

MAKING LIGHT OF CHRIST

NO. 98

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON SABBATH EVENING, AUGUST 17, 1856
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AT EXETER HALL, STRAND

“But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.”
Matthew 22:5

MAN is not much changed since the days of Adam. In his bodily frame he appears to be exactly similar, for skeletons many hundred years' old are the exact counterparts of ours. And sure enough that which was recorded in history as having been done by man centuries ago, might be written again, for, “There is nothing new under the sun.”

The same class of men is still to be discovered (although, perhaps, differently dressed) as that which existed ages long gone by. There are still men who answer the character given to others, in His day, by the Savior, “They go their way, one to his farm, another to his merchandise,” making light of the glorious things of the Gospel.

I am certain I have many such characters here tonight and I pray the Lord that I may be enabled to discourse to them very solemnly and very pointedly. And I must ask all you who understand the heavenly art of prayer, to pray that God would be pleased to send home every thought into the breast where He intends it to lodge, that it may bring forth the comfortable fruit of righteousness in the salvation of many souls.

“They made light of it,” so do too many in this day. And so will a large portion of my hearers tonight. I believe that to think lightly of Christ is a sin. And at all risks of being falsely called legalist or free-willer, by those who are wise above what is written, I shall charge it upon you as such, for I hope I shall never belong to that class of Calvinists who do the devil's work by excusing sinners in their sins.

In the first place, we shall have a few words with you concerning *what it is that the sinner makes light of*. Secondly, *how it is that he makes light of it*. And thirdly, *why it is that he makes light of it*. Then a general observation or two, and we shall not weary you.

I. In the first place, WHAT IS IT THAT THE SINNER MAKES LIGHT OF?

According to the parable, the person alluded to made light of a marriage banquet which a king had provided, with all kinds of dainties, to which they were freely invited, and from which they willfully absented themselves. The spiritual meaning of this is easy to discover. Sinners who make light of Christ express their contempt of a glorious banquet which God has provided at the marriage of His Son. This is solemn ground to tread upon. Oh! for the teachings of the Holy Spirit.

Taking this parable as the basis of our remarks, we may observe, first, that the sinner makes light of the *messenger who brings him the news that the marriage supper is prepared*. These men refused to come. They went, “One to his farm, another to his merchandise,” and so made light of the messenger. And every sinner who neglects the great salvation of Jesus Christ makes light of the Gospel minister, which is no little insult in God's esteem.

It is never reckoned a small offense by our great nation if our ambassador is treated with indifference. And take it for a truth, it is no light thing with God if you despise the ambassadors He sends to you. But this is comparatively little, the ambassadors are men like yourselves, who can well afford to be condemned, if that were all. In fact, we should be glad enough to forgive you if it were in our power to do so and if this were all your guilt.

But these people *despised the feast*. Some of them fancied that the fatlings and other provisions that would be upon the table would be no better than what they had at home. They thought that the royal

banquet would be no very great thing for which to give up their merchandise for a day or to renounce their farming even for an hour. They scorned the banquet—at least, it appears so, because they did not go to it.

Oh! sinner, when you neglect the great salvation, remember what you do despise. When you make light of God's Gospel, you make light of justification by faith, you make light of washing in the blood of Jesus, you make light of the Holy Spirit, you make light of the road to heaven, and then you make light of faith, and hope, and love. You make light of all the promises of the eternal covenant, of all the glorious things that God has laid up for them who love Him, and of everything which He has revealed in His Word as being the promised gift to those who come unto Him.

It is a solemn thing to make light of the Gospel, for in that Word, God's-spell—good tidings, is summed up all that human nature can require and all that even the saints in bliss can receive. Oh! to despise the Gospel of the blessed God, how mad! how worse than folly! Despise the stars and you are a fool. Despise God's earth, with its glorious mountains, with its flowing rivers, and its fair meads, and you are a maniac.

But despise God's Gospel and you are ten thousand maniacs in one. Make light of that and you are far more foolish than he who sees no light in the sun, who beholds no fairness in the moon, and no brilliancy in the starry firmament. Trample, if you please, His lower works, but oh! remember, when you make light of the Gospel, you are making light of the masterpiece of your great Creator—that which cost Him more than to create myriad worlds—the bloody purchase of our Savior's agonies.

