

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

A CURE FOR CARE.

A Sermon

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“Casting all your care upon him ; for he careth for you.”—1 Peter v. 7.

No one precept contains the whole of a believer's duty ; but usually in Scripture, the precepts rise one above the other, like those stone steps by which the traveller in Egypt ascends to the pinnacle of the pyramid. Ye must first plant your feet firmly upon the preceding duty, before ye shall be able fully to climb to the next command. Let me, then, call your attention to the precept which precedes my text: “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.” You know, beloved, that there are some selfish, carnal cares which we must not cast upon God; it were an insult to him; it were an act of infamy on our part if we should venture to ask for his assistance in them. Those are cares which would never molest us at all if we were obedient to the precept: “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God.” This cuts off the head at once of many of those anxieties into which Christians sometimes fall. For instance, covetous cares—if I desire to get and grasp more than is absolutely necessary, that I may hastily grow rich, I cannot on my knees ask God to carry this care for me, because it is none of his sending. He has taught me to say, “Give us this day our daily bread,” and he has given me a blessed example in Agur, that I may pray, “Give me neither poverty nor riches;” but I cannot go on my knees before God, honestly, as a miser, and ask that he would enable me to add house to house, and field to field. But then, that care I never ought to indulge, and I never should endure it if I attended to the precept, “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God.” There is, also, the care of ambition, when men desire to attain honours, eminence, and fame; to stand foremost, to be exalted upon the pinnacle, to be looked up to by all, and to be almost adored by some. But if we allow ambition to creep into our minds, we cannot go to God with it. It is a care which we dare not cast on God, for that were to empty the filth of our house upon the altar of God's sanctuary. But then, I say, it is a care which would never fret us, if our souls were lowly before the Lord.

There are those cares too, which we make for ourselves—those anxieties which anticipate the future—those foolish fears which are only created in our brain, and which vex the head, and then fret the heart—we cannot ask God to take those upon himself; cares which have no existence except in our own fancies, we can scarcely cast on God. But then, beloved, we should never have them if we “humbled ourselves under the mighty hand of God.” Then, in such a state of subjection to the divine will, and of resignation to the eternal purpose, our soul would sit in quiet and be still, and our spirit would not agitate itself with frivolities which it has itself imagined, with fancies which have no origin but in its own imagination. Oh that ye may have grace to obey the preceding command, and then I think, without any limitation, I may address you in the words of the text: “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” I repeat, sinful cares we cannot cast on God; but then, obeying the precept, “Humble yourselves,” would uproot such vexations. He that is down, need fear no fall. He whose soul is even as a weaned child will fret and cry no more.

In addressing you this morning from so rich a text as this, I would rather pray that the Holy Spirit may deliver you from carefulness, than attempt to deliver you from it myself, for I am not even able to obey this precept myself, much less shall I enable you to do it. Only when the Spirit of God is upon the preacher can *he* cast his cares upon his God, and he is convinced by experience, that only as the Holy Ghost shall enable you, will *you* be able to do the same. However, that our word may be the means of your comfort and of your strengthening, let us speak on this wise. First, for a few minutes, *let us expound this disease of care*, giving some description of it; secondly, *let us manifest the blessed remedy of the text*, endeavouring in God’s name, to apply it; and lastly, *let us hold out the sweet inducement of the second part of the sentence*, in order that believers may be led to attempt the practising of the precept, “He careth for you.”

I. First, then, LET US ENDEAVOUR TO DESCRIBE THE DISEASE OF CARE.

The care mentioned in the text, even though it be exercised upon legitimate objects, (and in this it differs from the cares of which I spoke just now, which were cares concerning wrong objects;) care even when exercised upon legitimate objects if carried to excess, hath in itself *the nature of sin*. This will be clear if you think for a moment that anything which is a transgression of God’s command is sin, and if there were no other command, the one in our text being broken would involve us in iniquity. But it is a precept earnestly repeated by our Saviour many times, it is one which the apostles have reiterated again and again, and one which cannot be neglected without involving transgression. Besides, the very essence of anxious care is the imagining that we are wiser than God, and the thrusting of ourselves into his place, to do for him that which we dream he either cannot or will not do; we attempt to think of that which we fancy he will forget; or we labour to take upon ourselves that burden which he either is not able or willing to carry for us. Now, this impertinence, this presumption, what if I say, this audacity, has in it the very nature of sin, to

attempt to know better than God, to snatch from his hand the helm by which he guides affairs, to attempt to correct his charts, to remap his providence, this indeed is such an impertinence that as the guardian Scripture pushes back the intruder, it demands of him, "Art thou also one of the King's counsel? What doest thou here? He took no counsel with thee when he made the heavens and the earth and balanced the clouds, and stretched out the skies like a tent to dwell in, how darest thou come hither and offer advice to perfect wisdom, and aid to omnipotent strength?" There is in anxious care the very nature of sin.

