

THE WATERER WATERED

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A SERMON
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“He that watereth shall be watered also himself.”
Proverbs 11:25

THE general principle is that in living for the good of others, we shall be profited also ourselves. We must not isolate our own interests, but feel that we live for others. This teaching is sustained by the analogy of nature, for in nature there is a law that no one thing can be independent of the rest of creation, but there is a mutual action and reaction of all upon all.

All the constituent parts of the universe are bound to one another by invisible chains, and there is not a single creature in it which springs up, or flourishes, or decays for itself alone. The very planets, though they float far from one another, exercise attraction. And the fixed stars, though they seem to be infinitely remote, are still linked to one another by mysterious bonds.

God has so constituted this universe that selfishness is the greatest possible offense against His law, and living for others, and ministering to others, is the strictest obedience to His will. Our surest road to our own happiness is to seek the good of our fellows. We store up in God's own bank what we generously expend on the behalf of our race. The little spring bubbling forth from the ancient pipe on the hillside overflows the stone basin, and liberally supplies all the villagers with pure and cooling drink.

In its flowing it does not waste itself, for the deep fountains in the bowels of the earth continue unceasingly to supply it, and both in winter's frost and summer's drought the springhead yields its crystal stream. The little brook which babbles through the woods, hiding among stones, leaping down the moss-grown rocks, and soon deepening and swelling its stream, pours all its gatherings into the river, hoarding not a drop, and though its treasure is constantly being lavished with unstinting liberality, yet heaven and earth see to it that the brook shall never fail to sing its joyous song,

“Men may come and go
But I go on forever.”

The river hastens with its greater floods towards the all-receiving ocean, pouring itself out every hour with happy plenteousness, as though it only existed to empty itself. Yet the abundant tributaries which come streaming from the hills and draining the valleys, are careful that the river shall know no lack, but shall be kept constantly brimming, a joyous and bounding river evermore.

The ocean perpetually sends up its steaming exhalations to the sky, grudging nothing. It puts no doors to its rolling waves, but uncovers all its treasure to the sun, and the sun makes large draughts upon the royal treasury of the deep. Nevertheless the ocean is not diminished, for all the rivers are constantly conspiring to keep the sea full to the shore. The clouds of heaven, when they are full of rain, empty themselves upon the earth, and yet the clouds cease not to be, for “they return after the rain,” and the ocean down below seems but to be too glad to be continually feeding its sister ocean on the other side of the firmament.

So, as wheels with bands are made to work together—as wheels with cogs working upon one another—the whole watery machinery is kept in motion by each part acting upon its neighbor, and the next upon the next. Each wheel expends its force upon its fellow, and the whole find a recompense in their mutual action upon one another.

The same truth might be illustrated from other departments of nature. If we view this microcosm, the human body, we shall find that the heart does not receive the blood to store it up, but while it pumps it in at one valve, it sends it forth at another. The blood is always circulating everywhere, and is stagnant nowhere.

The same is true of all the fluids in a healthy body, they are in a constant state of expenditure. If one cell stores for a few moments its peculiar secretion, it only retains it till it is perfectly fitted for its appointed use in the body, for if any cell in the body should begin to store up its secretion, its store would soon become the cause of inveterate disease. Nay, the organ would soon lose the power to secrete at all if it did not give forth its products.

The whole of the human system lives by giving. The eye cannot say to the foot, I have no need of you and will not guide you, for if it does not perform its watchful office, the whole man will be in the ditch, and the eye will be covered with mire. If the members refuse to contribute to the general stock, the whole body will become poverty-stricken, and be given up to the bankruptcy of death.

Let us learn, then, from the analogy of nature, the great lesson that to get, we must give, that to accumulate, we must scatter, that to make ourselves happy, we must make others happy. And that to get good and become spiritually vigorous, we must do good and seek the spiritual good of others. This is the general principle.

The text suggests a particular personal application of the general principle. We shall consider it, first, *in its narrowest sense, as belonging to ourselves personally*. Secondly, *in a wider sense, as it may refer to us as a church*. Then, thirdly, *in its widest sense, as it may be referred to the entire body of Christ*, showing that still it is true that as it waters, so it shall be watered itself.