And again these people *made light of the King's Son*. It was *his* marriage, and inasmuch as they absented themselves, they did dishonor to that glorious One in whose honor the supper was prepared. They slighted him whom his Father loved.

Ah! sinner, when you make light of the Gospel, you make light of Christ—of that Christ before whom glorious cherubs bow themselves—of that Christ at whose feet the high archangel thinks it happiness to cast his crown. You make light of Him with whose praise the vault of heaven rings. You make light of Him whom God makes much of, for He has called Him, "God over all, blessed for ever."

Ah! it is a solemn thing to make light of Christ. Despise a prince and you shall have little honor at the king's hand for it. But despise the Son of God, and the Father will have vengeance on you for His slighted Son. Oh! my dear friends, it seems to me to be a sin, not unpardonable, I know, but still most heinous, that men should ever despise my blessed Lord Jesus Christ and treat Him with cruel scorn.

Make light of You, sweet Jesus! Oh! when I see You with Your shirt of gore, wrestling in Gethsemane, I bow myself o'er You, and I say, "O, Redeemer, bleeding for sin, can any sinner make light of You?" When I behold Him with a river of blood rolling down His shoulder, beneath the cursed flagellation of Pilate's whip, I ask, "Can a sinner make light of such a Savior as this?"

And when I see Him yonder, covered with His blood, nailed to a tree, expiring in torture, shrieking, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani," I ask myself, "Can any make light of this?" Ay, if they do, then, indeed, it were sin enough to damn them, if they have no other sin—that they have lightly esteemed the Prince of Peace, who is glorious and altogether lovely.

Oh! my friend, if you make light of Christ, you have insulted the only one who can save you—the only one who can bear you across the Jordan—the only one who can unbolt the gates of heaven and give you welcome. Let no preacher of smooth things persuade you that this is not a crime. O, sinner, think of your sin, if you are making light of Him, for then you are making light of the King's only Son.

And yet, again, these people *made light also of the King* who had prepared the banquet. Ah! little do you know, O sinner, when you do trifle with the Gospel, that you are insulting God. I have heard some say, "Sir, I do not believe in Christ, but still I am sure I try to reverence God. I do not care about the Gospel. I do not wish to be washed in Jesu's blood, nor to be saved in free grace fashion, but I do not despise God. I am a natural religionist!"

Nay, sir, but you do insult the Almighty, inasmuch as you do deny His Son. Despise a man's offspring and you have insulted the man himself. Reject the only begotten Son of God and you have

rejected the Eternal One Himself. There is no such thing as true natural religion apart from Christ. It is a lie and a falsehood. It is the refuge of a man who is not brave enough to say he hates God, but it is only a refuge of lies.

For he who denies Christ, in that act offends God and shuts up heaven's gates against himself. There is no loving the Father except through the Son, and there is no acceptable worship of the Father except through the Great High Priest, the Mediator, Jesus Christ. Oh! my friend, remember, you have not merely despised the Gospel, but you have despised the Gospel's God.

In laughing at the doctrines of revelation, you have laughed at God. In reviling the truth of the Gospel, you have reviled God Himself. You have bent your fist in the face of the Eternal. Your oaths have not fallen upon the church, they have fallen upon God Himself. Oh! remember, you that mock at the message of Christ! Oh! remember, you who turn away from the ministry of truth! God is a Mighty One, how severely *can* He punish! God is a jealous God. Oh! how severely *will* He punish!

Make light of God, sinner? Why, this above all things is a damning sin, and in committing it, it may be you will one day sign your own death warrant. For making light of God, of Christ, and of His holy Gospel is destroying one's own soul and rushing headlong to perdition. Ah! unhappy souls, most unhappy must you be if you live and die making light of Christ, and preferring your farms and your merchandise to the treasures of the Gospel.

Again bethink you, my poor, pitiable friend, in that you make light of all the things I have mentioned, *you are making light of the great solemnities of eternity*. The man who lightly esteems the Gospel makes light of hell. He thinks its fires are not hot and its flames not such as Christ has described them. He makes light of the burning tears that scald despairing cheeks forever. He makes light of the yells and shrieks that must be the doleful songs and terrible music of perishing souls. Ah! it is no wise thing to make light of hell.

