

PREACHING FOR THE POOR

NO. 114

A SERMON
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AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS

*“The poor have the gospel preached to them.”
Matthew 11:5*

JOHN, the forerunner of Christ, had some followers who continued with him after Christ had come in the flesh and openly manifested Himself among the people. These disciples were in doubt as to whether Jesus was the Messiah or no. I believe that John himself had no doubt whatever upon the matter, for he had received positive revelations and had given substantial testimonies on the subject.

But in order to relieve their doubts, John said to his disciples, in some such words, “Go and ask Him yourselves.” And therefore, he dispatched them with this message, “Tell us whether thou art he that should come, or do we look for another?” Jesus Christ continuing His preaching for a while, said, “Stay and receive your answer.”

And instead of giving them an affirmative reply, “I am that Messiah,” He said, “Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.” As much as to say, “That is My answer, these things are My testimonies—on the one hand, that I come from God, and on the other hand, that I am *the Messiah*.”

You will see the truth and force of this reply, if you will observe that it was prophesied of the Messiah, that He should do the very things which Jesus at that moment was doing. It is said of Messias, in the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, at the fifth and sixth verses, “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.”

The Jews had forgotten this too much. They only looked for a Messiah who should be clothed with temporal grandeur and dignity, and they overlooked the teaching of Isaiah, that he should be “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” And besides that, you observe, they overlooked the miracles which it was prophesied should attend the coming of the glorious One, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Jesus gave this as His answer—a practical demonstration of John’s problem, proving it to an absolute certainty. But He not only referred to the miracles, He gave them a further proof, “The poor have the gospel preached to them.” This, also, was one evidence that He was Messias.

For Isaiah, the great Messianic prophet, had said, “He shall preach the gospel unto the meek,” that is, the poor. And in that Jesus did so, it was proved that He was the man intended by Isaiah. Besides, Zechariah mentions the congregation of the poor who attend on Him, and therein evidently foretold the coming of Jesus Christ, the preacher to the poor.

I shall not, however, dwell upon these circumstances this morning. It must be apparent to every hearer that here is sufficient proof that Jesus Christ is the person who had been foretold under the name of Shiloh, or Messiah. We all believe *that*, and therefore, there is little need that I should try to prove what you have already received.

I rather select my text this morning as one of the constant marks of the Gospel in all ages and in every land. “The poor have the gospel preached to them.” This is to be its *semper idem*, its constant stamp. And we believe where the poor have not the Gospel preached unto them, there is a departure from the dispensation of the Gospel—the forsaking of this which was to be a fundamental trait and characteristic of the Gospel dispensation. “The poor have the gospel preached to them.”

I find that these words will bear three translations, I shall, therefore, have three heads, which shall be composed of three translations of the text. The first is that of *the authorized version*, “The poor have the gospel preached to them.” It is also Tyndal’s version. The second is *the version of Cranmer and the version of Geneva*, which is the best, “The poor are evangelized,” that is to say, they not only hear the Gospel, but they are influenced by it—the poor receive it.

The last is a translation of *some eminent writers*, and above all, of *Wycliffe*, which amused me when I read it, although I believe it to be as correct as any of the others. Wycliffe translates it, “pore men ben taken to prechyng of the Gospel.” The verb may be equally well-translated in the active as in the passive sense, “The poor have taken to the preaching of the Gospel.” That is to be one of the marks of the Gospel dispensation in all times.

I. First, then, THE AUTHORIZED VERSION, “The poor have the gospel preached to them.”

It was so in Christ’s day. It is to be so with Christ’s Gospel to the end of time. Almost every impostor who has come into the world has aimed principally at the rich, and the mighty, and the respectable—very few impostors have found it to be worth their while to make it prominent in their preaching that they preach to the poor.

They went before princes to promulgate their doctrines. They sought the halls of nobles where they might expatiate upon their pretended revelations. Few of them thought it worth their while to address themselves to those who have been most wickedly called, “the swinish multitude,” and to speak to them the glorious things of the Gospel of Christ.