I. First, then, IN REFERENCE TO OURSELVES PERSONALLY.

There are some works, my brethren, in which we cannot all engage. Peculiar men are called to be God's great woodmen, to clear the way with the axe, to go before His army like our sappers and miners—such men as Martin Luther, and Calvin, and Zwingli—that glorious trio of heroes marching in front of reformation and evangelization. They are cutting down the tall trees, tunneling the hills, and bridging the rivers, and we smaller men feel that there is little of this work for us to do.

But when the backwoodsmen have cleared the forest, after all the roots are grubbed, and the soil is burned and plowed, then comes the sowing and the planting, and in this all the household can take a place. And when the plants have sprung up and need water, it is not only the stalwart man with the axe who can now apply himself to watering, but even the little children can take a share in this lighter work.

Watering is work for persons of all grades and all sorts. If I cannot carry about me some ponderous load as the Eastern water-bearer can, yet I will take my little water pot, my little jug or pitcher, and go to the well. For if I cannot water the forest tree, I may water the tiny plant which grows at its root. Watering is work for all sorts of people. So, then, we will make a personal application to every Christian here this morning. You can all do something in watering, and this promise can therefore be realized by you all, "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."

All God's plants, more or less, want watering. You and I do. We cannot live long without fresh supplies of grace. Hence the value of the promise, "I, the LORD, do keep it. I will water it every moment." There are no brooks at our roots as we grow in the soil of nature—it is only in the garden of grace that we are "like trees planted by the rivers of water, bringing forth our fruit in our season." If the Lord Jesus who is the stem of the vine should cease to supply us with the fresh sap of grace, should we not be like the withered branch which is cast over the wall to be burned in the fire?

The Lord's people usually get this watering through instrumentality. God does not speak to us out of heaven with His own voice—perhaps the thunder might appall us. He does not write texts of Scripture with His own finger in letters of fire across the sky, but He waters us by instrumentality, by His Word written, and His Word preached, or otherwise uttered by His servants. His Holy Spirit waters us by the admonitions of parents, by the kind suggestions of friends, by the teaching of His ministers, by the

example of all His saints. The Holy Spirit waters us, but He takes care to do it by our fellow-workers, putting an honor upon His own servants by using them in instrumentality.

This being fully believed by us all, we may proceed to another truth, namely, that *some of His servants especially want watering*, and should therefore be the objects of our constant care. Some plants need watering from their peculiar *nature*. A gardener will tell you that certain flowers require very little water, perhaps for months they will grow in a stony soil, but others must be watered regularly and plenteously, or they will soon droop.

Some of you, my dear brothers and sisters, are so *desponding* that if you did not receive much comfort you would hardly hold up your heads at all. You are so weak in the faith that if you were not fed with milk continually you would scarcely be alive. “Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God”—is especially applicable to the mourners in Zion. Their constitutional temperament is such that to maintain the lamp of their joy they require much oil of comfort.

Perhaps, too, they are *ignorant*, and the ignorant want much watering. If they knew the doctrines of grace more fully, they might go to the wells themselves, but not knowing where the water is, or feeling, like the woman at the well, that the well is deep and that there is nothing to draw with, they cannot get the water. And we who are instructed in the way of God, must take care that we bring up the water for them with our longer length of the line of knowledge, so that they may not fail to be watered.

It may be the need is not so much caused by the nature of the plant, as by *the position in which it is placed*. Many of you, dear brethren, are very happily situated where you can constantly attend the means of grace, where the family altar smokes with sweet perfume, where you cannot help growing, for you are like plants in a hothouse.

But there are others on the contrary, who live in houses where *the jeer* is far more frequently heard than the voice of praise. Where, instead of being helped in your devotions, you are hindered. Your spirit is driven to and fro with distractions. From the very closet where you wanted to commune with God, you are forced out by cruel mocking. We ought to be very tender about your condition, as being planted on no fruitful hill, but on a very thirsty land where there is no water. Your position should lead God’s people to watch you with deepest interest and see to it that you are well-watered.