Consider again, you make light of heaven—that place to which the blest ones long to go, where glory reigns without a cloud, and bliss without a sigh. You put the crown of everlasting life beneath your feet. You tread the palm branch beneath your unhallowed foot and you think it little to be saved and little to be glorified.

“Ah! poor soul, when you are once in hell, and when the iron key is turned forever in the lock of inevitable destiny, you will find hell to be a something not so easy to despise. And when you have lost heaven and all its bliss, and can only hear the song of the blessed, sounding faintly in the distance, increasing your misery by contrast with their joy, then you will find it no little thing to have made light of heaven.

Every man who makes light of religion makes light of these things. He misjudges the value of his own soul and the importance of its eternal state.

This is what men make light of. “Oh! sir,” says one, “I never indulge in any words hostile to God's truth. I never laugh at the minister, nor do I despise the Sabbath.” Stop, my friend, I will acquit you of all that and yet I will solemnly lay to your charge this great sin of making light of the Gospel. Hear me then!

II. HOW IS IT THAT MEN MAKE LIGHT OF IT?

In the first place, it is making light of the Gospel and of the whole of God's glorious things, *when men go to hear and yet do not attend*. How many frequent churches and chapels to indulge in a comfortable nap! Think what a fearful insult that is to the King of heaven. Would they enter into Her Majesty's palace, ask an audience, and then go to sleep before her face? And yet the sin of sleeping in Her Majesty's presence would not be so great, even against her laws, as the sin of willfully slumbering in God's sanctuary.

How many go to our houses of worship who do not sleep, but who sit with vacant stare, listening as they would to a man who could not play a lively tune upon a good instrument? What goes in one ear goes out at another. Whatever enters the brain goes out without ever affecting the heart. Ah, my hearers, you are guilty of making light of God's Gospel when you sit under a sermon without attending to it!

Oh! what would lost souls give to hear another sermon! What would yonder dying wretch, who is just now nearing the grave, give for another Sabbath! And what will you give, one of these days, when you shall be hard by Jordan's brink, that you might have one more warning, and listen once more to the wooing voice of God's minister! We make light of the Gospel when we hear it without solemn and awful attention to it.

But some say they *do* attend. Well, it is possible to attend to the Gospel and yet to make light of it. I have seen some men weep beneath a powerful sermon. I have marked the tears chase each other—tears, blessed telltales of emotions within. I have sometimes said to myself, it is marvelous to see these people weep under some telling word from God, which is alarming them, as if Sinai itself were thundering in their ears.

But there is something more marvellous than men's weeping under the Word. It is the fact that they soon, too soon, wipe all their tears away. But ah! my dear hearer, recollect that if you hear of these things and shake off a solemn impression, you are, in doing that, slighting God and making light of His truth. And take heed how you do that, lest your own garments be red with the blood of your soul and it be said, "Oh, Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself."

But there are others who make light of it in a different fashion. They hear the Word and attend to it, but alas! they *attend to something else with it*.

Oh! my hearer, you make light of Christ if you put Him anywhere except in the center of your heart. He who gives Christ a little of his affections, makes light of Christ. For Christ will have the whole heart or none at all. He who gives Christ a portion, and the world a portion, despises Christ, for he seems to think that Christ does not deserve to have the whole.

And inasmuch as he says that, or thinks that, he has mean and unholy thoughts of Christ. Oh! carnal man, you who are half religious and half profane, you who are sometimes serious, but as often frivolous, sometimes apparently pious, but yet so often unholy, you make light of Christ. And you who weep on the Sunday and then go back to your sins on the Monday, you who set the world and its pleasures before Christ, you think less of Him than He deserves, and what is that but to make light of Him?

Oh! I charge you, ask yourself my hearer this night, are not you the man? Do not you yourself make light of Christ? The self-righteous man who sets himself up as a partner with Christ in the matter of salvation, notwithstanding all his trumpety good works, is such a ringleader among despisers that I would gibbet him in the very middle of them, and bid all like him tremble, lest they also be found slights of Jesus.

