

MEMENTO MORI

NO. 304

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, MARCH 18, 1860
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AT EXETER HALL, STRAND

*“O that they were wise, that they understood this,
that they would consider their latter end!”
Deuteronomy 32:29*

MAN is unwilling to consider the subject of death. The shroud, the mattock and the grave, he labors to keep continually out of sight. He would live here always if he could, and since he cannot, he at least will put away every emblem of death as far as possible from his sight. Perhaps there is no subject so important, which is so little thought of. Our common proverb that we use is just the expression of our thoughts, “We must live.” But if we were wiser, we would alter it and say, “We must die.” Necessity for life there is not, life is a prolonged miracle. Necessity for death there certainly is, it is the end of all things. Oh that the living would lay it to heart.

Some years ago, a celebrated author—Drelincourt, wrote a work on Death, a valuable work in itself, but it commanded no sale whatever. There were no men who would trouble themselves with death’s heads and crossbones. And to show how foolish man is, a certain doctor went home and wrote a silly ghost story, not one word of which was true, sent it to the bookseller, he stitched it up with his volume, and the whole edition sold. Anything men will think of rather than death—any fiction, any lie. But this stern reality, this master truth, he puts away, and will not suffer it to enter his thoughts.

The old Egyptians were wiser than we are. We are told that at every feast there was always one extraordinary guest that sat at the head of the table. He ate not, he drank not, he spoke not, and he was closely veiled. It was a skeleton which they had placed there to warn them that even in their feasting, they should remember there would be an end of life. We are so fond of living, so sad at the very thoughts of death, that such a *memento mori* as that, would be quite unbearable in our days of feasting.

Yet our text tells us that we should be wise, if we would consider our latter end. And certainly we should be, for the practical effect of a true meditation upon death would be exceedingly healthful to our spirits. It would cool that ardor of covetousness, that fever of avarice, always longing after and accumulating wealth, if we did but remember that we would have to leave our stores, that when we have gotten our most, all that we can ever inherit for our body is one six feet of earth and a mouthful of clay. It would certainly help us to set loose by the things which we here possess. Perhaps it might lead us to set our affections upon things above and not upon the moldering things below.

At any rate, thoughts of death might often check us when we are about to sin. If we look at sin by the light of that death’s lantern by which the sexton shall dig our graves, we might see more of the hollowness of sinful pleasure, and of the emptiness of worldly vanity. If we would but sin on our coffin lids, we should sin far more seldom. Surely we would be kept back from many an evil act if we remembered that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

And maybe too, these thoughts of death might be blessed to us in even a higher sense, for we might hear an angel speaking to us from the grave, “Prepare to meet your God,” and we might be led to go home and set our house in order, because we must die and not live. Certainly, if even one of these effects shall be produced by considering our latter end, it would be the purest wisdom to continually walk arm in arm with that skeleton teacher—Death.

I propose this morning, as God shall help me, to lead you to consider your latter end. May the Holy Spirit bend your thoughts downward to the tomb. May He guide you to the grave, that you may there see

the end of all earthly hopes, of all worldly pomp and show. In doing this, I shall thus divide my subject. First, *let us consider death*, secondly, let us push on the consideration by considering *the warnings which death has given us already*, and then further, let us *picture ourselves as dying*—bringing to our mind's eye a picture of ourselves stretched upon our last bed.

I. In the first place then, LET US CONSIDER DEATH.

1. Let us begin by remarking its *origin*. Why is it that I must die? Whence came these seeds of corruption that are sown within this flesh of mine? The angels die not. Those pure ethereal spirits live on without knowing the weakness of old age and without suffering the penalties of decay. Why must I die? Why has God made me so curiously and so wondrously—why is all this skill and wisdom shown in the fashioning of a man that is to endure for an hour, and then to crumble back to his native element—the dust?

Can it be that God originally made me to die? Did He intend that the noble creature, who is but a little lower than the angels, who has dominion over the works of God's hands, beneath whose feet He has put all sheep and oxen, yea, and the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea and whatsoever passes through the paths of the sea—did He intend that that creature should waste away as a shadow, and should be as a dream that continues not? Come, my soul, let this melancholy thought thrust itself upon your attention.

You die because you sin! Your death is not God's primal ordinance, but it is a penalty brought upon you on account of the transgression of your first parent. You would have been immortal if Adam had been immaculate. Sin, you are the mother of death! Adam, you have dug the graves of your children! We might have lived on, in everlasting youth, if it had not been for that thrice-cursed theft of the forbidden fruit. Look then, that thought in the face.

