

THE GOD OF PEACE

NO. 49

A SERMON
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 AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

“Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.”
Romans 15:33.

PAUL once advised the Romans to strive. Three verses before our text he actually gives them an exhortation to strive and yet he here utters a prayer that the God of peace might be with them all. Lest you should think him to be a man of strife, you must read the verse. He says, “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake and for the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.” That is a holy striving and such a strife as that we wish always to see in the church, a strife in prayer, a surrounding the throne together, besieging God’s mercy seat, a crying out before God, until it actually amounts to a striving together in our prayers. There is also another kind of striving which is allowed in the church, and that is striving earnestly after the best gifts—a sweet contention which of us shall excel all others in love, in duty, and in faith. May God send us more strife of that kind in our churches, a strife in prayer, a strife in duty. And when we have mentioned these strifes, we find them of so peaceable a kind that we come back to the benediction of our text, “Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.” Without any preface, we shall consider, first, *the title*, “The God of peace.” And secondly, *the benediction*, “The God of peace be with you all. Amen.”

I. First of all, THE TITLE. Mars, among the heathens, was called the god of war. Janus was worshipped in periods of strife and bloodshed. But our God JEHOVAH styles Himself not the God of war, but the God of peace. Although He permits war in this world, sometimes for necessary and useful purposes. Although He superintends them and has even styled Himself the Lord, mighty in battle, yet His holy mind abhors bloodshed and strife. His gracious Spirit loves not to see men slaughtering one another. He is emphatically, solely, and entirely and without reserve, “the God of peace.” Peace is His delight, “Peace on earth and goodwill towards men.” Peace in heaven (for that purpose He expelled the angels). Peace throughout His entire universe is His highest wish and His greatest delight.

If you consider God in the Trinity of His persons for a few moments, you will see that in each—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the title is apt and correct, “the God of peace.” There is *God the Everlasting Father*. He is the God of peace, for He from all eternity planned the great covenant of peace whereby He might bring rebels near unto Him, and make strangers and foreigners fellow-heirs with the saints and joint-heirs with His Son Christ Jesus. He is the God of peace, for He justifies and thereby implants peace in the soul. He accepted Christ and as the God of peace, He brought Him again from the dead. And He ordained peace, peace eternal with His children, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. He is the God of peace.

So is *Jesus Christ*, the second person, the God of peace for, “He is our peace who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us.” He makes peace between God and man. His blood, sprinkled on the fiery wrath of God, turned it to love or rather that which must have broken forth in wrath, though it was love forever, was allowed to display itself in lovingkindness through the wondrous mediatorship of Jesus Christ. And He is the God of peace because He makes peace in the conscience and in the heart. When He says, “Come unto me all you that are heavy laden,” He gives “rest,” and with that rest He gives “the peace of God which passes all understanding,” which keeps our heart and mind. He is, moreover, the God of peace in the Church, for wherever Jesus Christ dwells, He creates a holy peace. As in the case of Aaron of old, the ointment poured upon the head of

Christ trickles down to the very skirts of His garments and thereby He gives peace—peace by the fruit of the lips and peace by the fruit of the heart—unto all them who love Jesus Christ in sincerity.

So is *the Holy Spirit* the God of peace. He of old brought peace when chaotic matter was in confusion, by the brooding of His wings—He caused order to appear where once there was nothing but darkness and chaos. So in dark chaotic souls, He is the God of peace. When winds from the mountains of Sinai and gusts from the pit of hell sweep across the distressed soul. When, wandering about for rest, our soul faints within us, He speaks peace to our troubles and gives rest to our spirits. When by earthly cares we are tossed about like the sea bird, up and down, up and down, from the base of the wave to the billows' crown, He says, "Peace, be still." He it is who on the Sabbath-day brings His people into a state of serenity and bids them enjoy—

*“That holy calm, that sweet repose
Which none but he that feels it knows.”*

And He shall be the God of peace when at life's last hour He shall still the current of Jordan, shall hush all the howlings of the fiends, shall give us peace with God through Jesus Christ, and land us safely in heaven. Blessed Trinity! However we consider You, whether as Father, Son, or Holy Spirit, Your name is still thrice well-deserved—the God of peace and the God of love.