But it is one delightful mark of Christ’s dispensation, that He aims first at the poor. “The poor have the gospel preached to them.” It was wise of Him to do so. If we would fire a building, it is best to light it at the basement—so our Savior—when He would save a world and convert men of all classes and all ranks, begins at the lowest rank that the fire may burn upwards, knowing right well that what was received by the poor will ultimately, by His grace, be received by the rich also.

Nevertheless, He chose this to be given to His disciples and to be the mark of His Gospel, “The poor have the gospel preached to them.” Now, I have some things to say this morning, which I think are absolutely necessary, if the poor are to have the Gospel preached unto them.

In the first place, let me say that *the Gospel must be preached where the poor can come and hear it*. How can the poor have the Gospel preached to them, if they cannot come and listen to it? And yet how many of our places of worship are there into which they cannot come and into which, if they could come, they would only come as inferior creatures?

They may sit in the back seats, but are not to be known and recognized as anything like other people. Hence the absolute necessity of having places of worship large enough to accommodate the multitude, and hence, moreover, the obligation to go out into the highways and hedges. If the poor are to have the Gospel preached unto them, then we must take it where they can get it.

If I wanted to preach to English people, it would be of no use for me to go and stand on one of the peaks of the Himalayas and begin preaching—they could not hear me there. And it is of little avail to build a gorgeous structure for a fashionable congregation and then to think of preaching to the poor. They cannot come any more than the Afrikaans can make their journey from Africa and listen to me here. I would not expect them to come to such a place, nor will they willingly enter it.

The Gospel should be preached, then, where the poor will come. And if they will not come after it, then let it be taken to them. We should have places where there is accommodation for them, and where they are regarded and respected as much as any other rank and condition of men. It is with this view alone that we have labored earnestly to be the means of building a large place of worship, because I feel that although the bulk of my congregation in New Park Street chapel are poor, yet there are many poor who can by no possibility enter the doors, because we cannot find room for the multitudes to be received.

You ask me why I do not preach in the street. I reply, I would do so, and am constantly doing so in every place except London, but here I cannot do it, since it would amount to an absolute breach of the

peace—it being impossible to conceive what a multitude of people must necessarily be assembled. I trembled when I saw twelve thousand on the last occasion I preached in the open air, and therefore, I have thought it best, for the present at least, to desist, until happily there shall be fewer to follow me.

Otherwise my heart is in the open air movement. I practice it everywhere else and I pray God to give to our ministers zeal and earnestness, that they may take the Gospel into the streets, highways and byways, and compel the people to come in, that the house may be filled. Oh that God would give us this characteristic mark of His precious grace—that the poor might have the Gospel preached unto them!

“But” you reply, “there are plenty of churches and chapels to which they might come.” I answer, yes, but that is only one half of the matter. *The Gospel must be preached attractively* before the poor will have the Gospel preached unto them. Why, there is no attraction in the Gospel to the great mass of our race, as it is currently preached. I confess that when I have a violent headache and cannot sleep, I could almost wish for some droning minister to preach to me. I feel certain I could go to sleep then, for I have heard some under the soporific influence of whose eloquence I could most comfortably snore.

But it is not at all likely that the poor will ever go to hear such preachers as these. If they are preached to in fine terms—in grandiloquent language which they cannot lay hold of—the poor will not have the Gospel preached to them, for they will not *go* to hear it. They must have something attractive to them. We must preach as Christ did. We must tell anecdotes and stories and parables as He did. We must come down and make the Gospel attractive.

The reason why the old Puritan preachers could get congregations was this—they did not give their hearers dry theology. They illustrated it. They had an anecdote from this and a quaint passage from that classic author. Here a verse of poetry. Here and there even a quip or pun—a thing which nowadays is a sin above all sins, but which was constantly committed by these preachers, whom I have ever esteemed as the patterns of pulpit eloquence.