Man is a suicide. Our sin, the sin of the human race, slays the race. We die because we have sinned. How this should make us hate sin! How we should detest it because the wages of sin is death! Brand then, from this day forward, the word *Murderer* on the brow of sin.

2. In considering Death, let us go a step further, and observe not only its origin, but its *certainty*. Die I must. I may have escaped a thousand diseases, but death has an arrow in his quiver that will reach my heart at last. True, I have one hope, a blissful hope, that if my Lord and Master shall soon come, I shall be among the number of them that are alive and remain, who shall never die, but who shall be changed. I have that fond anticipation that He will come ere this body of mine shall crumble into dust, and that these eyes shall see Him when He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth.

But however, if it is not so, die I must. "It is appointed unto all men once to die, and after death the judgment." Run! Run! but the fleet pursuer shall overtake you. Like the stag before the hounds, we fly swifter than the breeze, but the dogs of death shall outstrip us, fever and plague, weakness and decay, he has but to let slip these dogs and they are on us, and who can resist their fury?

There is a black camel upon which death rides say the Arabs, and that must kneel at every man's door. With impartial hand he dashes down the palace of the monarch as well as the cabin of the peasant, at every man's door there hangs that black knocker, and death has but to uplift it and the dread sound is heard, and the uninvited guest sits down to banquet on our flesh and blood. Die I must.

No physician can stretch out my life beyond its allotted term. I must cross that river Jordan. I may use a thousand stratagems, but I cannot escape. Even now I am today like the deer surrounded by the hunters in a circle, a circle which is narrowing every day, and soon must I fall and pour out my life upon the ground. Let me never forget then, that while other things are uncertain, death is sure.

3. Then, looking a little further into the shade, let me remember *the time of my death*. To God it is fixed and certain. He has ordained the hour in which I must expire. A thousand angels cannot keep me from the grave an instant longer when that hour has struck. Nor could legions of spirits cast me into the pit before the appointed time—

"Plagues and death around me fly,

*Till He pleases I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit.*

All our times are in His hand. The means, the way I shall die, how long I shall be in dying, the sickness and in what place I shall be seized with the contagion, all these are ordained. God has in His mind's eye the wave that shall engulf me, or the bed in which I shall breathe out my last. He knows the stones that shall mark my sleeping place, and the very worm that shall crawl o'er this face when it shall be cold in death. He has ordained everything, and in that book of fate it stands, and never can it be changed.

But to me it is quite uncertain. I know not when, nor where, nor how I shall breathe out my life. Into that sacred ark I cannot look—that ark of the secrets of God. I cannot pry between the folded leaves of that book which is chained to the throne of God, wherein is written the whole history of man. When I walk by the way I may fall dead in the streets, an apoplexy may usher me into the presence of my Judge. Riding along the road, I may be carried as swiftly to my tomb. While I am thinking of the multitudes of miles over which the fiery wheels are running, I may be in a minute, without a moment's warning, sent down to the shades of death.

In my own house I am not safe. There are a thousand gates to death and the roads, from earth to hades are innumerable. From this spot in which I stand there is a straight path to the grave, and where you sit, there is an entrance into eternity.

Oh, let us think then, how uncertain life is. Talk we of a hair, it is something massive when compared with the thread of life. Speak we of a spider's web, it is ponderous compared with the web of life. We are but as a bubble, nay, less substantial. As a moment's foam upon the breaker, such are we. As an instant spray—nay, the drops of spray are as enduring as the clouds of heaven compared with the moments of our life.

Oh, let us then, prepare to meet our God, because when and how we shall appear before Him is quite unknown to us. We may never go out of this hall alive. Some of us may be carried hence on young men's shoulders, as Ananias and Sapphire of old. We may not live to see our homes again. We may have given the last kiss to the beloved cheek, and spoken the last word of fondness to those who are near to our hearts. We are on the brink of our tombs.

*“Ten thousand to their endless home
This solemn moment fly;
And we are to the margin come,
And soon expect to die!”*

4. But I must not linger here, but go on to observe *the terrors which surround death*. I would call to your memory today the pains, the groans, the dying strife, which make our frightened souls start back from the tomb. To the best men in the world, dying is a solemn thing. Though, “I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies,” and know that I have a portion among them that are sanctified, yet must it always give some trembling to the flesh, some quivering to the human frame, to think of breathing out my soul, and launching on an unknown sea.

