

# The True Church (Reading)

by J.C. Ryle

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*The true church is a company of men and women who have repented of sin and fled to Christ by faith, and have been made new creatures in Him, and it is built by Christ, who is the Redeemer and Saviour.*

**Duration:** 1:01:31

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Matthew 16:18, Romans 8:9, 2 Corinthians 13:5, Ephesians 2:20, 1 Timothy 1:15, Hebrews 10:25

**Topics:** "The Church", "Persecution"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of the church of Jesus Christ as the foundation that will endure forever. He highlights the ongoing conflict and opposition faced by the true church from the devil, who hates it passionately. Despite persecution and attempts to destroy it, the church has always prevailed and will continue to do so. The preacher assures the listeners that Christ will never be without a witness in the world, and that every member of his army will be accounted for in the end.

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## Transcript

Welcome to this audio presentation from Crites Baptist Church in Derbyshire, England. This sermon by Bishop J.C. Ryle was first preached at Weston-Super-Mare in August 1858. We acknowledge that we may not have this great man of God's style or delivery, but we do hope, at least, that you may find the content of the address a blessing to your soul.

A sermon entitled, The True Church. Bishop Ryle's text was from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 16, and verse 18, Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. We live in a world in which all things are passing away.

Kingdoms, empires, cities, ancient institutions, families, all are liable to change and corruption. One universal law seems to prevail everywhere. In all created things there is a tendency to decay.

There is something saddening and depressing in this. What profit hath a man in the labour of his hands? Is there nothing that shall stand? Is there nothing that shall last? Is there nothing that shall endure? Is there nothing of which we can say, this shall continue for evermore? You have the answer to these questions in the words of our text. Our Lord Jesus Christ speaks of something which shall continue and not pass away.

There is one created thing which is an exception to the universal rule to which I have referred. There is one thing which shall never perish and pass away. That thing is the building founded upon the rock, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He declares, in the words you have heard tonight, upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. There are five things in these words which demand your attention. Firstly, you have a building, my church.

Secondly, a builder. Christ says, I will build my church. Thirdly, a foundation.

Upon this rock I will build my church. Fourthly, perils implied, the gates of hell. Fifthly, security asserted.

The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. May God bless the words that shall be spoken. May we all search our own hearts tonight and know whether or not we belong to this one church.

May we all go home to reflect and to pray. Finally, you have, firstly, a building mentioned in the text. The Lord Jesus Christ speaks of my church.

Now what is this church? Few inquiries can be made of more importance than this. For want of due attention to this subject, the errors that have crept into the church and into the world are neither few nor small. The church of our text is no material building.

It is no temple made with hands of wood or brick or stone or marble. It is a company of men and women. It is no particular visible church on earth.

It is not the Eastern Church or the Western Church. It is not the Church of England or the Church of Scotland. Much less is it the Church of Rome.

The church of our text is one that makes far less show in the eyes of man, but is of far more importance in the eyes of God. The church of our text is made up of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. It comprehends all who have repented of sin and fled to Christ by faith and be made new creatures in Him.

It comprises all God's elect, all who have received God's grace, all who have been washed in Christ's blood, all who have been clothed in Christ's righteousness, all who have been born again and sanctified by Christ's Spirit. All such of every nation and people and tongue compose the church of our text. This is the Body of Christ.

This is the Flock of Christ. This is the Bride. This is the Lamb's Wife.

This is the Holy Catholic Church of the Apostles' Creed. This is the blessed company of all faithful people spoken of in the communion service of our prayer book. This is the Church on the Rock.

The members of this church do not all worship God in the same way, or use the same form of government. Our own thirty-fourth article declares it is not necessary that ceremonies should be in all places one and alike, but they all worship with one heart. They are all led by one Spirit.

They are all really and truly holy. They can all say, Alleluia! And they can all reply, Amen! This is that church to which all visible churches on earth are servants and handmaidens, whether they are Episcopalian, Independent or Presbyterian, they all serve the interests of the one true church. They are the scaffolding behind which the great building is carried on.

They are the husk under which the living kernel grows. They have their various degrees of usefulness. The best and worthiest of them is that which trains up most members for Christ's true church.

But no visible church has any right to say, We are the only true church. We are the men and wisdom shall die with us. No visible church should ever dare to say, We shall stand forever.