Christ Jesus was an attractive preacher. He sought above all means to set the pearl in a frame of gold, that it might attract the attention of the people. He was not willing to place Himself in a parish church and preach to a large congregation of thirteen and a half, like our good brothers in the city, but would preach in such a style that people felt they must go to hear Him.

Some of them gnashed their teeth in rage and left His presence in wrath, but the multitudes still thronged to Him to hear and to be healed. It was no dull work to hear this King of preachers—He was too much in earnest to be dull and too humane to be incomprehensible. I believe that until this is imitated, the poor will not have the Gospel preached to them.

There must be an interesting style adopted to bring the people to hear. But if we adopt such a style, they will call us clownish, vulgar, and so on. Blessed be God, we have long learnt that vulgarity is a very different thing from what some men suppose. We have been so taught that we are willing to be even clowns for Christ’s sake, and so long as we are seeing souls saved we are not likely to alter our course.

During this last week I have seen, I believe, a score of persons who have been in the lowest ranks, the very meanest of sinners, the greatest of transgressors, who have, through preaching in this place, been restored and reclaimed. Do you think then that I shall shear my locks to please the Philistine? Oh no. By the grace of God, Samson knows where his strength lies and is not likely to do that to please any man or any set of men. Preaching must reach the popular ear. And to get at the people, it must be interesting to them, and by the grace of God we hope it shall be.

But in the next place, if the poor are to have the Gospel preached unto them, *it must be preached simply*. It is a waste of time to preach Latin to you, is it not? To the multitude of people it is of no use delivering a discourse in Greek. Possibly five or six of the assembly might be mightily edified and go away delighted. But what of that? The mass would retire unedified and uninstructed.

You talk about the education of the people, don’t you, and about the vast extent of English refinement? For the most part it is a dream. Ignorance is not buried yet. The language of one class of Englishmen is a dead language to another class, and many a word which is very plain to many of us, is as hard and difficult a word to the multitude as if it had been culled out of Hindustani or Bengali.

There are multitudes who cannot understand words composed of Latin, but must have the truth told them in round homely Saxon, if it is to reach their hearts. There is my friend the Reverend So and so, Doctor of divinity. He is a great student, and whenever he finds a hard word in his books, he tells it next Sunday to his congregation. He has a little intellectual circle, who think his preaching must be good, because they cannot understand it, and who think it proven that he must be an intelligent man because all the pews are empty.

They believe he must be a very useful member of society. In fact, they compare him to Luther and think he is a second Paul, because nobody will listen to him, seeing it is impossible to understand him. Well, we conceive of that good man that he may have a work to do, but we do not know what it is.

There is another friend of ours, Mr. Cloudyton, who always preaches in such a style that if you should try to dissect the sermon for a week afterwards, you could by no possibility tell what he meant. If you could look at things from his point of view you might possibly discover something. But it does appear by his preaching as if he himself had lost his way in a fog and were scattering a whole mass of mist about him everywhere.

I suppose he goes so deep down into the subject that he stirs the mud at the bottom and he cannot find his way up again. There are some such preachers whom you cannot possibly understand. Now, we say and say very boldly too, that while such preaching may be esteemed by some people to be good, we have no faith in it at all. If ever the world is to be reclaimed, and if sinners are to be saved, we can see no likelihood in the world of its being done by such means.

We think the Word must be understood before it can really penetrate the conscience and the heart. And we would always be preaching such as men can understand, otherwise the poor will not “have the gospel preached to them.” Why did John Bunyan become the apostle of Bedfordshire, and Huntingdonshire, and round about? It was because John Bunyan, while he had a surpassing genius, would not condescend to cull his language from the garden of flowers, but he went into the hayfield and the meadow, and plucked up his language by the roots, and spoke out in words that the people used in their cottages.

Why is it that God has blessed other men to the stirring of the people, to the bringing about of spiritual revivals, to the renewal of the power of godliness? We believe it has always been owing to this—under God’s Spirit—that they have adopted the phraseology of the people and have not been ashamed to be despised because they talked as common people did.