He that can laugh at death is a fool—stark, staring mad is he. He who can make jokes with regard to his end will find that if he should die jesting, it will be no jest to be damned. When this tent is being taken down, when this clay tenement begins to creak and shake in the rough north wind of death, when stone after stone tumbles from its place, and all the bonds are loosened, it will be a terrible moment then.

When the poor soul stands beneath the temple of the body, and sees it shake, sees rifts in its roof, sees the pillars tremble, and all the ruins thereof falling about it, it will be an awful moment—a moment which, if it were continued and lengthened, would be the most dread picture of hell that can be presented to us, for hell is called the second death. An endless dying, the pangs of death prolonged eternally, the

woes and the grief of dissolution made to last without an end, that, I say, is one of the most terrible pictures of hell. Death itself must be a tremendous thing.

Let me think too, that when I die I must leave behind me all that I have on earth. Farewell! to that house which I have so fondly called my home. Farewell! to that fireside and the little prattlers that have climbed my knee. Farewell! to her who has shared my life and been the beloved one of my bosom. Farewell! all things—the estate, the gold, the silver.

Farewell! earth. Your fairest beauties melt away, your most melodious strains die in the dim distance. I hear no more and see no more. Ears and eyes are closed, and men shall carry me out and bury their dead out of their sight. And now, farewell! to all the means of grace. That passing bell is the last sound of the sanctuary that shall toll for me. No church bell now shall summon me to the house of God. If I have neglected Christ I shall hear of Christ no more. No grace presented now, no strivings of the Spirit.

*“Fix’d is my everlasting state,
Could I repent, ’tis now too late.”*

Death has now closed up the window of my soul. If I am impenitent, an everlasting darkness, a darkness like that of Egypt, that may be felt, rests on me forever. Ye may sing, ye saints of God, but I must howl eternally. Ye may gather round the Sacramental Table and remember your Master’s death, but I am cast away forever from His presence, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. This is to die, my friends, and to die with a vengeance too.

To the believer there are softening tints, there are lines in the picture which take out the blackness. The very shades help to make the believer’s glory brighter, the grim passage of death makes heaven shine with a superior luster. He thinks of the lands beyond the flood, of the beatific vision, of the face of the exalted Redeemer, of a seat at His right hand, of crowns of glory and of harps of immortal bliss.

But to you who are ungodly and unconverted, death has only this black side. It is the leaving of all you have, and of all you love. It is an entering upon eternal poverty, everlasting shame, and infinite woe. Oh that you were wise, you careless sinners—oh that you were wise, that you understood this, and would consider your latter end.

5. I have thus you see pushed into another head which I meant to have dwelt upon for a moment, viz., *the results of death*. For verily, its results and terrors to the wicked are the same. Oh that you were wise to consider them. Let me, however, remind the Christian, in order that there may be a flash of light in the thick darkness of this sermon, that death to him should never be a subject upon which he should loathe to meditate.

To die!—to shake off my weakness and to be girded with omnipotence. To die!—to leave my pangs, and pains, and fears, and woe, my feeble heart, my unbelief, my tremblings and my griefs, and leap into the divine bosom. To die!—What have I to lose by death? The tumult of the people and the strife of tongues. A joyous loss indeed!

To the believer, death is gain, unalloyed gain. Do we leave our friends by death? We shall see better friends and more numerous up yonder, in the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. Do we leave our house and comforts? “There is a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Do we lose our life? Ah no, we gain a better far, for remember that we live to die, we die to live, and then we live to die no more.

Without any fraction of loss, death to the believer is a glorious gain. It is greatly wise then, for a Christian to talk with his last hours, because those last hours are the beginning of his glory. He leaves off to sin and begins to be perfect, he ceases to suffer and begins to be happy, he renounces all his poverty and shame, and begins to be rich and honored. Comfort then, comfort then, ye sorrowing and suffering Christians. “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.” Say unto them your warfare is accomplished, your sin is pardoned, and you shall see your Lord’s face without a veil between.

II. I shall now turn to the second head of my discourse. Brethren, fellow immortals, I desire you now to CONSIDER THE WARNINGS WHICH DEATH HATH ALREADY GIVEN TO EACH ONE OF US.