The gates of hell shall not prevail against me. This is that church to which belong the Lord's precious promises of preservation, continuance, protection and final glory. Whatsoever, says Hooker, we read in Scripture, concerning the endless love and saving mercy which God showeth toward his churches, the only subject thereof is his church, which we properly term the mystical body of Christ, small and despised as the true church may be in this world.

It is precious and honourable in the sight of God. The temple of Solomon in all its glory was mean and contemptible in comparison with that church which is built upon a rock. Men and brethren, see that you hold sound doctrine upon the subject of the church.

A mistake here may lead on to dangerous and soul-ruining errors. The church which is made up of true believers is the church for which we, who are ministers, are specially ordained to preach. The church which comprises all who repent and believe the gospel is the church to which we desire you to belong.

Our work is not done, and our hearts are not satisfied until you are made new creatures and are members of the one true church. Outside of this church, there can be no salvation. I pass on to the second point to which I propose to call your attention.

Our text contains not merely a building, but a builder. The Lord Jesus Christ declares, I will build my church. The true church of Christ is tenderly cared for by all the three persons of the Blessed Trinity.

In the economy of redemption, beyond all doubt, God the Father chooses and God the Holy Ghost sanctifies every member of Christ's mystical body. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three persons and one God, co-operate for the salvation of every saved soul. This is truth, which ought never to be forgotten.

Nevertheless, there is a peculiar sense in which the help of the church is laid on the Lord Jesus Christ. He is peculiarly and pre-eminently the Redeemer and the Saviour. Therefore it is that we find Him saying in our text, I will build.

The work of building is my special work. It is Christ who calls the members of the church in due time. They are the call of Jesus Christ.

Romans 1, verse 6 It is Christ who quickens them. The Son quickeneth whom He will. John 5, verse 21 It is Christ who washes away their sins.

He has loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. Revelation 1, verse 5 It is Christ who gives them peace. Peace I leave with you.

My peace I give unto you. John 14, verse 27 It is Christ who gives them eternal life. I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish.

John 10, verse 28 It is Christ who grants them repentance. Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance Acts 5, verse 31 It is Christ who enables them to become God's children to as

many as received Him. To them gave He power to become the sons of God.

John 1, verse 12 It is Christ who carries on the work within them when it is begun. Because I live ye shall live also. John 14, verse 19 In short It has pleased the Father that in Christ should all fullness dwell.

Colossians 1, verse 19 He is the author and finisher of faith. From Him every joint and member of the mystical body of Christians is supplied. Through Him they are strengthened for duty.

By Him they are kept from falling. He shall preserve them to the end and present them faultless before the Father's throne with exceeding great joy. He is all things and all in all to believers.

The mighty agent by whom the Lord Jesus Christ carries out this work in the number of His churches is without doubt the Holy Ghost. He it is who applies Christ and His benefits to the soul. He it is who is ever renewing awakening, convincing leading to the cross transforming, taking out of the world stone after stone and adding it to the mystical building.

But the great chief builder who has undertaken to execute the work of redemption and bring it to completion is the Son of God. The Word who was made flesh. It is Jesus Christ who builds.

In building the true church the Lord Jesus condescends to use many subordinate instruments the ministry of the gospel the circulation of the scriptures the friendly rebuke the word spoken in season the drawing influence of afflictions all, all are means and appliances by which His work is carried on. But Christ is the great superintending architect ordering, guiding, directing all that is done what the sun is to the whole solar system that Christ is to all the members of the true church. Paul may plant and Apollos water but God giveth the increase.

Ministers may preach and writers may write but the Lord Jesus Christ alone can build and except He builds the work stands still. Great is the wisdom wherewith the Lord Jesus Christ builds His church. All is done at the right time and in the right way.

Each stone in its turn is put in the right place sometimes He chooses great stones and sometimes He chooses small stones sometimes the work goes on fast and sometimes it goes on slowly. Man is frequently impatient and thinks that nothing is doing but man's time is not God's time. A thousand years in His sight are but as a single day The great builder makes no mistakes he knows what he is doing he sees the end from the beginning he works by a perfect unalterable and certain plan the mightiest misconceptions of architects like Michelangelo and Rennes are mere trifling child's play in comparison with Christ's wise counsels respecting His church.