But now we have something to say more important than this. We may preach, very simply too, and very attractively, and yet it may not be true that “the poor have the gospel preached to them,” for the poor may have something else preached to them beside the Gospel. It is, then, highly important that we should each of us ask what the Gospel is, and that when we think we know it, we should not be ashamed to say, “This is the Gospel and I will preach it boldly, though all men should deny it.”

Oh! I fear that there is such a thing as preaching another Gospel “which is not another, but there are some that trouble us”. There is such a thing as preaching science and philosophy attractively, but not preaching the Gospel. Mark, it is not preaching, but it is preaching the Gospel that is the mark of Christ’s dispensation and of His truth.

Let us take care to preach fully the depravity of man, let us dwell thoroughly upon his lost and ruined estate under the law, and his restoration under the Gospel. Let us preach of these three things, for as a good brother said, “The Gospel lies in three things, the Word of God only, the blood of Christ only, and the Holy Spirit only.”

These three things make up the Gospel. “The Bible, the Bible alone the religion of Protestants. The blood of Christ the only salvation from sin, the only means of the pardon of our guilt, and the Holy Spirit, the only regenerator, the only converting power that will alone work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure.” Without these three things there is no Gospel.

Let us take heed, then, for it is a serious matter, that when the people listen to us, it is *the Gospel* that we preach, or else we may be as guilty as was Nero, the tyrant, who, when Rome was starving, sent his

ships to Alexandria, where there was corn in plenty, not for wheat, but for sand to scatter in the arena for his gladiators.

Ah! there be some who seem to do so—scattering the floor of their sanctuary—not with the good corn of the kingdom, upon which the souls of God’s people may feed and grow thereby, but with sand of controversy, sand of logic—which no child of God can ever receive to his soul’s profit. “The poor have the gospel preached to them.” Let us take heed that it is the Gospel.

Hear then, you chief of sinners, the voice of Jesus, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” “Whosoever believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.” “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

And just one more hint on this point, namely this—it must be said of us, if we would keep true to Christ’s rule and apostolic practice, that “the poor have the gospel *preached* to them.” In these days there is a growing hatred of the pulpit. The pulpit has maintained its ground many a year, but partially by its becoming inefficient, it is losing its high position. Through a timid abuse of it, instead of a strong stiff use of the pulpit, the world has come to despise it.

And now most certainly we are not a priest-ridden people one-half as much as we are a press-ridden people. By the press we are ridden indeed. Dispatches, Journals, Gazettes, and Magazines are now the judges of pulpit eloquence and style. They thrust themselves into the censor’s seat and censure those whose office it should rather be to censure them.

For my own part, I cheerfully accord to all men the liberty of abusing me. But I must protest against the lying conduct of at least one editor, who has misquoted in order to pervert my meaning and has done more. He has, to his eternal disgrace, manufactured a quotation from his own head, which never did occur in my works or words.

The pulpit has become dishonored. It is esteemed as being of very little worth and of no esteem. Ah! we must always maintain the dignity of the pulpit. I hold that it is the Thermopylae of Christendom. It is here the battle must be fought between right and wrong—not so much with the pen, valuable as that is as an assistant—as with the living voice of earnest men, “contending earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints.”

In some churches the pulpit is put away, there is a prominent altar, but the pulpit is omitted. Now, the most prominent thing under the Gospel dispensation is not the altar which belonged to the Jewish dispensation, but the pulpit. “We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.”

That altar is Christ, but Christ has been pleased to exalt “the foolishness of preaching” to the most prominent position in His house of prayer. We must take heed that we always maintain preaching. It is this that God will bless. It is this that He has promised to crown with success. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

We must not expect to see great changes nor any great progress of the Gospel until there is greater esteem for the pulpit—more said of it and thought of it. “Well,” some may reply, “you speak of the dignity of the pulpit. I take it, you lower it yourself, sir, by speaking in such a style to your hearers.” Ah! no doubt you think so. Some pulpits die of dignity.

