

# Notes (From the February 1890 Sword and Trowel)

by C.H. Spurgeon

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*The Down-Grade Movement is a threat to the truth of God's Word and the church, and believers must stand against it and uphold the old gospel.*

**Scripture:** 2 Timothy 4:3

**Topics:** "Defending the Faith", "Vigilance Against False Teachings"

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## Description

C.H. Spurgeon addresses the troubling state of the church in February 1890, expressing his unwavering confidence in the ultimate victory of God's truth despite the rise of modern thought and error within the visible church. He warns against the complacency of good men who fail to recognize the dangers posed by false teachings, emphasizing the need for vigilance and protest against such trends. Spurgeon shares a letter from a concerned brother highlighting the decline in doctrinal integrity in some congregations, where heretical views are being accepted. He calls for a return to the old truths and cautions that neglecting these issues could lead to significant harm. Spurgeon's earnest plea is for the church to heed these warnings and remain steadfast in their faith.

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## Transcript

A CERTAIN newspaper paragraph very kindly attempts to comfort "Mr. Spurgeon at his worst stage of depression concerning the doubts of the day," by the assurance that religion can never pass away. We can assure our friend that we never thought it could. No fear as to the ultimate victory of the truth of God ever disturbs our mind. We are sure that the doctrines of the gospel will outlive all the dotings of "modern thought." The trouble is that, for the moment, error is having its own way in certain parts of the visible church, where better things once ruled; and, worse still, that good men will not see the evil, or, seeing it, wink at it, and imagine that it will do no very great deal of harm. It is ours to give warning of a danger which to us is manifest and alarming; and if the warning makes us the butt of ridicule, we must bear it. Our protest is, no doubt, regarded by some as a piece of bigotry, and by others, as the dream of a nervous mind. Neither conjecture is correct; but we speak the words of love and soberness. An American, who enquired of certain leaders in the "Down-Grade" what they thought of Spurgeon's conduct, was informed that sickness and age had weakened his intellect. This has been their contemptuous method all along; but facts are not to be set aside by such remarks. Be the protester what he may, he declares his protest to be solemnly needful, and he begs for attention to it. It may be the old truth is in the minority, and that those

who uphold it are thought to be troublers in Israel, and causers of false alarm: but we are none the less confident that, when good men return to their better selves, they will see differently. Bitterly will some regret that they allowed matters to drift, and drift, till they had wrought incalculable mischief. We have spoken in saddest earnest. It is no pleasure to us to stand apart, and refuse complicity with what we judge to be a great crime. Our witness is on high. The Lord will judge between us and the enemies of the faith in his own good time!

From a Congregational Church a brother writes:--" I have heard several friends say that your pictures of the 'Down-Grade' are overdrawn; but in our church they have been photographs. Commencing with denial of eternal punishment, our minister has gone on to talk of 'Mark's garbled statements,' 'the legend of the Angel's song,' and 'The myth of the Resurrection.' He says, 'Christ is the natural son of Joseph and Mary,' and that 'the Bible is but one of the Scriptures of the human race.' . . . May the churches heed your warning, and so be saved from our fate!" In this instance, old members are driven out, and all protesters are held up to ridicule in the public prints as bigots wanting in common sense.

The churches are, some of them, courting the fate of this church by seeking out clever men for preachers, irrespective of their doctrinal beliefs. But, on the other hand, many are growing cautious, and, having been once bitten, are shy of the new school. The evangelicals in the churches are beginning to be divided from the Broad School; and when the opportunity has occurred, they have been, in some cases, strong enough and bold enough to claim their rights. We wish it were so more generally; but we know several notable instances which put us in good hope that the present tyranny of falsehood will not last for ever. Still, these brighter signs are but gleams in a darkening sky. The men who take the lead are, in many cases, halfhearted as to truth, and they yield themselves up to the dogmatic assertions of the non-evangelical intruders. Tender as mothers to every new heresy-vendor, the men in office in the denominations have a hard, ungenerous side for the faithful adherents of the old gospel. We may go where we will--we are not worth a thought; but the most flippant blasphemer shall have honor for his courage and independence! Happily, this is a small matter to some of us now, for our ecclesiastical relationships are for ever severed; but there is none the less of gross injustice in such conduct towards those who cannot turn their coats, or profess to love what they inwardly abhor.

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