Let us now enter into the subject and see wherein God is a God of peace. We remark that He is the God of peace, for He created peace originally. He is the God of peace, for He is the restorer of it. Though wars have broken out through sin, He is the God of peace, because He preserves peace when it is made. And He is the God of peace because He shall ultimately perfect and consummate peace between all His creatures and Himself. Thus He is the God of peace.

I. First of all, He is the God of peace BECAUSE HE CREATED NOTHING BUT PEACE.

Go back in your imagination to the time when the majestic Father stepped from His solitude and commenced the work of creation. Picture to yourself the moment when He speaks the word and the first matter is formed. Before that time there had been neither space, nor time, nor anything existing, but Himself. He speaks and it is done. He commands and it stands fast. Behold Him scattering from His mighty hands, stars as numerous as the sparks from an anvil. Witness how, by His word, worlds are fashioned and ponderous orbs roll through that immensity which first of all He had decreed to be their dwelling place. Lift up your eyes and behold these great things which He has created already. Let the wings of your fancy carry you through the immensity of space and the vast profound, and see if you can discover anywhere the least sign or trace of war. Go through it from the north even to the south, from the east even to the west, and mark well if you can discover one sign of discord—whether there is not one universal harmony, whether everything is not lovely, pure, and of good report. See if in the great harp of nature, there is one string which when touched by its Maker's finger gives forth discord. See if the pipes of this great organ God has made do not all play harmoniously. Mark you well and note it. Are there bulwarks formed for war? Are there spears and swords? Are there clarions and trumpets? Has God created any material with which to destroy His creatures and desolate His realms? No. Everything is peaceable above, beneath, and all around. All is peace. There is nothing else but calm and quietness. Hark when He makes the angels. He speaks—winged seraphs fly abroad and cherubs flash through the air on wings of fire. He speaks and multitudes of angels in their various hierarchies are brought forth, while Jesus Christ, as a mighty Prince of angels, is decreed to be their Head. Is there now in any of those angels one sign of sorrow? When God made them did He make one of them to be His enemy? Did He fashion one of them with the least implacability or ill-will within his bosom? Ask the shining cohorts and they tell you, "We were not made for war, but for peace. He has not fashioned us spirits of battle, but spirits of love, joy, and quietness." And if they sinned, He made them not to sin. They did so. They brought woe into the world of their own accord. God created no war. The evil angel brought it first. Left to his free will, he fell. The elect angels, being confirmed by divine grace, stood fast and firm. But God

was not the author of any war or any strife. Satan of himself conceived the rebellion, but God was not the author of it. He may from all eternity have foreseen it and it may even be said in some sense that He ordained it to manifest His justice and His glory, and to show His mercy and sovereignty in redeeming man—but God had no hand in it whatsoever. The Eternal adjures war. He was not the author of it. Satan led the van, that morning star who sang together with the rest, fell of himself. God was not the author of his confusion, but the author of eternal and blessed order.

Look, too, at God in the creation of this world. Go into the Garden of Eden. Walk up and down its bowers. Recline under its trees and partake of its fruits. Roam through the entire world. Sit down by the seashore or stretch yourself upon the mountain. Do you see the least sign of war? Nothing like it. There is nothing of tumult and of noise, no preparation of destruction. See Adam and Eve—their days are perpetual sunshine, their nights are balmy evenings of sweet repose. God has put nothing in their hearts which can disturb them. He has no ill-will towards them, but on the contrary, He walks with them in the evening under the trees in the cool of the day. He condescends to talk with His creatures and hold fellowship with them. He is in no sense whatever the author of the present confusion in this world. That was brought about by our first parents through the temptation of the evil one. God did not create this world for strife. When He first fashioned it, peace, peace, peace, was the universal order of the day. May there come a time when peace once more shall be restored to this great earth and tranquility to this world! Do you not observe that God is the God of peace because He created it originally? When He pronounced His creation, “very good,” it was entirely without the slightest exception, a peaceful creation. God is the God of peace.