I take it, the greatest dignity in the world is the dignity of converts—that the glory of the pulpit is, if I may use such a metaphor, to have captives at its chariot-wheels, to see converts following it, and where there are such, and those from the very worst of men. There is a dignity in the pulpit beyond any dignity which a fine mouthing of words and a grand selection of fantastic language could ever give to it. “The poor have the gospel preached to them.”

II. Now, the next translation is THE TRANSLATION OF GENEVA, principally used by Calvin in his commentary. It is also the translation of Thomas Cranmer, whose translation, I believe, was at least in some degree molded by the Geneva translation. He translates it thus, “The poor receive the gospel.”

The Geneva translation has it, “The poor receive the glad tidings of the gospel,” which is a tautology, since glad tidings mean the same thing as Gospel.

The Greek has it, “The poor are evangelized.” Now, what is the meaning of this word “evangelized”? They talk with a sneer in these days of evangelical drawing rooms and evangelicals and so on. It is one of the most singular sneers in the world—for to call a man an evangelical by way of joke is the same as calling a man a gentleman by way of scoffing at him.

To say a man is one of the Gospellers by way of scorn, is like calling a man a king by way of contempt. It is an honorable, a great, a glorious title, and nothing is more honorable than to be ranked among the evangelicals. What is meant, then, by the people being evangelized? Old Master Burkitt, thinking that we should not easily understand the word, says, that as a man is said to be Italianized by living among the Italians, getting their manners and customs, and becoming a citizen of the state, so a man is evangelized when he lives where the Gospel is preached and gets the manners and customs of those who profess it.

Now, that is one meaning of the text. One of the proofs of our Savior’s mission is not only that the poor hear the Word, but are influenced by it and gospelized. Oh! how great a work it is to gospelize any man and to gospelize a poor man. What does it mean? It means, to make him *like* the Gospel.

Now, the Gospel is holy, just, and true, and loving, and honest, and benevolent, and kind, and gracious. So, then, to gospelize a man is to make a rogue honest, to make a harlot modest, to make a profane man serious, to make a grasping man liberal, to make a covetous man benevolent, to make the drunken man sober, to make the untruthful man truthful, to make the unkind man loving, to make the hater the lover of his species, and in a word, to gospelize a man is, in his outward character, to bring him into such a condition that he labors to carry out the command of Christ, “Love thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself.”

Gospelizing, furthermore, has something to do with an inner principle. Gospelizing a man means saving him from hell and making him a heavenly character. It means blotting out his sins, writing a new name upon his heart—the new name of God. It means bringing him to know his election, to put his trust in Christ, to renounce his sins, and his good works too, and to trust solely and wholly upon Jesus Christ as his Redeemer.

Oh! what a blessed thing it is to be gospelized! How many of you have been so gospelized? The Lord grant that the whole of us may feel the influence of the Gospel. I contend for this, that to gospelize a man is the greatest miracle in the world. All the other miracles are wrapped up in this one. To gospelize a man, or in other words, to convert him, is a greater work than to open the eyes of the blind—for is it not opening the eyes of the blind soul that he may see spiritual matters and understand the things of heavenly wisdom?

And is not a surgical operation easier then operation on the soul? Souls we cannot touch, although science and skill have been able to remove films and cataracts from the eyes. “The lame walk.” Gospelizing a man is more than this. It is not only making a lame man walk, but it is making a dead man who could not walk in the right way walk in the right way ever afterwards.

“The lepers are cleansed.” Ah! but to cleanse a sinner is greater work than cleansing a leper. “The deaf hear.” Yes, and to make a man who never listened to the voice of God hear the voice of his Maker is a miracle greater than to make the deaf hear, or even to raise the dead. Great though that is, it is not a more stupendous effort of divine power than to save a soul, since men are naturally dead in sins and must be quickened by divine grace if they are saved. To gospelize a man is the highest instance of divine might, and remains an unparalleled miracle, a miracle of miracles. “The poor are evangelized.”