He makes light of Christ, again, *who makes a profession of religion and yet does not live up to it*. Ah! church members, you need a great deal of sifting. We have an immense quantity of chaff now mixed with the wheat, and sometimes I think we have something worse than that. We have some in our churches who are not so good as chaff, for they do not seem to have been near the wheat at all. They are nothing better than tares.

They have come into our churches, just as they would into a trade-association, because they think it will improve their business. It gives respectability to their name to take the sacrament. It makes them esteemed to have been baptized, or to be a member of a Christian church. And so they come in by shoals after the loaves and fishes, but not after Jesus Christ.

Ah! hypocrite, you make light of Christ if you think that He is a stalking-horse to get you wealth. If you dream that you are to saddle and bridle Christ, and ride to wealth upon Him, you make a grand mistake, for He was never meant to carry men anywhere except to heaven. If you suppose that religion was intended to gild your homes, to carpet your floors, and line your purses, you have greatly erred.

It was intended to be profitable to the soul, and he who thinks to use religion to his own personal advantage, thinks lightly of Christ. And at the last day, this crime shall be laid to his charge—that he has made light of it, and the King shall send His armies to cut him in pieces, among those who have despised His Majesty and would not obey His laws.

III. And now, in the third place, I will tell YOU WHY THEY MADE LIGHT OF IT. They did so from different reasons.

Some of them made light of it, *because they were ignorant*. They did not know how good the feast was. They did not know how gracious the King was. They did not know how fair the Prince was or else they might have thought differently. Now there are many present tonight, I dare say, who think lightly of the Gospel, because they do not understand it. I have often heard people laugh at religion, but ask them what it is, and they know no more about religion than a horse, and worse than that, for they believe untruths about it, and a horse does not do that. They laugh at it simply because they do not comprehend it. It is a thing beyond them.

We have heard of a foolish man who, whenever he heard a piece of Latin mentioned, laughed at it because he thought it was a joke, at any rate it was a very outlandish way of talking—and so he laughed. So it is with many when they hear the Gospel. They do not know what it is and so they laugh at it. “Oh!” they say, “the man is mad.” But why is he mad? Because you do not understand him.

Are you so conceited as to suppose that all wisdom and all learning must rest with you? I would hint to you that the madness is on the other side. And though you may say of him, “Much learning has made thee mad,” we would reply, “It is quite as easy to be made mad with none at all.” And those who have none, and especially those who have no knowledge of Christ, are the most likely to despise Him. Well did Watts say,

*“His worth, if all the nations knew,
Sure, the whole earth would love Him too.”*

Oh! dear friends, if you once knew what a blessed master Christ is, if you once knew what a blessed thing the Gospel is, if you could once be brought to believe what a blessed God our God is, if you could only have one hour’s enjoyment such as the Christian experiences, if you could only have one promise applied to your heart, you would never make light of the Gospel again.

Oh! you say you do not like it. Why, you have never tried it. Should a man despise the wine of which he has never sipped? It may be sweeter than he dreams. Oh! taste and see that the Lord is good, and as sure as ever you taste, you will see His goodness.

I will venture to say again, that there are many who make light of the Gospel simply through ignorance. And if that is so, I am somewhat in hopes that when they are a little enlightened by sitting under the Word, the Lord may be pleased graciously to bring them to Himself and then I know they will never make light of Christ again. Oh! do not be ignorant, “for that the soul to be without knowledge is not good.” Seek to know Him, whom to know aright is life eternal, and when you know Him, you will never make light of Him.

Other people make light of it, *because of pride*. “What is the good,” said one, “of bringing me that invitation? Step into my house, my man, I will show you a feast quite as good as any you can tell me of. Look here! There is good cheer for you, for my table is as well spread as any man’s. Begging his Majesty’s pardon, the King cannot give a better feast than I, and I do not see why I should drag my bones about to get nothing better than I can get at home.” So he would not go, out of pride.

And so with some of you. *You* want to be washed! No, you were never filthy, were you? *You* need to be forgiven! Oh no! you are rather too good for that! Why, you are so awfully pious in your own conceit that if it were all true, you would make even the angel Gabriel blush to think of you. You do not even think an angel capable of holding a candle to you.