Great is the condescension and mercy which Christ exhibits in building His church He often chooses the most unlikely and roughest stones and fits them into most excellent work He despises none and rejects none on account of former sins and past transgressions He delights to show mercy He often takes the most thoughtless and ungodly and transforms them into polished corners of His spiritual temple Great is the power which Christ displays in building His church He carries on His work in spite of opposition from the world the flesh and the devil in storm, in tempest through troublous times silently, quietly without noise, without stir without excitement the building progresses like Solomon's temple I will work, He declares and none shall let it Brethren the children of this world take little

or no interest in the building of this church they care little for the conversion of souls what are broken spirits and penitent hearts to them it is all foolishness in their eyes but while the children of this world care

nothing there is joy in the presence of the angels of God for the preserving of that church the laws of nature have often times been suspended for the good of that church all the providential dealings of God in this world are ordered and arranged for the elect's sake wars are brought to an end and peace is given to a nation statesmen rulers emperors kings presidents heads of governments have their schemes and plans and think them of vast importance but there is another work going on of infinitely greater moment for which they are all but as the axes and saws in God's

hands that work is the gathering in of living stones into the one true church how little are we told in God's word about unconverted men compared with what we are told about believers the history of Nimrod the mighty hunter is dismissed in a few words the history of Abraham the father of the faithful occupies several chapters nothing in scripture is so important as the concerns of the true church the world takes up little of God's word the church and its story takes up much forever let us thank God my beloved brethren that the building of the one true church is laid on the shoulders of one that is mighty let us bless God that it does not rest upon man let us bless God that it does not depend on missionaries ministers or committees Christ is the almighty builder he will carry on his work

though nations and visible churches do not know their duty Christ will never fail that which he hath undertaken he will certainly accomplish I pass on to the third point which I propose to consider the foundation upon which this church is built the Lord Jesus Christ tells us upon this rock will I build my church what did the Lord Jesus Christ mean when he spoke of this foundation did he mean the apostle Peter to whom he was speaking I think assuredly not I can see no reason if he meant Peter why he did not say upon thee will I build my church if he had meant Peter he would have said I will build my church on thee as plainly as he said to thee will I give the keys no, it was not the person of the apostle Peter but the good confession which the apostle had just made it was not Peter the

erring unstable man but the mighty truth which the father had revealed to Peter it was the truth concerning Jesus Christ himself which was the rock it was Christ's mediatorship and Christ's messiahship it was the blessed truth that Jesus was the promised saviour the true surety the real intercessor between God and man this was the rock and this the foundation upon which the church of Christ was to be built my brethren this foundation was laid at a mighty cost it needed that the son of God should take our nature upon him and in that nature live suffer and die not for his sins not for his own sins but for ours it needed that in that nature Christ should go to the grave and rise again it needed that in that nature Christ should go up to heaven to sit at the right hand of God having obtained

eternal redemption for all his people no other foundation but this could have borne the weight of that church of which our text speaks no other foundation could have met the necessities of a world of sinners that foundation once obtained is very strong it can bear the weight of the sin of all the world it has borne the weight of all the sins of all the believers who have built on it sins of thought sins of the imagination sins of the heart sins of the head sins which everyone has seen and sins which no man knows sins against God and sins against man sins of all kinds and descriptions that mighty rock can bear the weight of all these sins and not give way the mediatorial office of Christ is a remedy sufficient for all the sins of the world to this one foundation every member of Christ's

true church is joined in many things believers are disunited and disagreed in the matter of their soul's foundation they are all of one mind they are all built on the rock ask where they get their peace and hope and joyful expectation of good things to come you would find that all flows from that one mighty truth Christ the mediator between God and man and the office that Christ holds as the high priest and surety of

sinner here is the point which demands our personal attention are we upon the rock are we really joined to the one foundation what says that good old divine Archbishop Leighton God has laid this precious stone for this very purpose that weary sinners may rest upon it the multitude of imaginary believers lie round about it but they are none the better for that any more than

stones that lie loose in heaps near a foundation but not joined into it there is no benefit to us by Christ without union with him look to your foundation my beloved brethren if you would know whether or not you are members of the one true church it is a point that may be known to yourselves your public worship we can see we cannot see whether you are personally built upon the rock your attendance at the Lord's table we can see but we cannot see whether you are joined to Christ and one with Christ and Christ in you but all shall come to light one day the secrets of all hearts shall be exposed perhaps you go to church regularly you love your prayer book you are constant in attending on every means of grace your church supplies all this is right and good so far as it goes but all this time