I may also mention the *sick*. When our dear friends are tried with bodily pain, when they are shut up week after week from public gatherings, then they want watering. Their position is such that we ought to be especially mindful of them. It is written, “*He carrieth the lambs in his bosom, and gently leadeth those that are with young.*” And *we* must note the peculiar condition of the saints of God, being most careful of those who most need our tenderness.

Let me also suggest *the young* to you. These want watering, both, let me say, from their character and from their position. With little experience and little knowledge, they are prone to wander or to be seized by the wolf. Tend them with parental affection. When slips of flowers are first put into the ground, they want more water than they will do afterwards. When they have sent out more roots, and these roots have abundant fibers searching through the soil for moisture, they may not require much of the gardener’s care, but just now they must have it or die. Therefore, I say, let the feeble, the weak, the young, the sick, the persecuted, be watered most anxiously and lovingly by you all.

Certain dear friends need watering, not so much from their position and character as from *the present trials through which they are passing*. Certain plants, after long standing in the sun, droop their leaves, and look as if they must wither and die, but as soon as water is poured to their roots, it has sometimes perfectly surprised me to see how they will recover. I could scarcely think that they were the same plants, their recovery was so sudden.

The little roots beneath sent the message up to the main roots and said, “We have found out moisture, a friendly hand has given us a supply,” and the root talked to the stem, and the stem rejoiced, and the great leaves drank up their share, and the little leaves sucked up their drops till the whole plant to the very summit was verdant once more and rejoiced.

Times will come to all of us when we want water. I, myself, get very desponding at seasons, and I suppose you do. Unbelief dries us up. Oh that devil of unbelief! Why, if that demon were dead, the other devils we might very well contend with. Personal affliction, losses, crosses, burdens, make us just like the withering shrub, and then we want to have the consolations of some kind friend to water us.

Dear friends, sometimes there are those in the church who particularly want watering, because they are *actually withering*. It is not to maintain verdure in their case but to restore it. Those backsliding ones, those who have slipped with their feet, do not cast them off, for God casts not off the backsliding one. When they begin to forsake the house of God, do not forsake *them*. Follow them with your tears. In such a church as this, if you do not exercise mutual oversight over one another, we shall simply become a mass of corruption, instead of being a mountain of holiness.

Watch over your brethren as soon as you see the first signs of declension. When they forsake the prayer meetings, gently give them a hint of the evil of lukewarmness, and the danger of falling by little and little. When you mark the first sign in their outward carriage of laxity with regard to divine things, when you see coldness where there was formerly zeal, be sure to give a gentle word of earnest, pathetic admonition.

As I look around this Tabernacle, I can but compare these rising seats to shelves in the conservatory, and you are the plants which must all be watered, or you will languish and wither. And I, who have to be my Master's under-gardener, am very anxious to say to all of you who have any water in your watering pots—help me water these plants—that, by the gracious operations of God the Holy Ghost, they may be kept fruitful, green, verdant in spiritual things even to the end.

We now enter more thoroughly into our text, and observe that *all believers have power to water others*. You may not have much ability or influence, but you all have some power in this matter. In thinking over what Solomon meant, it struck me that he had in his mind's eye the plan of irrigation which is followed in some Eastern countries. The rivers at certain seasons overflow their banks. The careful husbandmen whose farms are close along the sides of the bank, have large tanks and reservoirs in which they store up the water.

After the flood the river is comparatively empty, and the little farms, the vineyards, and pastures on the banks begin to cry out for water. Then the careful husbandman lets out the water from his tank or reservoir by slow degrees, and uses it with great economy. It would sometimes happen that one of these farmers would have his reservoirs filled, and his neighbor, perhaps through the bursting of a tank, or the falling down of the bank of earth, might have little or no water. At such times a churlish man would say, "I shall want all my water for myself, I will not lend or give so much as a drop of it. I have none to spare."