But, secondly, He is the God of peace *because He restores it*. Nothing shows a man to be much fonder of peace than when he seeks to make peace between others. Or when others have offended him, he endeavors to make peace between himself and them. If I should be able at all times to maintain peace with myself and should never provoke a quarrel, I should of course be considered a peaceful spirit, but if other persons choose to quarrel and disagree with me, and I desire and purposely set to work to bring about a reconciliation, then everyone says I am a man of peace. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they are the children of God.” God is the great peacemaker and thus He is indeed the God of peace. When Satan fell, there was war in heaven. God made peace there, for He smote Satan and cast him and all his rebel hosts into eternal fire. He made peace by His might and power and majesty, for He drove him out of heaven and expelled him by his flaming brand to never again pollute the sacred floor of bliss and never more to endanger Paradise by misleading his peers in heaven. So He made peace in heaven by His power.

But when man fell, God made peace not by His power, but by His mercy. Man transgresses. Poor man! Mark how God goes after him to make peace with him! “Adam, where are you?” Adam never said, “God, where are You?” But God came after Adam and He seemed to say with a voice of affection and pity, “Adam, poor Adam, where are you? Have you become a God? The evil spirit said you would be a God—are you so? Where are you now, poor Adam? You were once in holiness and perfection, where are you now?” And He saw the truant Adam running away from his Master, running away from the great peacemaker, to hide himself beneath the trees of the garden. Again God calls, “Adam, where are you?” But he says, “I heard your voice in the midst of the garden and I was afraid, because I was naked and I hid myself.” And God says, “Who told you that you were naked?” How kind He is. You can see He is a peacemaker even then. But when after having cursed the serpent and sent the cursed obliquely on the ground, He comes to talk to Adam, you see Him as the peacemaker still more. “I will,” said He, “put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed. It shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.” There He was making peace through the blood of the cross. Do not conceive, however, that that was the first preparation of peace God ever made. That was the first *display* of it, but He had been making peace from all eternity. Through the covenant He made with Jesus Christ from all eternity, God’s people were at peace with God. Although God saw that man shall fall, though He foresaw that His elect would with the rest depart from rectitude and become His enemies, yet He long

before the fall drew up a covenant with Jesus, wherein Jesus stipulated that He would pay the debts of all His people. And the Father on their behalf did actually and positively forgive their sins and justify their persons, take away their guilt, acquit them, accept and received them unto peace with Him. Though that was never developed until the fall and though to each of us it is not known until we believe, yet there was always peace between God and the elect.

I must tell you a tale of a poor bricklayer who met with an accident and everyone thought he was going to die and he did die. A clergyman said to him, "My poor fellow, I am afraid you will die. Try to make your peace with God." With tears in his eyes, he looked the clergyman in the face and said, "Make my peace with God, sir? I thank God that was made for me in the eternal covenant by Jesus Christ long before I was born." So beloved, it was. There was a peace, a perfect peace which God made with His Son. Jesus was not our ambassador merely, but He *was* our peace. Not the maker of peace merely, but *our peace*. And since there was a Christ before all worlds, there was peace before all worlds. Since there always will be a Christ, so there always will be peace between God and all those interested in the covenant. Oh, if we can but feel we are in the covenant, if we know we are numbered with the chosen race and purchased with redeeming blood, then we can rejoice because God has been to us the Restorer of breaches, the Builder of cities to dwell in, and has given us peace which once we lost. He is the Restorer of peace.

Thirdly, *He is the preserver of peace*. Whenever I see peace *in the world*, I ascribe it to God. And if it is continued, I shall always believe it is because God interferes to prevent war. So combustible are the materials of which this great world is made that I am always apprehensive of war. I do not account it amazing that one nation should strive against another—I account it far more amazing that they are not all at arms. Whence come wars and fights? Come they not from our lusts? Considering how much lust there is in the world, we might well conceive that there would be more war than we see. Sin is the mother of wars and remembering how plentiful sin is, we need not marvel if it brings forth multitudes of them. We may look for them. If the coming of Christ is indeed drawing nigh, then we must expect wars and rumors of wars through all the nations of the earth. But when peace is preserved, we consider it to be through the immediate interposition of God. If then we desire peace between nations, let us seek it of God, who is the great Pacificator.