What! *you* seek for mercy? It is an insult to you. “Go and tell the drunkard,” you say, “go and fetch the harlot. But I am a respectable man, I always go to church or chapel. I am a very good sort of fellow. I may frolic now and then, but I make it up some other day. I am sometimes a little slack, but then I rein the horses in and make up the distance afterwards. And I dare say I shall get to heaven as soon as anybody else. I am a very good sort.”

Well, my friend, I do not wonder that you despise the Gospel, for the Gospel tells you that you are entirely lost. It tells you that your very righteousness is full of sin. That, as for any hope of your being saved by it, you might as well try to sail across the Atlantic on a withered leaf as try to get to heaven by your righteousness. And as for it being a garment fit to cover you, you might as well get a spider's web to go to court in and think it a dress fit to appear in before her Majesty.

Ah! my hearer, I know why you despise Christ, it is because of your Satanic pride. May the Lord pull the pride out of you, for if He do not, it will be the fire wood that shall roast your soul forever. Take heed of pride, by pride fell the angels—how can men, then, though the image of their Maker, hope to win by it? Shun it, flee from it, for so sure as you are proud, you will incur the guilt of making light of Christ.

Perhaps quite as many made light of the good news, because *they did not believe the messenger*. “Oh!” said they, “stop a moment. What! A dinner to be given away? I do not believe it. What! The young Prince going to be married? Tell that to fools, we do not believe any such thing. What! We all invited? We do not believe it, the story is incredible.” The poor messenger went home and told his Master that they would not believe him. That is just another reason why many men make light of the Gospel, because they do not believe it.

“What!” they say “Jesus Christ died to wash men from their sins? We do not believe it. What! A heaven? Who ever saw it? A hell! Who ever heard its groans? What! Eternity. Who ever returned from that last hope of every spirit? What! Blessedness in religion? We do not believe it—it is a moping, miserable thing. What! Sweetness in the promises? No there is not, we believe there is sweetness in the world, but we do not believe there is any in the wells the Lord has digged.” And so they despise the Gospel, because they do not believe it.

But I am sure that when a man once believes it, he never thinks lightly of it. Once let me have the solemn conviction in my heart by the Holy Spirit that if unsaved, there is a gaping gulf that shall devour me, do you think I can go to rest till I have trembled from head to foot? Once let me heartily believe that there is a heaven provided for those who believe on Christ, do you think I could give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids, till I have wept because it is not mine? I believe not.

But damnable unbelief thrusts his hand into the mouth of man and plucks up his heart, and so destroys him, for it will not let him believe. And therefore, he cannot feel, because he believes not. Oh! my friends, it is unbelief that makes men think lightly of Christ. But unbelief will not do so by and by. There are no infidels in hell. They are all believers there. There are many that were infidels here, but they are not so now.

The flames are too hot to make them doubt their existence. It is hard for a man, tormented in the flame, to doubt the existence of the fire. It would be difficult for a man, standing before the burning eyes of a God, to doubt the existence of a God after that. Ah! Unbelievers, turn you, or rather, may the Lord turn you from your unbelief, for this makes you think lightly of Christ, and this it is that is taking away your life and destroying your souls.

Another set of people thought lightly of this feast because *they were so worldly*—they had so much to do. I have heard of a rich merchant who was waited on one day by a godly man, and when he stopped him, he said to him, “Well, sir, what is the state of your soul?” “Soul!” he said, “bother you, I have no time to take care of my soul. I have enough to do to take care of my ships.” About a week after, it so happened that he had to find time to die, for God took him away. We fear He said to him, “You fool! This night your soul shall be required of you, then whose shall those things be which you have hoarded up for yourself?”

You merchants of London, there are many of you who read your ledgers more than your Bibles. Perhaps you must, but you do not read your Bibles at all, while you read your ledgers every day. In America, it is said, they worship the almighty dollar. I believe that in London many men worship the almighty sovereign. They have the greatest possible respect for an almighty bank note, that is the god which many men are always adoring.