But the generous man says, "I do not know whether God may be pleased to send a drought or no, but I cannot let my neighbor lose all his crops for the want of a little water while I have a good stock in hand." So he pulls up the sluice, and lets such a stream as he thinks he can spare flow into his neighbor's channel, that he may water his fields therewith.

Now Solomon says that those who water others shall be watered. Hence, next season it may happen that this good man may have no water himself. Well, then, all the farmers round about will say, "Why, he helped us when his tank was full, and we will return his kindness into his bosom." "Ah," says one, "he saved me from ruin. I should not have had a crop at all last season if it had not been for him." So they all lend a portion, till he finds no difficulty whatever—even in a season of drought, when men cannot get water for love or money, he is sure to have it. The common feeling of men, as a usual rule, recognizes the law of gratitude, and men say, "He watered others, he shall be watered himself."

My dear brother, you may be a man of talent, you may be a man of wealth—just turn on the big tap, and let your ignorant or poor neighbors benefit a little by your abundance. Pull up the floodgates, and let the more needy brethren be enriched by your fullness—open that mouth of yours that your wisdom may feed many. Tell of what God has done for your soul that the humble may hear thereof and be glad.

Do not be a reservoir brimmed up till the banks are ready to burst out through the weight which presses upon them, but just let some of the treasure run out, and when *your* time of need shall come—and who knows when it may overtake any of us?—you shall find willing friends who shall run with swift feet to cheer your adversity.

This simile needs to be supplemented by another—many true saints are unable to do much. See, then, the gardeners going down to the pond, and dipping in their watering pots to carry the refreshing liquid to the flowers. A child comes into the garden and wishes to help, and yonder is a little watering pot for him. Now, see that little water pot, though it does not carry much, yet carries the same water, and it does not make any difference to the half-dozen flowers which get that water, whether it came out of the big pot or the little pot, so long as it is the same water, and they get it.

You who are like children in God's church, you who do not know much, yet try and tell others what you do know, and if it be the same Gospel truth and it is blest by the same Spirit, it will not matter to the souls who get blessed by you whether they were blessed by a man of one or ten talents. What difference will it make to me whether I was converted to God by means of a poor woman who was never made a blessing to anybody else, or by one who had brought his thousands to the Savior's feet?

Go, my dear brethren, and exercise the holy art of watering. You say, "How?" Why, a word may do it, a look may do it, an action may do it. Only zealously desire to offer sympathy, to afford instruction, to give needed help, to impart what you may be favored with to others, and you shall be watering yourselves.

The main point is that *in so watering others we shall be watered ourselves*. I am sure we shall, for God promises it and He always keeps His promise. If I want to get water, I must give water. Though that seems a strange way of self-serving I pray you try it. Was not that a very singular thing that when the poor woman of Sarepta had nearly exhausted all her meal, the prophet asked for a cake for himself. She had been saving of it, I dare say she had eaten only a mouthful or two every day. She and her poor boy were looking very thin. They had come to the last handful. She thought, "I will make one cake for my son and myself, and then we will die."

She is outside picking up sticks that she may bake this cake. God intends to bless her. How does He do it? There comes His prophet, the hairy man, and the first word he says to her is, "Fetch me, I pray you, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink." She is quite ready to serve anyone, and away she hastens for the water, when Elijah cries aloud, "Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand." What, out of that little handful—barely enough for one? "Yes," he says, "make me a little cake first, and after that make for thee and thy son."

"After that!" she might have said, "what will be left after that? When there is only a handful of meal and a little oil in a cruse, not enough for one, am I to give that to you, and *afterwards* see to myself and child?" Faith enabled her to obey, and from that very moment neither she nor her son ever knew what want was. She gave from her little, and her little multiplied. The case of the woman of Zarephath is but one of thousands establishing the rule of God's mode of action with His church—a rule which shall not be broken till time shall end.

Let me show you how you will get watered yourself. In the first place, if you try to do good to others it will do you good by *waking up your powers*. Thousands of men do not know what they are made of. You have no idea what a fine fellow you are, young man, till you begin to shake yourself a little and go forth to fight the Lord's battles. We do not know what sinews we have till we climb the mountains. We do not know what strength there may be in our backs and arms till we have to carry a ponderous load, and then we find it out. You have latent talents, dormant faculties, which would work wonders if you would call them forth.