see that you make no mistake about your own personal salvation see that your own soul is upon the rock without this all else is nothing without this you will never stand in the day of judgment better a thousand times in that day to be found in a cottage upon the rock than in a palace upon the sand I proceed in the fourth place to speak of the implied trials of the church to which our text refers there is mention made of the gates of hell by that expression we are meant to understand the power of the devil the history of Christ's true church has always been one of conflict and war it has been constantly assailed by a deadly enemy satan the prince of this world the devil hates the true church of Christ with an undying hatred he is ever stirring up opposition against all its members he is

ever urging the children of this world to do his will and injure and harass the people of God if he cannot bruise the head he will bruise the heel if he cannot rob believers of heaven he will vex them by the way for six thousand years this enmity has gone on millions of the ungodly have been the devil's agents and done the devil's work though they knew it not the pharaohs the herods the nero's the julians the diocletians the bloody marys what were they all but satan's tools when they persecuted the disciples of Jesus Christ warfare with the powers of hell has been the experience of the whole body of Christ it has always been a bush burning though not consumed a woman fleeing into the wilderness but not swallowed up the visible churches have their times of prosperity and seasons of peace

but never has there been a time of peace for the true church its conflict is perpetual its battle never ends warfare with the powers of hell is the experience of every individual member of the true church each has to fight what are the lives of all the saints but records of battles what were such men as Paul and James and Peter and John and Polycarp and Ignatius and Augustine and Luther and Kelvin and Latimer and Baxter but soldiers engaged in a constant warfare sometimes their persons have been assailed and sometimes their property sometimes they have been harassed by calumnies and slanders and sometimes by open persecution but in one way or another the devil has been continually warring against the church the gates of hell have been continually assaulting the people of Christ men and

brethren we who preach the gospel can hold out to all who come to Christ exceeding great and precious promises we can offer boldly to you in our masters name the peace of God which passeth all understanding mercy, free grace and full salvation are offered to everyone who will come to Christ and believe on him but we promise you no peace with the world or with the devil we warn you on the contrary that there must be warfare so long as you are in the body we would not keep you back or deter you from Christ's service but we would have you to count the cost and fully understand what Christ's service entails

hell is behind you heaven is before you home lies on the other side of the troubled sea thousands, tens of thousands have crossed these stormy waters and in spite of all opposition have

reached the haven where they would be hell has assailed them but has not prevailed go forward beloved brethren and fear not the adversary only abide in Christ and victory is sure marvel not at the enmity of the gates of hell if ye were of the world the world would love his own so long as the world is of the world and the devil the devil so long there must be warfare and believers in Christ must be soldiers the world hated Christ and the world will hate true Christians as long as the earth stands as the great reformer Luther said Cain will go on murdering Abel so long as the church is on the earth be prepared for the enmity of the gates of hell put on the whole armor of God the tower of David contained a thousand butlers all ready for the use of God's people the weapons of our warfare have

been tried by millions of poor sinners like ourselves and have never been found to fail be patient under the enmity of the gates of hell it is all working together for your good it tends to sanctify it keeps you awake it makes you humble it drives you nearer to the Lord Jesus Christ it weans you from the world it helps to make you pray more above all it makes you long for heaven and say with heart as well as lips come Lord Jesus be not cast down by the enmity of hell the warfare of the true child of God is as much a mark of grace as the inward peace which he enjoys no cross no crown no conflict no saving Christianity blessed are ye said our Lord Jesus Christ when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake there remains one thing more

to be considered the security of the true church of Christ there is a glorious promise given by the mighty builder the gates of hell shall not prevail against it he who cannot lie has pledged his royal word that all the powers of hell shall never overthrow his church it shall continue and stand in spite of every assault it shall never be overcome all other created things perish and pass away but not the church of Christ the hand of outward violence or the moth of inward decay prevail over everything else but not over the temple that Christ builds empires have risen and fallen in rapid succession Egypt Assyria Babylon Persia Tyre Carthage Rome Greece Venice where are all these now? they were all the creations of man's hand and have passed away but the church of Christ lives on the

mightiest cities have become heaps of ruins the broad walls of Babylon are sunk to the ground the palaces of Nineveh are mounds of dust the hundred gates of Thebes are only matters of history Tyre is a place where fishermen hang their nets Carthage is a desolation yet all this time the true church stands the gates of hell do not prevail against it the earliest visible churches have in many cases decayed and perished where is the church of Ephesus and the church of Antioch where is the church of Alexandria and the church of Constantinople where are the Corinthian and Philippian and Thessalonian churches where indeed are they all they departed from the word of God they were proud of their bishops and synods and ceremonies and learning and antiquity they did not glory in the true cross of