But there is an *inward peace* which God alone can keep. Am I at peace with myself, with the world and with my Maker? Oh, if I want to retain that peace, God alone can preserve it. I know there are some people who once enjoyed peace, but who do not now possess it. Some of you once had confidence in God, but may have lost it. You once thought yourselves to be in a glorious state from which now you seem to have somewhat departed. Beloved, no one can maintain peace in the heart but God, as He is the only one who can put it there. Some people talk about doubts and fears and seem to think they are very allowable. I have heard some say, "Well, a sailor in the sunshine knows his reckoning and can tell where he is, he has no doubt. But if the sun withdraws, he cannot tell his longitude and latitude and he knows not where he is." That is not, however, a fair description of faith. Always wanting the sun is wanting to live by *sight*. But living by faith is to say, "I cannot tell my longitude and my latitude, but I know the Captain is at the helm and I will trust Him everywhere." But still you cannot stay in that peaceful state of mind unless you have God in the vessel to help you to smile at the storm. We can be peaceful at times, but if God goes away, how we begin quarrelling with ourselves! God alone can preserve peace.

Backslider! Have you lost it? Go and seek it again of God. Christian! Is your peace marred? Go to God and He can say to every doubt, "Lie down, doubt," and to every fear, "Begone." He can speak to every wind that can blow across your soul and can say, "Peace, be still," for He is the God of peace. Since He preserves it, trust in Him.

Fourthly, God is the God of peace *because He shall perfect and consummate it at last*. There is war in the world now. There is an evil spirit walking to and fro, a restless being, eager, like a lion, to devour, walking through dry places, seeking rest and finding none. And there are men bewitched by that evil spirit who are at war with God and at war with one another. But there is a time coming—let us wait a

little longer—when there shall be peace on earth and peace throughout all God’s dominions. In a few more years, we look for a lasting and perpetual peace on earth. Perhaps, tomorrow, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, will come again, without a sin offering unto salvation. We know not either the day or the hour wherein the Son of Man shall come, but by-and-by He shall descend from heaven with a shout and with the noise of a trumpet. He shall come, but not as once He came—a lowly and humble man—but a glorious and exalted monarch. Then He will cause wars to cease. From that day forth and forever, they will hang the useless helm on high and study war no more. The lion shall lie down with the kid and eat straw like the ox. The cockatrice and the serpent shall lose their hurtful powers. The weaned child shall lead the lion and the leopard, each one by his beard with his little hands. The day is coming, and speedily, when there shall not be found on earth a single man who hates his brother, but when each one shall find in every other a brother and a friend. And we shall be able to say, as the old poet did, but in a larger sense, “I know not that there is one Englishman alive with whom I am one jot at odds more than the infant that is born tonight.” We shall all be united. Nationalities will be leveled because made into one and the Lord Jesus Christ shall be King of the entire earth. After that time shall come the consummation of peace, when the last great day shall have passed away and the righteous have been severed from the wicked. When the monster battle of Armageddon shall have been fought and won. When all the righteous shall have been gathered into heaven and the lost sent down to hell.

Where will be the room for battle then? Look at the foemen, bruised and mangled in the pit, perpetually howling, the victims of God’s vengeance. There is no fear of war from them. There is Satan himself, crest-fallen, bruised, battered, slain. His head is broken. There he lies despoiled—a king without his crown. There can be no fear of war from him and mark the angels who were once under his supremacy—can they arise? No. They writhe in tortures and bite their iron bands in misery. They have no power to lift a lance against the God of heaven. And look on sinful man, condemned for his sin to dwell with those fallen beings—can he again provoke his Maker? Will he again blaspheme? Can he oppose the Gospel? No, injured in dungeons of hot iron, there he is, an abject, ruined spirit. Ten thousands times ten thousands lost and perished sinners are there. But could all unite in solemn league and covenant to break the bands of death and sever the laws of justice, He that sits in the heavens would laugh at them, the Lord would have them in derision. Peace is consummated because the enemy is crushed. Then look up yonder. There is no fear of war from those bright spirits. The angels cannot fall now, their period of probation is passed forever. A second Satan shall never drag with him a third part of the stars of heaven. No angel will totter anymore and the ransomed spirits, blood-bought and washed in the fountain of Jesu’s blood, will never fall again. Universal peace is come, the olive branch has outlived the laurel. The sword is sheathed, the banners are furled, the stains of blood are washed out of the world. Again it moves in its orb and sings like its sister stars, but the one song is peace, for the God who made it is the God of peace.