Some people are not awake more than skin deep, all underneath the skin is sound asleep. They are like the great candle which I showed you one night with a small wick, which was only melted a little in the middle, while all the outside was still cold, hard tallow, and did not contribute to the light. You have not become warm through yet, your whole souls have not been wound up to the right pitch for serving

God, you have only a little earnestness, a little zeal, but if you ventured upon holy enterprises, you would bestir yourself so thoroughly that you would scarcely know yourself again. That would be a blessing indeed.

But next, *you would often find that in trying to water others you gained instruction*. Go talk to some poor saint to comfort her and she will tell you what will comfort you. Oh, what gracious lessons some of us have learned at sick beds! We went to teach the Scriptures, we came away blushing that we knew so little of them. We went to talk experiential truth, and we found we were only up to the ankles while here were God's poor saints breast-deep in the river of divine love. We learn by teaching and our pupils often teach us.

You will also *get comfort in your work*. Rest assured that working for others is very happy exercise. Like the two men in the snow, one chafed the other's limbs to keep him from dying, and in so doing he kept his own blood in circulation, and his own life was preserved. Comfort God's people and the comfort will return into your own soul.

Watering others will make you *humble*. You will find better people in the world than yourself. You will be astonished to find how much grace there is where you thought there was none, and how much knowledge some have gained, while you, as yet, have made little progress with far greater opportunities.

You will also *win many prayers*. Those who work for others, get prayed for, and that is a swift way of growing rich in grace. Let me have your prayers and I can do anything! Let me be without my people's prayers and I can do nothing. You Sunday school teachers, if you are blessed to the conversion of the children, will get your children's prayers. You who conduct the larger classes, in the conversion of your young people, will be sure to have a wealth of love come back into your own bosoms, swimming upon the stream of supplication. You will thus be a blessing to yourselves.

In watering others *you will get honor to yourselves*, and that will help to water you by stimulating your future exertions. The Romans appointed censors in their State—not only to censure men for gross immoralities, but to require every man to give an account of what he was doing for the good of the Republic. We have deacons and elders—would it not be an additional blessing to have censors in the church, to go round and ask the members, all of them, what they are doing for the good of the Christian church?

A Greek historian desired very intensely to say a word about the people of the city where he was born. He felt he could not write his history without saying something of his own native place, and accordingly he wrote this, "While Athens was building temples, and Sparta was waging war, my countrymen were doing nothing." I am afraid there are too many Christians of whom, if the book were written as to what they are doing in the church, it would have to be said they have been doing nothing all their lives. You would be delivered from that reproach if you began to water others.

Let me cease from this subject by saying, *while you are watering others, you will be manifesting and showing your love to Christ, and that will make you more like Him*, and so you will be watered while you are seeking to benefit your neighbors. To serve Jesus! what need I say of that? Look into that face, bedewed with bloody sweat for you and can you not sweat for Him? Look at those hands pierced for you, and shall your hands hang idly down and not be used for Him? Look at those feet fastened to the wood with nails for you! Can I ask of you any pilgrimage too long to repay the toil which those feet endured for your sake?

My brethren and sisters, remember what Christ Jesus has done for you, from whence He came, the riches which He left, to what He came, the poverty and shame which He endured, and how He went down into the depths that He might take us up to the heights. If you will think of these, you will have the best motive, methinks, for beginning to look after His lambs and fighting with those lions which seek to devour His flock. And in that moving motive will be the main means by which you shall be conformed to His image, and shall become like Him—self-sacrificing, doing your Father's business.

I wish I could speak more powerfully this morning, but the matter ought to speak for itself with Christians. If we love Jesus, we shall not want any pleading with to water His plants. If you really love

Him, it will not be a question of whether you shall do something, the only question will be, “What can I do?” and you will say in your pew this morning, “What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?”