The prayer book they carry so religiously in their hands is their cash book. Even on Sunday, there is a gentleman over there, he does not think his foreman knows it, but he was sitting indoors all this morning, because it was wet, casting up his accounts, and now he comes here in the evening, because he is a very pious man—extraordinarily so. He would shut the parks up on a Sunday, he would—he would not let a soul get a breath of fresh air, because he is so pious. But he himself may sit half-a-day in the counting house and yet think it no sin.

But many are too busy to think of these things. “Pray!” they say, “I have no time for that. I have to pay. What! Read the Bible? No I cannot. I have to be looking over this thing and that thing, and seeing how the markets go. I find time to read the *Times*, but I could not think of reading the Bible.” It will be marvelously unfortunate for some of you that you will find the lease of your lives rather shorter than you expected.

If you had taken a lease of your lives for eighty-eight years from this date, you would be foolish enough, perhaps, to spend forty-four in sin. But considering that you are a tenant at will and liable to be turned out any day, it is the height of folly, the very climax of absurdity, excelling all that the fool, with his cap and bells, ever did, to be living just to gather up the pelf of this world and not for things to come. Worldliness is a demon that has wrung the neck of many souls. God grant that we may not perish through our worldliness!

There is another class of people that I can only characterize in this way—they are *altogether thoughtless*. If you ask them concerning religion, they have no opinion at all about it. They do not positively detest it, they do not mock at it, but they have not a thought about it. The fact of it is, they intend thinking about it by and by.

Theirs is a kind of butterfly existence, they are always moving about, never doing anything, neither for others or themselves. And these are very amiable people, who are always ready to give a guinea for a charity. They never refuse anybody, and they would give their guinea all the same, whether it was for a cricket match or a church. Now, if I were forced to go back to the world and had to choose the character I would wish to be, the last position I would wish to occupy would be that of the thoughtless man. I believe thoughtless persons are in the most danger of being lost of any class I know.

I like, sometimes to get under the Word a thoroughly stout, stiff, hater of the Gospel, for his heart is like a flint, and when it is struck with the hammer of the Gospel, the flint goes to pieces in a moment. But these thoughtless people have thick rubber hearts—you hit them and they give way. You strike them again and they give way. If they are sick and you visit them, they say, “Yes.” You talk to them about the importance of religion, they say, “Yes.” You talk to them about escaping from hell and entering heaven, they say, “Yes.”

You preach a sermon to them when they are better and remind them of the vows they made in their sickness. “It is quite right, sir,” they say. And they say the same whatever you may tell them. They are always very polite to you, but whatever you say to them is put aside. If you begin talking to them about drunkards, oh! they are not drunkards. They may have accidentally got drunk once, but that was a little thing out of the usual way.

And bring whatever sin you like to them, you may hit them and hit them, but it is no good, for they are not half so easily broken (speaking after the manner of men) as the real stout-hearted hater of the Gospel.

Why, there is a sailor comes rolling home from sea, swearing, blaspheming, cursing. He comes into the house of God and almost the first word is applied by the Spirit for the breaking of Jack’s heart. Another young man says, “I know as much as any minister can tell me, for my own mother taught me and my old father used to read the Bible for me till, I believe, I have got every bit of it in my head. I go to chapel out of respect to his memory, but I really don’t care at all about it. It is very good for old people. It is quite right for old women, and those who are dying, and in time of cholera. It is a very good thing, but I don’t care anything about it just now.”

Now, I tell you, you careless people, most solemnly, that you are the very devil's lifeguards. You are his reserve. He keeps you away from the battle. He does not send you out like he does a blasphemer, for he fears that a shot may haply light upon you and you may be saved. But he says, "Stand by here, and if you have to go out, I will give you an impenetrable coat of mail."

The arrows go rattling against you, they all hit you, but alas! there is not one of them that penetrates your heart, for that is left elsewhere. You are only an empty chrysalis, and when you come to God's house, and His Word is preached, you make light of it, because it is your habit to be thoughtless about everything.

Very briefly I must touch another case and then I must dismiss you. You may make light of the Gospel *out of sheer presumption*. They are like the foolish man, who goes on and is punished—not like the prudent man, who, "foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself." They go on, that step is safe—they take it. The next step is safe—they take it. Their foot hangs over a gulf of darkness. But they will try one step, and as that is safe, they think they will try the next.