Beloved, there have been some very precious specimens of poor people who have come under the influence of the Gospel. I think I appeal to the hearts of all of you who are now present, when I say there is nothing we more reverence and respect than the piety of the poor and needy. I had an engraving sent to me the other day which pleased me beyond measure. It was an engraving simply but exquisitely executed.

It represented a poor girl in an upper room, with a lean-to roof. There was a post driven in the ground, on which was a piece of wood, standing on the table were a candle and a Bible. She was on her knees at a chair, praying, wrestling with God. Everything in the room had on it the stamp of poverty. There was the mean coverlet to the old stump bedstead. There were the walls that had never been papered and perhaps scarcely whitewashed.

It was an upper story to which she had climbed with aching knees and where perhaps she had worked away till her fingers were worn to the bone to earn her bread at needlework. There it was that she was wrestling with God. Some would turn away and laugh at it. But it appeals to the best feelings of man and moves the heart far more than does the fine engraving of the monarch on his knees in the grand assembly.

We have had lately a most excellent volume, the *Life of Captain Hedley Vicars*. It is calculated to do great good and I pray God to bless it. But I question whether the history of Captain Hedley Vicars will last as long in the public mind as the history of the Dairyman's Daughter, or the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain. The histories of those who have come from the ranks of the poor always lay hold of the Christian mind.

Oh! we love piety anywhere. We bless God where coronets and divine grace go together, but if piety in any place do more brightly than anywhere else, it is in rags and poverty. When the poor woman in the almshouse takes her bread and her water, and blesses God for truth—when the poor creature who has not where to lay his head, yet lifts his eye and says, “My Father will provide,” it is then like the glowworm in the damp leaves, a spark more conspicuous for the blackness around it. Then religion gleams in its true brightness and is seen in all its lustre.

It is a mark of Christ's Gospel that the poor are evangelized—that they can receive the Gospel. True it is, the Gospel affects all ranks and is equally adapted to them all, but yet we say, “If one class is more prominent than another, we believe that in Holy Scripture the poor are most of all appealed to.”

“Oh!” say some very often, “the converts whom God has given to such a man are all from the lower ranks, they are all people with no sense. They are all uneducated people that hear such-and-such a person.” Very well, if you say so. We might deny it if we pleased, but we do not know that we shall take the trouble, because we think it no disgrace whatever. We think it rather to be an honor that the poor are evangelized and that they listen to the Gospel from our lips. I have never thought it a disgrace at any time.

When any have said, “Look, what a mass of uneducated people they are.” Yes, I have thought, and blessed be God they are, for those are the very people that want the Gospel most. If you saw a physician's door surrounded by a number of ladies of the sentimental school, who are sick about three times a week and never were ill at all—if it were said he cured them, you would say, “No great wonder too, for there never was anything the matter with them.”

But if you heard of another man, that people with the worst diseases have come to him and that God has made use of him, and his medicine has been the means of healing their diseases, you would then say, “There is something in it, for the people that want it most have received it.” If, then, it be true that the poor will come to hear the Gospel more than others, it is no disgrace to the Gospel—it is an honor to it—that those who most want it do freely receive it.

III. And now I must close up by briefly dwelling on the last point. It was the third translation, WYCLIFFE'S TRANSLATION. To give it to you in old English—“Poor men are taking to the preaching of the gospel.” “Ah!” say some, “they had better remain at home, minding their ploughs or their blacksmith's hammer. They had better have kept on with their tinkering and tailoring, and not have turned preachers.” But it is one of the honors of the Gospel that poor men have taken to the preaching of it.

There was a tinker once, and let the worldly-wise blush when they hear of it—there was a tinker once, a tinker of whom a great divine said he would give all his learning if he could preach like him.

There was a tinker once, who never so much as brushed his back against the walls of a college, who wrote a *Pilgrim's Progress*. Did ever a doctor in divinity write such a book?

