Well may he, if he be an ungodly man, tremble as he stands at the oven's mouth, for there is a text which he may well comprehend as he stands there. For the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the

proud and they that do wickedly shall be as stubble, they shall be consumed. Men, engather them in bundles and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Out of the oven's mouth comes a hot and burning warning, and the man's heart might melt like wax within him, if he would but regard it. Then see the butcher. How doth the beast speak to him? He sees the lamb almost lick his knife, and the bullock goes unconsciously to the slaughter.

How might he think every time that he smites the unconscious animal who knows nothing of death, of his own doom? Are we not, all of us who are without Christ, fattening for the slaughter? Are we not more foolish than the bullock? For doth not the wicked man follow his executioner, and walk after his own destroyer into the very chambers of hell? When we see a drunkard pursuing his drunkenness, or an unchaste man running in the way of licentiousness, is he not as an ox going to the slaughter, until a dart smite him through the liver? Hath not God sharpened His knife, and made ready His axe, that the fatlings of this earth may be killed, when He shall say to the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field, Behold, I have made a feast of vengeance for you, and ye shall feast upon the blood of the slain, and make yourselves drunken with the streams thereof? Ay, butcher, there is a lecture for you and your trade, and your business may reproach you. And ye whose craft is to sit still all day, making shoes for our feet, the lapstone in your lap may reproach you. For your heart, perhaps, is as hard as that.

Have you not been smitten as often as your lapstone, and yet your heart has never been broken or melted? And what shall the Lord say to you at last, when your stony heart being still within you, He shall condemn you and cast you away, because you would have none of His rebukes, and would not turn at the voice of His exhortation. Let the brewer remember, that as he brews, he must drink. Let the potter tremble, lest he be like a vessel marred upon the wheel.

Let the printer take heed, that his life be set in heavenly type, and not in the black letter of sin. Painter, beware, for paint will not suffice. We must have unvarnished realities.

Others of you are engaged in business where you are continually using scales and measures. Might not you often put yourselves into those scales? Might you not fancy you saw the great judge standing by with his gospel in one scale, and you in the other, and solemnly looking down upon you, saying, Mene, Mene, Tekel, thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting. Some of you use the measure, and when you have measured out, you cut off the portion that your customer requires.

Think of your life, too. It is to be of a certain length, and every year brings the measure a little farther, and at last there come the scissors that shall clip off your life, and it is done. How knowest thou when thou art come to the last inch? What is that disease thou hast about thee but the first snip of the scissors? What that trembling in thy bones, that failing in thy eyesight, that fleeing of thy memory, that departure of thy youthful vigor, but the first rent? How soon shalt thou be rent in twain! The remnant of thy days passed away, and thy years all numbered and gone, misspent and wasted for ever.

But you say you are engaged as a servant, and your occupations are diverse. Then diverse are the lectures God preaches to you. A servant waits for his wages, and the hireling fulfilleth his day.

There is a similitude for thee when thou hast fulfilled thy day on earth, and shalt take thy wages at last. Who then is thy master? Art thou serving Satan and the lusts of the flesh? And wilt thou take out thy wages at last in the hot metal of destruction? Or art thou serving the fair Prince Emmanuel? And shall thy wages be the golden crowns of heaven? O happy art thou if thou servest a good master! For according to

thy master shall be thy reward. As is thy labor, such shall the end be.

For thou art one that guideth the pen, and from hour to hour wearily thou writest. O man, know that thy life is a writing. When thy hand is not on the pen, thou art a writer still.

Thou art always writing upon the pages of eternity. Thy sins thou art writing, or else thy holy confidence in Him that loved thee. Happy shall it be for thee, O writer, if thy name is written in the Lamb's book of life, and if that black writing of thine, in the history of thy pilgrimage below, shall have been blotted out with the red blood of Christ, and thou shalt have written upon thee the fair name of Jehovah, to stand legible for ever.

Or perhaps thou art a physician or a chemist. Thou prescribest or preparest medicines for man's body. God stands there by the side of thy pestle and thy mortar, and by the table where thou writest thy prescriptions.

And He says to thee, Man, thou art sick. I can prescribe for thee the blood and righteousness of Christ, that, laid hold of by faith and applied by the Spirit, can cure thy soul. I can compound a medicine for thee that shall rid thee of thy ills and bring thee to the place where the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick.

Wilt thou take my medicine, or wilt thou reject it? Is it bitter to thee, and dost thou turn away from it? Come, drink, my child, drink, for thy life lieth here. And how shalt thou escape, if thou neglect so great salvation? Do you cast iron, or melt lead, or fuse the hard metal of the mines? Then pray that the Lord may melt thine heart, and cast thee in the mold of the gospel. Do you make garments for men? O, be careful that you find a garment for yourself for ever.

Are you busy in building all day long, laying the stone upon its fallow and the mortar in its crevice? Then remember, thou art building for eternity too. O, that thou mayest thyself be built upon a good foundation! O, that thou mayest build thereon not wood, hay, or stubble, but gold, and silver, and precious stones, and things that will abide the fire! Take care, man, lest thou shouldst be God's scaffold, lest thou shouldst be used on earth to be a scaffolding for building His church. And when His church is built, thou shouldst be cast down and burned up with fire unquenchable.

Take heed that thou art built upon a rock, and not upon the sand, and that the vermillion cement of the Saviour's precious blood unite thee to the foundation of the building and to every stone thereof. Art thou a jeweler? And dost thou cut thy gem and polish the diamond from day to day? Would to God thou wouldst take warning from the contrast which thou presentest to the stone on which thou dost exercise thy craft. Thou cuttest it, and it glitters the more thou dost cut it.

But though thou hast been cut and ground, though thou hast had cholera and fever, and hast been at death's door many a day, thou art none the brighter, but the duller. For alas, thou art no diamond. Thou art but the pebble stone of the brook.

And in the day when God makes up His jewels, He shall not enclose thee in the casket of His treasures. For thou art not one of the precious sons of Zion, comparable unto fine gold. But be thy situation what it may, be thy calling what it may, there is a continual sermon preached to thy conscience.

I would that thou wouldst now from this time forth open both eye and ear, and see and hear the things that God would teach thee. And now, dropping the similitude, while the clock shall tick but a few times more, let us put the matter thus. Sinner, thou art as yet without God and without Christ.

Thou art liable to death every hour. Thou canst not tell but that thou mayest be in the flames of hell before the clock shall strike one to-day. Thou art to-day condemned already, because thou believest not in the Son of God.

And Jesus Christ says to thee to-day, O that thou wouldst consider thy latter end, He cries to thee this morning, How often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings! But ye would not. I entreat you, consider your ways. If it be worthwhile to make your bed in hell, do it.

If the pleasures of this world are worth being damned to all eternity for enjoying them, if heaven be a cheat and hell a delusion, go on in your sins. But if there be hell for sinners and heaven for repenting ones, and if thou must dwell a whole eternity in one place or the other, without similitude, I put a plain question to thee. Art thou wise in living as thou dost, without thought, careless and godless? Wouldst thou ask now the way of salvation? It is simply this.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. He died. He rose again.

Thou art to believe Him to be thine. Thou art to believe that He is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. But more than that, believing that to be a fact, thou art to cast thy soul upon that fact and trust to Him, sink or swim.

Spirit of God, help us each to do this, and by similitude or by providence or by thy prophets, bring us each to thyself and save us eternally. And unto thee shall be the glory. This message, Everybody's Sermon, was preached by Charles Haddon Spurgeon on July 25th, 1858.

This is Charles Kelsch inviting you to join me again for another message from The Prince of Preachers.

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