And as the last has been safe, and as for many years they have been safe, they suppose they always shall be. And because they have not died yet, they think they will never die. And so out of sheer presumption, thinking, "all men mortal but themselves," they go on making light of Christ. Tremble, you presumptuous, you will not always be able to do that.

And lastly, I fear there are a great many who make light of Christ *because of the commonness of the Gospel*. It is preached everywhere and that is why you make light of it. You can hear it at the corner of every street. You can read it in this widely circulated Bible. And because the Gospel is so common, therefore, you don't care for it.

Ah! my dear friends, if there were only one Gospel minister in London that could tell you the truth, if there were only one Bible in London, I believe you would be rushing to hear that Bible read. And the man who had the message would have no easy sinecure of it, he would be obliged to work from morning to night to tell it out to you.

But now, because you have so many Bibles, you forget to read them. Because you have so many tracts, you pack up any article in them. Because you have so many sermons, you do not think anything at all of them. But why is that? Do you think the less of the sun because he scatters his beams abroad? Do you think the less of bread because it is the food which God gives to all His children? Do you think the less of water, when you are thirsty, because every rill will afford it to you? No. If you were thirsty after Christ, you would love Him all the better, because He is preached everywhere, and you would not think lightly of Him because of that.

"They made light of it." How many of my hearers tonight, I ask again, are making light of Christ? Many of you are, no doubt. I will give you, then, just one warning and then farewell. Make light of Christ, sinner! Let me say, again, to you, and you will rue the day when you come on your deathbed. It will go hard with you when the bony monster has got the grip of you, and when he is bringing you down the river, to steep you in the lake of death.

It will go hard with you when your eye-strings break and when your death sweat stands upon your brow. Remember last time you had a fever? Ah! how you did shake. Remember, last night, how you did quake in your bed, when flash after flash of lightning came through your window and how you did tremble when the deep-mouthed thunder spake out the voice of God?

Ah! sinner, you will tremble worse then when you shall see death for yourself, and when the bony rider, on his white horse, shall grasp his dart and plunge it in your heart. It will go hard with you then, if you have no Christ to shelter you, no blood wherein to wash your soul! Remember, moreover, after death comes the judgment.

It will go hard with you if you have despised Christ and shall die a despiser. See that flying angel? His wings are made of flame and in his hand he grasps a sharp two-edged sword. O angel, wherefore do you wing your speedy flight? "Hark!" says he, "this trump shall tell you." And he puts a trumpet to his lips and

*“Blows a blast so loud and dread,
Ne’er were prophetic sounds so full of woe.”*

Look! The sheeted dead have started from their graves. Behold, the cloudy chariot is wheeled along by cherub’s hands. Mark! there upon the throne sits the King—the Prince. O angel, what in this terrible day must become of the man that has thought lightly of Christ? See there, he unsheathes his sword. “This blade,” says he, “shall find and pierce him through. This blade, like a sickle, shall reap each tare from the wheat and this strong arm shall bind him up in his bundle to be burned. And this great arm of mine shall grasp him and hurl him down, down, down, where flames forever burn and hell forever howls.” It will go hard with you then.

Mark this man’s word tonight, go away and laugh at it. But remember, I say to you again, it will be a solemn thing for you when Christ shall come to judgment, if you have made light of Him, and worse than all, if you should ever be locked up in the caverns of despair, if you should ever hear it said, “Depart ye cursed,” if you should ever mingle your awful shrieks with the doleful howls of lost myriads, if you should see the pit that is bottomless, and the gulf that has walls of fire. It will be a fearful thing to find yourself in there and to know that you can ne’er get out again!

Sinner, this night I preach the Gospel to you. E’er you go, hear it and believe it. May God grant you grace to receive it, so you shall be saved. “He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved. He that believeth not,” so says the Scripture, “shall be damned.” To believe is to put your trust in Christ. To be baptized is to be plunged in water in the name of the Lord Jesus, as a profession that you are already saved and that you love Christ.

“He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned.” O may you never know the meaning of that last word. Farewell!

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.