There was once a pot-boy—a boy who carried on his back the pewter pots for his mother, who kept the Old Bell. That man drove men mad, as the world had it—but led them to Christ, as we have it—all his life long, until, loaded with honors, he sank into his grave, with the goodwill of a multitude round about him, with an imperishable name written in the world's records, as well as in the records of the church. Did you ever hear of any mighty man, whose name stood in more esteem among God's people than the name of George Whitefield? And yet these were poor men, who, as Wycliffe said, were taking to the preaching of the Gospel.

If you will read the life of Wycliffe, you will find him saying that he believed that the Reformation in England was more promoted by the labors of the poor men whom he sent out from Lutterworth than by his own. He gathered round him a number of the poor people whom he instructed in the faith, and then he sent them two and two into every village, as Jesus did.

They went into the marketplace and they gathered the people around. They opened the Book and read a chapter, and then they left them a manuscript of it, which for months and years after the people would assemble to read, and would remember the Gospellers who had come to tell them the Gospel of Christ.

These men went from marketplace to marketplace, from town to town, and from village to village, and though their names are unknown to fame, they were the real reformers. You may talk of Cranmer, and Latimer, and Ridley—they did much—but the real reformers of the English nation were people whose names have perished from the annals of time, but are written in the records of eternity. God has blessed the poor man in preaching the truth.

Far be it from me to depreciate learning and wisdom. We should not have had the Bible translated without learning, and the more learning a man can have, if he be a sanctified man, the better. He has so many more talents to lay out in his Master's service. But it is not absolutely necessary for preaching of the Word.

Rough, untamed, untaught energy has done much in the church. A Boanerges has stood up in a village. He could not put three words together in grammatical English. But where the drowsy parson had for many a year lulled all his people into an unhallowed rest, this man started up, like the herdsman Amos, and brought about a great awakening.

He began to preach in some cottage. People thronged around him. Then a house was built and his name is handed down to us as the Reverend So and so, but then he was known as Tom the ploughman, or John the tinker. God has made use of men whose origin was the most obscure, who seemed to have little, except the gifts of nature, which could be made use of in God's service. And we hold that this is no disgrace, but on the contrary an honor that poor men are taking to preaching the Gospel.

I have to ask you this morning to help some poor men in preaching the Gospel. We are constantly receiving letters from our poor brethren and it is very seldom that we say "No," to their appeals for assistance, but we must do so, unless our friends, more especially those who love the Gospel, will really do something towards the maintenance of God's faithful servants.

I have, during the past year, preached many times for ministers on this ground, that they could not live unless some preached a sermon and made a collection for them. In some places the population was so small that they could not maintain their minister, and in others it was a new movement, and therefore, they were unable to support him.

Some of you subscribe to the Church Pastoral Aid Society. That is a very excellent Society, but I never could see any good in it. There are many poor clergy in the Church of England who want assistance bad enough. But if you want to know the right way of keeping poor curates, I will tell you—split a bishop up into fifty and that will do it. If that could be done at once and speedily, there would be no need of Pastoral Aid Societies.

You will say, perhaps, "Let such a thing be done in our denomination." I answer that we have no bishops with whom such a thing could be done. I believe there is not to be found one minister in the whole Baptist denomination whose salary has ever exceeded £600, and there are only three, I believe, who receive as much as that, of which I am not one, and these three men are in such a position that their demands are great, and they have not one penny too much, while the great mass of our denomination receive £20, £30, £40, £50, £60, and so on, but below £100. The sum collected today will be given to those whose incomes are below £80 and whose needs are great.

And now, beloved, I have opened my mouth for the dumb and pleaded the cause of the poor, let me end by entreating the poor of the flock to consider the poor man's Christ. Let me urge them to give Him their thoughts and may the Lord enable them to yield Him their hearts. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

May God bless the high and low, the rich and poor. Yea, all of you, for His name's sake.

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