He has spared your lives, He has given you health and strength, provided you with spirituals and temporals, He has made your heart leap for joy at the sound of His name, He has plucked you out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay, He has taken you out of the black bondage of the prince of darkness, and made you His sons and daughters. He has put the ring of His eternal love upon your finger, your feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.

*“This world is yours, and worlds to come,
Earth is your lodge, and heaven your home.”*

There is a crown for your head, and a palm branch for your hand, and there are pavements of gold for your feet, and felicities forever for your entire soul. And even your body is to be raised again from the dust and fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious body. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for you.” Now what will you do for Him? Will you not win the promise that your soul shall be watered by seeking to water the souls of others?

II. A BRIEF EXHORTATION shall suffice for the second point—this general principle is worthy of a wider application.

We, as a church, dear friends, have enjoyed singular prosperity. While many churches have been depressed and decreased in numbers, we have increased. While other churches have had the hectic flush of a spurious revival, we have had one perpetual revival lasting for nearly twelve years. I do not know that we have increased at a more or a less rapid rate. We could not increase more quickly, for we have not officers enough, or time enough to see the converts as it is. We have never, I think, increased less, for the work seems to always have the same prosperity about it.

I praise God that I can say of my ministry in this place and elsewhere, that to this day it has the dew of its youth upon it, and there are as many rejoicing to find Christ through the agencies employed in this church today as in the first day when we came among you in the freshness and vigor of our youth. We have had no schism. We have had no division. We have not been vexed with heresy. We have been blessed with something like persecution, but this has only bound us the faster to one another, till we are like a three-fold cord which cannot be broken, and like iron bars made red hot in the furnace and hammered together, we are not soon to be sundered from one another.

Now, dear friends, up to this time the policy which we have pursued has been this—if members of other churches want to know, we hereby tell them, *we have endeavored to water others*. Your minister has journeyed all over the three kingdoms preaching the Word, and you have not grumbled at his absence. We have undertaken many enterprises for Christ. We hope to undertake a great many more. We have never husbanded our strength. We have undertaken enterprises that were enough to exhaust us, to which we became accustomed in due season, and then we have gone on to something more.

We have never sought to hinder the planting of other churches from our midst or in our neighborhood. It is with cheerfulness that we dismiss our twelves, our twenties, our fifties, to form other churches. We encourage our members to leave us to found other churches—nay, we seek to persuade them to do it. We ask them to scatter throughout the land to become the goodly seed which God shall bless. I believe that as long as we do this, we shall prosper.

I have marked other churches that have adopted the other way, and they have not succeeded. This is what I have heard from some ministers, “I do not encourage village stations, or if I do, I do not encourage their becoming distinct churches and breaking bread together. I do not encourage too many young men going out to preach, for to have a knot of people who can preach a little, may very soon cause dissatisfaction with my own preaching.”

I have marked those who have followed this course, and I have seen that the effect of trying to keep all the blood in the heart is to bring on congestion, and very soon the whole body has been out of health.

My brethren, if you can do more good elsewhere than you can do here, for God's sake, go, and happy shall I be that you have gone. If you can serve my Master in the little rooms in the neighborhood—if by forming yourselves into smaller churches you can increase the honor of my Master's name, I shall love you none the less for going, but I shall delight to think that you have Christ's spirit in you, and can do and dare for His name's sake.

At the present moment we rejoice to know that many a Sunday school in this neighborhood is indebted to the members of this church for teachers. It is right. We do not want you at home, and are therefore glad to see you at work elsewhere. No matter, so long as Christ is preached, whether you throw your strength into that church or into this church. Here, as being members with us, we have the first claim upon you, but when we do not need you by reason of our abundance of men, go and give your strength to any other part of Christ's church that may desire you.

While I speak thus much in your praise, my brethren and sisters, let me say, we must keep this up. If we say, "We have the College to support, and we do as much as other churches for various societies, and we can be content to sit still," this church will begin to go rotten at the core the moment we are not working for God with might and main. Sometimes I get a pull at my coattail by very kind, judicious friends, who think I shall ask you to do too much. My brethren are welcome to pull my coattail, but it will come off before I shall stand back for a moment.