II. Now we come to the BENEDICTION.

“The God of peace be with you all.” I am not about to address you concerning that inward peace which rests in the heart. I am sure I wish above all things that you may always enjoy a peace with your conscience and be at peace with God. May you always know that you have the blood of Jesus to plead, that you have His righteousness to cover you, that you have His atonement to satisfy for you and that there is nothing which can hurt you. But I wish to address you as a church and exhort you to peace.

First, I will remind you that there is great need to pray this prayer for you all, because *there are enemies to peace always lurking in all societies*. Petrarch says there are five great enemies to peace—avarice, ambition, envy, anger, and pride. I shall alter them a little, but use the same number. Instead of avarice, I shall commence with *error*. One of the greatest means of destroying peace is error. Error in doctrine leads to the most lamentable consequences with regard to the peace of the church. I have noticed that the greatest fallings out have been among those who are most erroneous in doctrine. Though I admit that some called Calvinists are the most quarrelsome set breathing, this is the reason—while they have the main part of the truth, many of them are leaving out something important and therefore God

chastises them because they are some of His best children. It may be a sign of life that they are so eager after truth that they kill one another in order to get it, but I wish they would leave off their quarrelling, for it is a disgrace to our religion. If they had more peace I might hope better for the progress of truth. Everyone says to me, "Look there at your brethren! I never saw such a set of cut-throats in my life. I never saw a church where they have the Gospel, where they are not always falling out." Well, that is near the truth and I am ashamed to confess it. I pray God, however, to send a little more peace where He has sent the Gospel. There are, however, strifes among our opponents which we do not see. The bishop uses his strong hand and the people dare not disagree. The pastor has such power and authority that the crush of his mailed hand is sufficient to put down everything, because there is no freedom.

Now, I would rather have a row in the church than have all the members asleep. I would rather have them falling to errors than sitting down in indifference. You never expect dead churches to have strife, but where there is a little life, if there is error—it always begets strife. What is the most litigious denomination now existing? No one would have a difficulty in pointing to our excellent friends, the Wesleyans, for just at this moment they are quarrelling and finding fault with one another, splitting up into numberless sections, and making reformed churches, and so on. What is the cause of it? Because they are in the wrong track altogether with regard to church government and with regard to some other things. John Wesley was a good man at making churches, I dare say. But he did not understand what the church ought to be in these days. He might do for a hundred years ago, but he bound his poor followers too tightly and now they are trying to break out into freedom and liberty. If they had been right at first, they might have gone on and a thousand years would not have spoiled their system. It would have done now as well as then. Error is the root of bitterness in the church. Give us sound doctrine, sound practice, sound church government, and you will find that the God of peace will be with us. My brethren, seek to uproot error out of your own hearts. If one of you does not really believe the great cardinal doctrines of the Gospel, I beseech you, then, for the good of the church to leave it, for we want those who love the truth.

The next enemy to peace is *ambition*. "Diotrephes loves to have the pre-eminence," and that fellow has spoiled many a happy church. A man does not want, perhaps, to be pre-eminent, but he is afraid that another shall be, and so he would have him put down. Thus brethren are finding fault with each other—they are afraid that such a one will go too fast, and that such another will go too fast. The best way is to try to go as fast as *he* does. It is of no use finding fault because some may have a little pre-eminence. After all, what is the pre-eminence? It is the pre-eminence of one little animalcule over another. Look in a drop of water. One of these little fellows is five times as big as another, but we never think of that. I dare say he is very large and thinks, "I have the pre-eminence inside my drop." But he does not think the people of Park Street ever talk about him. So we live in this little drop of the world, not much bigger in God's esteem than a drop in the bucket, and one of us seems a little larger than the other—a worm a little above his fellow worm, but O, how big we get! And we want to get a little bigger, to get a little more prominent, but what is the use of it? For when we get ever so big, we shall then be so small that an angel would not find us if God did not tell him where we were. Whoever heard up in heaven anything about emperors and kings? Small tiny insects—God can see the animalcule, therefore He can see us—but if He had not an eye to see the most minute, He would never discover us. O may we never get ambition in this church. The best ambition is, who shall be the *servant* of all? The strangers seek to have dominion, but children seek to let the father have dominion and the father only.