We are so prone to turn away from this subject, that you must excuse me if I continue to bring you back again, again, and again to it, during the brief time that can be allotted to the discourse of this morning. Death has been very near to many of us, he has crossed the ecliptic of our life many and many a time. That baleful planet has often been in close conjunction with us.

Let us just observe how frequently he has been in our house. Call you then to mind first of all, how many warnings you have had in the loss of relatives. There is not a person here, I imagine, who has not had to make a pilgrimage to the tomb, to weep over the ashes of your friends. During the few years that I have been the pastor of this church, how many times have I journeyed to the tomb. One after another of the valiant men in our Israel have been taken away. Many who were my spiritual sons and daughters, whom I buried first in the tomb of baptism, have I had to bury afterwards in the tomb of death.

The scene is always changing. As I stand in my pulpit, I see many an old familiar face. But I have to observe also, how many places there are which would have been empty, if it were not that God has sent other Davids to occupy David's seat. And my dear friends, it cannot be long with some of you ere it shall be my mournful task, unless I die myself, to go weeping over your bodies to the tomb. That funeral oration may soon be pronounced over some of you. And you have good reason to expect it when you think how one after another of those who were the friends of your youth have gone.

Where is the wife with whom you lived joyously in the early days of your life? Or where is the husband whose fair young face so often looked on you with eyes of love? Where are those children who sprung up like flowers, but withered as they bloomed? Where are those brothers and those sisters, the elder born, that have crossed the flood before us? or where are those younger ones, whom we lived to see born, who shone with us for an hour, but whose sun even before it had reached its zenith, had set in eternal night?

Brothers and sisters, death has made sad inroads into some of our families. There be some of you who stand today like a man upon the shore when the tide is swelling towards his feet. There came one wave, and it took away the grandmother, another came, and a mother was swept away, another came, and the wife was taken, and now it dashes at your feet. How long shall it be ere it breaks over you—and you too, are carried away by the yawning wave into the bosom of the deep of death?

The Lord has given many of you serious and solemn warnings. I do entreat you, listen to them. Harken now to the cry which comes up from the grave of those who being dead yet speak to you. Hear them now, those lately buried ones, as they cry, "Children, husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, prepare to meet your God, lest you should fail in the last dread day."

Think again, what solemn and repeated warnings we have had of late, not in our families, but in the wide, wide world. It is a singular fact that afflictions and accidents never come alone. A few weeks ago we were all shocked with the news that one who sailed across the treacherous sea full many a time, and who at last had risen so high in his profession as to become captain of the largest vessel that was ever launched upon the deep, that he had suddenly perished in calm waters, and his spirit had appeared before his God. It seemed to us to be a sad, sad thing, that one who had endured the tempest and the storm, perhaps a thousand times, should sink as a ship that founders in mid-ocean, when not a wave rocks her keel. He is at home—he has just left his family—his foot slips, and he finds a watery grave.

Quick upon that, as one messenger follows another, came the news across the sea of the falling of a mill, in which so many hundreds were at once overwhelmed by the ruins, and sent hurriedly into the presence of God. We can little tell what a shriek of horror went through the towns which are adjacent to that mill in America. Even ourselves, across leagues of the sea, felt stunned by the blow, when so large a number of our fellow creatures were hurried from this state of being into another.

Immediately after that there came another calamity, which is still fresh in our memory. A train is whirling along, and suddenly the iron horse leaps from his road, and men who are talking together, as

fully at ease as we are, are amid the breaking of bones, the crashing of timber, and whirlwinds of dust and steam, and are snatched from time into eternity.

And now, this last week, how many tokens have we had that man is mortal? A judge who has long presided over the trials of his criminal countrymen, delivers his charge before a grand jury. He delivers it with his usual wisdom, calmness, and deliberation. He has finished, he pauses, he lifts the smelling bottle to his nose to refresh himself, he falls back, he is carried from the court to receive his own charge, to go from the judgment seat on which he sat to the judgment seat before which he must himself stand.

Then, in the same week, a good man who has served his day and generation in a sister church of this city, is suddenly snatched away from before us. He who aided every good cause, and served his day and generation—perhaps you may know that I allude to Mr. Corderoy—is suddenly taken away, and leaves a whole denomination mourning over him.