Christ they did not hold fast to the gospel they did not give Jesus his rightful office or faith its rightful place they are now among the things that have been their candlestick has been taken away but all this time the true church has lived on has the true church been oppressed in one country it has fled to another has it been trampled on and oppressed in one soil it has taken root and flourished in some other climate fire, sword prisons, fines penalties have never been able to destroy its vitality its persecutors have died and gone to their own place but the word of God has lived and grown and multiplied weak as this true church may appear to the eye of man it is as an anvil which has broken many a hammer in times past and perhaps will break many more yet before the end he that lays

hands on it is touching the apple of God's eye the promise of our text is true of the whole body of the true church Christ will never be without a witness in the world he has had a people in the worst of times he had seven thousand in Israel even in the days of Ahab there are some now I believe in the dark places of the Roman and Greek churches who in spite of much weakness are serving Christ the devil may rage horribly the church may in some countries be brought exceedingly low but the gates of hell shall never entirely prevail the promise of our text is true of every individual member of the church some of God's people have been brought very low so that they despaired of their safety some have fallen sadly as David and Peter did some have departed from the faith for a time like Cranmer

and Jewel many have been tried by cruel doubts and fears but all have got safe home at last the youngest as well as the oldest the weakest as well as the strongest and so it will be to the end can you prevent tomorrow's sun from rising can you prevent the tide in the Bristol channel from ebbing and flowing can you prevent the planets moving in their respective orbits then and then alone can you prevent the salvation of any believer however feeble of any living stone in that church which is built on the rock however small or insignificant that stone may appear the true church is Christ's body not one bone in that mystical body shall ever be broken the true church is Christ's bride they whom God hath joined in everlasting covenant shall never be put asunder the true church is Christ's flock

when the lion came and took a lamb out of David's flock David arose and delivered the lamb from his mouth Christ will do the same he is David's greater son not a single sick lamb in Christ's flock shall perish he will say to his father in the last day of those whom thou gavest me I have lost none the true church is the wheat of the earth it may be sifted winnowed buffeted tossed to and fro but not one grain shall be lost the tares and chaff shall be burned the wheat shall be gathered into the barn the true church is Christ's army the captain of our salvation loses none of his soldiers his plans are never defeated his supplies never fail his muster role is the same at the end as it was at the beginning of the men that marched gallantly out of England a few years ago in the Crimean war how

many never came back regiments went forth strong and cheerful with bands playing and banners flying laid their bones in a foreign land and never returned to their native country but it is not so with Christ's army not one of his soldiers shall be missing at last he himself declares they shall never perish the devil may cast some of the members of the true church into prison he may kill and burn and torture and hang but after he has killed the body there is nothing more he can do he cannot hurt the soul when the French troops took Rome a few years ago they found on the walls of a prison cell under the inquisition the words of a prisoner who he was we know not but his words are worthy of remembrance though dead he yet speaketh he had written on the walls very lightly after an unjust trial

and a still more unjust excommunication the following striking words blessed Jesus they cannot cast me out of thy true church that record is true not all the power of Satan can cast out of Christ's true church one single believer the children of this world may wage fierce warfare against the church but they cannot stop the work of conversion what said the sneering emperor Julian in the early ages of the church what is the carpenter's son doing now an aged Christian made answer he is making a coffin for Julian himself but a few months passed away when Julian with all his pomp and power died in battle where was Christ when the fires of Smithfield were lighted and when Latimer and Ridley were burnt at the stake what was Christ doing then he was still carrying on his work of building that

work will ever go on even in troublous times fear not beloved brethren to begin serving Christ he to whom you commit your souls has all power in heaven and earth and he will keep you he will never let you be cast