The next enemy to peace is *anger*. There are some individuals in the world who cannot help getting angry very quickly. They grow on a sudden, very wrathful. While others who are not passionate, who take a longer time to be angry, are fearful enough when they do speak. Others who dare not speak at all, are still worse, for they get to brewing their anger—

"Nursing their wrath to keep it warm."

They go into a sulky fit, disagreeing with everybody, eternally grumbling. They are like dogs in the flock—only barking and yielding no fleece. O that nasty anger! If it gets into the church, it will split it to pieces. Somehow or other we cannot help getting angry sometimes. O that we could come into the church and leave ourselves behind us! There is nobody I should like to run away from half so much as from myself. Try, beloved, to curb your tempers and when you do not exactly see with another brother, do not think it necessary to knock him in the eyes to make him see. That is the worst thing in all the world to do—he will not see any the better for it, for—

*“The man convinced against his will,
Is of the same opinion still.”*

Then *envy* is another fearful evil. One minister, perhaps, is envious of another because one church is full and the other not. How can teachers agree in the Sunday school if there is any envy there? How can church members agree if envy creeps in? One member thinks another is thought more highly of than he deserves. Why, beloved, you are all too much thought of, but after all, it does not matter what you are thought of by man, it only matters what God thinks of you—and God thinks as much of Little-Faith as of Great-Heart. He thinks as much of Mrs. Despondency as of Christiana herself. Drive, then, that “green-eyed monster” away and keep him at a distance.

Again, there is *pride*, which gives rise to ill-feeling and bad blood. Instead of being affable to one another and “condescending to men of low estate,” we want that every punctilio of respect should be given to us, that we should be made lords and masters. That I am sure can never exist in a peaceable church.

Here, then, are our five great enemies. I would I could see the execution of them all. Banish them, transport them forever, send them away amongst lions and tigers—we do not want any of them amongst us. But though I thus speak, it is not because I conceive that any of these have thoroughly crept in amongst you, but because I would have kept them away. I am most jealous in this matter. I am always afraid of the slightest contention and I desire the God of peace to be ever with us.

Now let me briefly show you the appropriateness of this prayer. We indeed ought to have peace among ourselves. Joseph said to his brethren when they were going home to his father’s house, “See that *you* fall not out by the way.” There was something extremely beautiful in that exhortation. “See that you fall not out *by the way*.” You have all one father. You are of one family. Let men of two nations disagree, but you are of the seed of Israel, you are of one tribe and nation. Your home is in one heaven. “See that you fall not out by the way.” The way is rough. There are enemies to stop you. See that if *you* fall out when you go home, you do not fall out by the way. Keep together. Stand by one another. Defend each other’s character. Manifest continual affection, for recollect you will want it all. The world hates you because you are not of the world. Oh! you must take care that you love one another. You are all going to the same house. You may disagree here, and not speak to one another, and be almost ashamed to sit at the same table even at the sacrament, but you will all have to sit together in heaven. Therefore do not fall out by the way. Consider, again, the great mercies you have all shared together. You are all pardoned, you are all accepted, elected, justified, sanctified, and adopted. See that you fall not out when you have so many mercies, when God has given you so much. Joseph has filled your sacks, but if he has put some extra thing into Benjamin’s sack, do not quarrel with Benjamin about that, but rather rejoice because your sacks are full. You have all got enough, you are all secure, you have all been dismissed with a blessing, and therefore, I say once more, “See that you fall not out by the way.”