Nay, nearer than that has the stroke of death come to some of us. It was but last Wednesday that I sat in the house of that mighty servant of God, that great defender of the faith, the Luther of his age, Dr. Campbell, we were talking, then about these sudden deaths, little thinking that the same calamity would invade his very family, but alas! we observed in the next day's paper, that his second son had been swept overboard in returning from one of his voyages to America. A bold brave youth has found a liquid grave.

So that here, there, everywhere, O death! I see your doings. At home, abroad, on the sea, and across the sea, you are doing marvels! O you mower! how long ere your scythe shall be quiet? O you destroyer of men, will you never rest, will you ne'er be still? O death! must your juggernaut-car go crashing on forever, and must the skulls and blood of human beings mark your track? Yes, it must be so till He comes who is the King of life and immortality, then the saints shall die no more, but be as the angels of God. So then, death has spoken very loudly to us as a nation, as a people, and has spoken to many of us, very loudly, in our own family circles.

Now, man, I will come closer home to you still. Death has given home strokes to all of us. Put your finger in your own mouth, for you have death's mark there. What means those decaying teeth, those twitching pains of the gums?—an agony despised by those alone who feel it not. Why do some parts of the house tremble and hurry to decay? Because the rottenness that is in the teeth is in the whole body. You talk of a decayed tooth, remember, it is but part of a decayed man. You are yourself rotting, but a little less rapidly.

For, to some of you, what warnings death has given. He has laid his cold hand upon your head and frozen your hair, and there it lies in snowy flakes upon your temples. Or perhaps, he has put that hand yet more heavily upon it, and now your bare head is exposed to the rays of the sun, and remember, this is but a type of the exposure of your bare soul to the stroke of death.

What signs have we all had in our bodies, especially the aged, the infirm, the consumptive, and the maimed? What mean those lungs that are so soon exhausted of their breathing if you travel up a flight of stairs to your bed? Why is it you need your optic glasses for your eyes, but that they that look out of the windows are darkened? Why that affected hearing? Why that failure of the voice, that weakness of the entire body, that accumulation of the flesh, or that prominence of the bones and leanness of the body?

What are all these but stabs from the hands of death? They are, if I may say so, his warrants which he presents to you, summoning you in a little time to meet him in another place, to do your last work, and take your last farewell. Oh! if we would but look at ourselves, we bear death's signs and tokens about us in every part of our body.

But some of us have had yet more solemn warnings than these. If these suffice not, death gives us a more thundering sermon. It is but a little while ago with me since death with his axe seemed to be felling my tree. How the chips flew about me and covered the ground! It is a marvel to myself that I am here. Brought to death's door, till the mind became distracted, and the body weakened, so that one could scarce stand upright, and yet again recovered.

*“Tell it unto sinners—tell,
I am, I am, out of hell.”*

Still spared, and yet alive. You have had fever, cholera it may be. You have been stretched on your bed time after time, and each time the branch has creaked and bent almost double, till we have said, “Surely, it must snap.” As a bowing wall have we been, and as a tottering fence, down it must come, so we thought, for a rough hand was shaking it, and moving us to and fro. There was not a pillar that stood firm. There was not a beam or rafter that did not quiver. We said in the bitterness of our soul, “My days are cut off, and I shall go down to my tomb before my time.” Well man, and yet you are living in sin, as careless and unconcerned as you were before.

Remember, if you will not hear death’s tongue you shall feel his dart. If you will not think of God when He gives you a warning from a distance, you shall be made to feel God, for “He shall tear you in pieces, and none shall deliver.”

I think I see this morning death fitting his arrow to the bow. He is drawing it, pulling it tighter and tighter still, and the marvel is that he can hold the arrow in his hand so long. “Shall it fly?” says death, “Shall I let fly at yon wretch’s heart? he will not repent, let me cut him off and send him to his destruction.” But the Lord says, “Spare him yet a little longer.”

But anon, death’s fingers are itching. He says, “My Lord, let me take aim, I have bent my bow and made it ready. So sharp is it that it would cut through bars of brass, or triple steel, to reach a human heart. My throat is thirsting after his blood. Oh, let me slay him, let him die.” “No,” cries the longsuffering voice of God. “Spare him, spare him, spare him yet a little longer.”

But the time will soon arrive. Perhaps ere that clock shall reach the half hour, it may be said in heaven, “Time is! Time was!” And then shall death let fly, his arrow shall reach your heart, and you, falling down on earth, shall appear before the awful Judge of the quick and the dead, and receive your final sentence. And good God, if you are unprepared to die! O careless sinner, what then will become of you?