away relatives may oppose neighbours may mock the world may slander and sneer fear not fear not the powers of hell shall never prevail against your soul greater is he that is for you than all they that are against you fear not for the church of Christ my brethren when ministers die and saints are taken away Christ can ever maintain his own cause he will raise up better and brighter stars the stars are all in his right hand leave off all anxious thought about the future cease to be cast down by the measures of statesmen or the plots of wolves in sheep's clothing Christ will ever

provide for his own church Christ will take care that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it all is going on well though our eyes may not see it the kingdoms of this world shall yet become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ suffer me now to say a few words of practical application of this sermon I speak to many whom I speak to for the first time I speak perhaps to many whom I speak to for the last time let not this service conclude without an effort to press home the sermon on each part and indeed on each heart my first word of application shall be a question what shall that question be wherewith shall I approach you what shall I ask I ask you whether you are a member of the one true church of Christ are you in the highest, the best sense a churchman in the sight of God you

know what I mean I look far beyond the church of England I speak of the church built upon the rock I ask you with all solemnity are you a member of that one church of Christ are you joined to the great foundation have you received the Holy Ghost does the spirit witness with your spirit that you are one with Christ and Christ with you I beseech you in the name of God to lay to heart this question and to ponder it well take heed to yourselves dear brethren if you cannot give a satisfactory answer to my inquiry take heed that you do not make shipwreck of faith take heed lest at the gates of hell that they prevail against you the devil claims you as his own and you be cast away forever take heed lest you go down to the pit from the land of Bibles and in the full light of Christ's gospel my

second word of application shall be an invitation I address it to all who are not yet true believers I say to you come and join the one true church without delay come and join yourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ in an everlasting covenant not to be forgotten come to Christ and be saved the day of decision must come sometime why not this very evening, why not today while it is called today why not indeed this very night ere the sun rises tomorrow morning come to him whose I am and whom I serve come to my master Jesus Christ come I say for all things are now ready mercy is ready for you heaven is ready for you, angels are ready to rejoice over you Christ is ready to receive you Christ will receive you gladly and welcome you among his children come into the ark the flood of God's wrath will

soon break upon the earth come into the ark and be safe come into the lifeboat the old world will soon break into pieces hear you not the tremblings of it the world is but a wreck hard upon the sandbank the night is far spent, the waves are beginning to rise the winds are rising the storm will soon shatter the old wreck but the lifeboat is launched and we the ministers of the gospel beseech you to come into the lifeboat and be saved dost thou ask how can I come my sins are so many dost thou ask how thou shalt come hear the words of that beautiful hymn just as I am without one plea but that thy blood was shed for me and that thou bidst me come to thee O Lamb of God I come that is the way to come to Christ you should come waiting for nothing and tarrying for nothing you should come as a

hungry sinner to be filled as a poor sinner to be enriched as a bad undeserving sinner to be clothed with righteousness so coming Christ would receive you him that cometh to Christ he will in no wise cast out O come come to Jesus Christ last of all let me give a word of exultation to my believing hearers live a holy life my brethren walk worthy of the church to which you belong live like citizens of heaven let your light

shine before men so that the world may profit by your conduct let them know whose you are and whom you serve be epistles of Christ known and read of all men written in such clear letters that none can say I know not whether he be a member of Christ or not live a courageous life my brethren confess Christ before men whatever station you occupy in that station confess

Christ why should you be ashamed of him he was not ashamed of you on the cross he is ready to confess you now before his father in heaven why should you be ashamed of him be bold, be very bold the good soldier is not ashamed of his uniform the true believer ought never to be ashamed of Christ live a joyful life my brethren live like men who look for that blessed hope the second coming of Jesus Christ this is the prospect to which we should all look forward it is not so much the thought of going to heaven as of heaven coming to us that should fill our minds there is a good time coming for all the people of God a good time for all the church of Christ a good time for all believers a bad time for the impenitent and unbelieving a bad time for them that will serve their own lusts and turn

their backs on the Lord but a good time for true Christians for that good time let us wait and watch and pray the scaffolding will soon be taken down the last stone will soon be brought out the top stone will be placed upon the edifice yet a little time and the full beauty of the building shall be clearly seen the great master builder will soon come himself a building shall be shown to assembled worlds in which there shall be no imperfection the saviour and the saved shall rejoice together the whole universe shall acknowledge that in the building of Christ's church all was well done

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