As long as I live I must serve my Master with my whole soul, and when you think I go too fast, you can stand back *if you dare*, for mark, you will be responsible to God if you do. You may start back if you will, and if you dare, but I must go on, *must* go, **MUST** go on, or else I die. And you that are worthy of the day in which you live will follow me, step by step, in any good project, and though I should seem too rash, you will redeem me from the charge of rashness by the enthusiasm, and the earnestness with which you carry out my plans.

Here is this great city! Was there ever such spiritual destitution? A million people who could not go to a place of worship, if they had the heart to go there! And here we have the priest-craft of the Church of England increasing the spiritual destitution by building fresh churches—not providing for it, but increasing it, I say, for I reckon that wherever Puseyism is preached, there is an increase of spiritual destitution. Wherever broad churchism comes, there is an increase of spiritual destitution, and it is little better where they go who preach the Gospel in the pulpit, and read Popery at the font, the grave, and the bedside.

In this last case, public morality is shocked by the perjury of those who swear to a Prayer Book in which they do not believe. Much as I respect and even love believers in the Anglican Establishment, I can only feel that their presence in so corrupt a body is the reason why it exists, and I therefore think them to be doing mischief by buttressing a falling and ruinous cause.

True Protestants, we must take upon ourselves to work for London as if there were no other agencies at work except those of the Free churches. For the Hagar church, the church which has a mortal for its head—the harlot church which lives in alliance with the State, has too many sins of her own to repent of, to be of much use in this hour of peril. The good she can do is so insignificant that it is not worthwhile to compute it, because the monstrous evil which she fosters and perpetrates is a more than sufficient set-off against it.

We must work and toil, and labor to scatter in every lane, and alley, and court of London, the pure Gospel of the blessed God. And we must let men know that Sacramentarianism is a lie, and that there is no salvation but in the uplifted cross of Christ, and no salvation through ceremonies but only through a simple faith in Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

If you among others are come to the kingdom for such a time as this, it shall be well with you, but if not, you shall be put away as things abhorred, and this place shall be a hissing, and a by-word in generations yet to come, and it shall be said of you, "There lived a people who were led by a man, who,

with all his faults, was in earnest and was honest, and they would not follow him, but proved unworthy of him, and they have passed away, and their names were writ in water. They had opportunities which they did not use, work was allotted them which they were not worthy to take up, God said to them in answer to their request to be excused, ‘You shall be excused.’ And they went back—

*‘To the vile dust from whence they sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.’”*

But it shall not be so with you, my brethren. Though I thus speak, I know your zeal, and love, and earnestness, and that you will continue to water others, and then you shall be watered yourselves. We will pray and strive together for the faith once delivered to the saints. We will cleave closer and closer to one another, and foot to foot, and shoulder to shoulder we will march to battle for God and for His truth. And come what may, whoever may prove cravens in these days of charity and compromise, we will be found, in God’s name, by the help of God’s Spirit, faithful and true.

III. And now, dear friends, another sentence or two will close the sermon. On the widest scale, this is true. This is true of our denomination and of every church. If we will water others, we shall be watered. From the very day when Carey, and Fuller, and Pearce went forth to preach the Gospel to the heathen, a blessing rested upon our denomination, I believe, and if we had done more for the heathen, we should have been stronger to do more at home.

You may rest assured, though some may not think it, that our missionary operations are an infinite blessing to the churches at home—that relinquishing them, giving them up, staying them, would bring such a blight and a curse that we had need to go down on our knees and pray, “God send the missionary work back again. Give us an outlet for our liberality and our zeal, for without it we become like a pool dammed up, that is full of filth, and toads, and frogs, and all sorts of foul things. Lord, open the river for our zeal, and let us once again have an opportunity to serve You for the nations that are far away!”

But I must leave *you* to preach on that point, for my time has gone, and you can do so more practically than I can. My sermon is reported, and I will undertake that what you preach shall not be forgotten—it shall all be taken down in those boxes which shall be passed round. Say each of you as much as ever you can upon this subject by your contributions, and remember, “He that watereth others, shall himself be watered.”

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—PROVERBS 11

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.