Now, dear brethren, is there anything I can plead with you this morning in order that you may always dwell in peace and love? God has happily commenced a blessed revival amongst us. And under our means, by the help of God, that revival will spread through the entire kingdom. We have seen that “the Word of the Lord is quick and powerful.” We know that there is nothing that can stop the progress of His kingdom and there is nothing that can impede your success as a church except this. If the unhappy

day should arrive—let the day be accursed if it does come—when you amongst yourselves should disagree, there would be a stop to the building of the Lord’s house at once, when those who carry the trowel and bear the spears do not stand side by side—then the work of God must tarry. It is sad to think how much our glorious cause has been impeded by the different fallings out amongst the disciples of the Lamb. We have loved one another, brethren, up till now, with a true heart and fervently, and I am not afraid but that we shall always do so. At the same time, I am jealous over you, lest there should come in by any possibility any root of bitterness to trouble you. Let us this morning throw around you the bands of a man. Let us unite together with a three-fold cord that cannot be broken. Let us entreat you to love one another. Let us entreat you by your one Lord, one faith, one baptism, to continue as one. Let us beg of you, by our great success, to let our unity be commensurate therewith. Remember “How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” The devil wants you to disagree and nothing will please him better than for you to fall at wars among yourselves. The Moabites and Ammonites cut down one another. Do not let us do that—

*“Those should in strictest concord dwell,
Who the same God obey.”*

It is continual bickering and jealousy that has brought disgrace upon the holy name of Christ. He has been wounded in the house of His friends. The arrows we have shot at one another have hurt us more than all that ever came from the bow of the devil. We have done more injury to the escutcheon of Christ by our contentions than Satan has ever been able to do. I beseech you, brethren, love one another. I know not how I could endure anything like discord among *you*. I can bear the scoff of the world and the laughter of the infidel. I think I could bear martyrdom, but I could not bear to see you divided. I beseech my God and Master to suffer me first to wear my shroud before I ever wear a garment of heaviness on account of your divisions. While I feel that I have your love and affection, and that you are bound to one another, I care not for the devils in hell, nor for men on earth. We have been and we shall be omnipotent, through God. And by faith we will stand firm to one another and to His truth. Let each one resolve within himself, “If there is strife, I will have nothing to do with it.” “The beginning of strife is like the letting out of water,” and I will not turn the tap. If you will take care not to let the first drop in, I will be sure about the second. Brethren, again I say for the Gospel’s sake, for truth’s sake, that we may laugh at our enemies and rejoice with unspeakable joy—let us love one another.

Though I may not have preached to the worldly this morning, I have been asking you to preach to them, for when you love one another, that is a beautiful sermon to them. There is no sermon like what you can see with your own eyes. I went to the Orphan-house last Wednesday, on Ashley Down, near Bristol, and saw that wonder of faith—I had some conversation with that heavenly-minded man Mr. Muller. I never heard such a sermon in my life as I saw there. They asked me to speak to the girls, but I said, “I could not speak a word for the life of me.” I had been crying all the while to think how God had heard this dear man’s prayer and how all those three hundred children had been fed by my Father through the prayer of faith. Whatever is wanted comes, without annual subscriptions, without asking anything, simply from the hand of God. When I found that it was all correct that I had heard, I was like the Queen of Sheba and I had no heart left in me. I could only stand and look at those children and think, did my heavenly Father feed them and would He not feed me and all His family? Speak to them? They had spoken to me quite enough, though they had not said a word. Speak to them? I thought myself ten thousand fools that I did not believe God better. Here am I—I cannot trust Him day by day, but this good man can trust Him for three hundred children. When he has not a sixpence in hand, he never fears. “I know God,” he might say, “too well to doubt Him. I tell my God, ‘You know what I want today to keep these children, and I have not anything. My faith never wavers and my supply always comes.’” Simply by asking of God in this way, he has raised (I believe) £17,000 towards the erection of a new orphan-house. When I consider that—I sometimes think we will try the power of faith here and see if we

will not get sufficient funds whereby to erect a place to hold the people that crowd to hear the Word of God. Then we may have a tabernacle of faith as well as an orphan-house of faith. God send us that and to Him shall be all the glory. Amen.

Taken from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software. 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.