I have thus tried to make you think of death’s warnings in the loss of friends, and the deaths of many abroad, moreover in the failing of our bodies, and in the diseases which have begun to prey upon us.

III. And now to conclude, will you in the last place, PICTURE YOURSELF AS DYING NOW.

Antedate for a very little while your last day. Suppose it to have come. The sun has risen. “Throw up that window! let me see that sun for the last time!—this is my last day!” The physicians whisper with one another. You catch some syllables, and you learn the sad news that the case is hopeless. Much has been done for you, but skill has its limit.

“He may survive,” says the physician, “perhaps another twelve hours, but I hardly expect it will be as long as that. You had better gather his friends together to see him. Telegraph for the daughter, let her come up and see her father’s face for the last time in the world.” Yes, and now I begin to feel that the hour is coming. They are gathering round my bed. “Farewell! to you all, a last farewell! A father bids you follow him upwards to the skies. ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth.’ My hope stands fast and firm in Christ Jesus! Farewell! Farewell! I commend you to Him who is the Father of the fatherless and the husband of the widow.”

But the hour draws nearer still. And now the lips refuse to speak. We have something to communicate—a last word to a wife. We mutter through our closed teeth, but no audible sounds are heard, no words that can be interpreted. We breathe heavily. They stay us up in the bed with pillows. And now we begin to understand that expression of the hymn, “The cracking of the eye strings.” Now, we cannot see. Strange to say, we have eyes still, but we cannot see.

If we want anything we must feel about us for it. But no, we cannot lift our hands. They begin to hang down. We can still hear, and we hear them whispering the question, “Is he dead?” One of them says, “I think there is still a little breath.” They come very near and try to hear us breathing. That can

hardly be heard. What must our sensations be in that solemn moment! There is a hush now in the room. The watch alone is heard ticking, as the last sands drop from the hour glass.

And now, the last moment is come. My soul is severed from my body. And where am I now—a naked, disembodied spirit? My soul, if your hope be sound and real, you are now where you have longed to be, you are in the presence of your Savior and your God. You are now brother to the angels. You stand in the mid-blaze of the splendor of divinity. You see Him, whom having not seen, you have loved, in whom believing, you have rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Ah, but there is another picture, the reverse of this, I cannot attempt to draw it, I will give you but the rough outline of it—a crayon sketch without the filling up. Yes, you are dying, and bad as you have been, you have some that love you, and they gather round you. You cannot speak to them. Alas! you tell them more than if you could speak, for they see in your face that clammy sweat, those staring eyes. They see tokens that you have a vision of a something which would not bear to be revealed.

You try to be composed, you quiet yourself. The doctor assists you to be damned easily, he drugs you, helps to send you to sleep. And now you feel that you are expiring. Your soul is filled with terror. Black horrors and thick darkness gather round you. *Your* eye strings break. *Your* flesh and your heart fail. But there is no kind angel to whisper, “Peace, be still.” No convoy of cherubim to bear your soul away straight to yonder worlds of joy. You feel that the dart of death is a poisoned dart, that it has injected hell into your veins, that you have begun to feel the wrath of God before you enter upon the state where you shall feel it to the full! Ah, I will not describe what has happened.

As your minister it may be, I shall have to come up and see you in your last extremity, and I shall have to say to the mother, to the children, to your brothers and to your sisters, “Well, well, we must leave this in the hands of a covenant God.” I must speak as gently as I can, but I shall go away with the reflection, “O that he had been wise, that he had understood this, that he had considered his latter end.”

My heart, as I go down the stairs, shall ask me this question, “Was I faithful to this man? did I tell him honestly the way to heaven? if he is lost, will his blood be required at my hands?” I know that with regard to some of you the answer of my conscience will be, “I have preached as well as I possibly could the Word of God, not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but with a desire to be simple and to come home to the heart. I must leave the matter there. If they are lost, oh, horror of horrors! but I am clear of their blood.”

Ah, my hearers, I hope it will not be so with you, but that each one of you, dying, may have a hope, and rising again may possess immortality and ascend to the throne of my Father and of your Father, to my God and to your God.

And now, if there is any impression upon your minds, any serious thought, let me send you away with this one sentence. The way of salvation is plain, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.” Believe—that is, trust—trust the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved. My God the Holy Spirit enable you to trust Him *now*, for with some of you—and mark this last sentence—with some of you it is NOW or NEVER.

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.