But, further, these anxious cares very frequently lead to other sins, sometimes to *overt acts of transgression*. The tradesman who is not able to leave his business with God, may be tempted to indulge in the tricks of trade; nay, he may not only be tempted, but he may be prevailed upon to put out an unholy hand with which to help himself. The professional or literary man, if he has no firm trust in providence, may lend his skill to indirect and unlawful ends; and each man if he have no other snare, will be tried with this—to forsake prayer and to forget the promise in order to trust to the wisdom of a friend, or to the natural sagacity of some mentor in whom he puts confidence. Now, this is forsaking the fountain to go to the broken cisterns, a crime which was laid against Israel of old, a wrath provoking iniquity. Even if it led to no other act save this sin of preferring the counsel of man to the direction of God, excessive anxiety were to be reprobated and detested. But think, my brethren, of the many sins which our anxieties engender in our hearts. Our unbelief which makes us doubt our God, our want of love which is proven by our distrust of love, our want of hope which puts out our eyes so that we cannot see the clear shining after the rain. Think, my brethren, how we fret and mistrust and thus vex the Spirit of God, and often cause him to depart from us, so that our prayers are hindered, so that our example is marred, so that we give ourselves rather to self-seeking than to seeking God. All these things are sins, the grapes of Gomorrah which grow on the vines of our cares. These base-born cares are the plentiful mothers of transgressions. Distrust is the egg out of which many a mischief is hatched; we indulge in these cares and think surely we are doing no wrong, whereas the indulgence in them is in itself a crime, and is besides a tempter which guides us onward to the commission of other iniquities, for the man that is full of care is ripe for any sin, but he who has cast his care on God standeth securely, neither shall the evil one be able to touch him.

To proceed further in uncovering this disease. As it is in itself sin, and the mother of sin, we note again that *it brings misery*, for where sin is, sorrow shall soon follow. He who would have his spirit bowed down even to the very earth, has only to fix his thoughts upon himself and his circumstances, instead of looking to God and his promises. Some of you are placed in a very happy position in life, but my dear brethren, you can make yourselves miserable if you please. Others of you are put in what the world considers unhappy circumstances, but if God enable you, you can be supremely blessed. Poverty does not necessarily involve sorrow, nor do riches of themselves bring peace or

happiness. If any of you wish for misery you need not go out of your own house, there is no need to travel far for causes of discontent; you can be surfeited with plenty and be poor; you can dwell in the midst of peace and be disturbed; you can possess the richest prosperity and yet be afflicted. We, to a very great extent make our own position. God ordains providence, and either grace makes us happy, or sin racks us with pain. God does not make our misery; the cause of our trouble lies at our own door, not at his. Do you see that Christian there with the sparkling eye, and the light footstep, the man who is swift to run upon his Master's errands? that man has many troubles, but when he wakes in the morning if he retains remembrance of them, he bows his knee and leaves them with his God: he goes home, and the day has had much of sorrow in it, but he shakes the weight from his own shoulder and leaves his burden upon God. That man, with all his troubles, is more blessed than yonder professor, who has very little to vex him except that he vexes himself, by making every little thing a ground for fretfulness, magnifying every small mischance into a strange calamity, and by losing all patience, when all things suit not his proud will and dainty taste. Oh brethren! it is an ill thing for Christians to be sad. Let them rejoice, "Rejoice in the Lord always," but they never can so long as they indulge in anxious cares.

Besides this, these anxious cares do not only lead us into sin, and destroy our peace of mind, but they also *weaken us for usefulness*. When one has left all his cares at home, how well he can work for his Master, but when those cares tease us in the pulpit, it is hard preaching the gospel. When cares buzz in the ear, the music of grace is hard to hear. What would you say of your workman who should come to you in the morning with a heavy piece of family furniture upon his back. He calls himself your porter, he is about to carry your goods, and you see him going out of the door with your load, which is properly proportioned to his strength, but beside that he is carrying a heavy piece of his own upon his shoulders. You say to him, "My good man, what are you doing there?" "Oh sir, I am only loaded with household stuff." I think you would say, "Well, but you are not fit to do my work which you are engaged to do. I do not employ you to carry your own load, I had you here to carry mine." "But sir," says he, "I am so weak, I cannot carry both." "Then leave yours alone," say you, "and carry mine." Or to use another simile. There was a great king who once employed a merchant in his service as an ambassador to Foreign courts. Now the merchant before he went away, said to the king, "My own business requires all my care, and though I am always willing to be your majesty's servant, yet if I attend to your business as I ought, I am sure my own will be ruined." "Well," said the king, "you take care of my business, and I will take care of yours. Use your best endeavours, and I will answer for it that you shall be nothing the loser for the zeal which you take from yourself to give to me." And so our God says to us, as his servants, "Do my work, and I will do yours. Serve me and I will serve you." Like Peter,—Peter is fishing, Christ needs a pulpit to preach in. He borrows Peter's boat, and preaches in it; well what about Peter's fishing? Oh the Master

will take care of that, for no sooner is the sermon done than he says, "Launch into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught," and Peter gets more in ten minutes through having lent his boat to his Master, than he might have done in ten weeks, if he had been fishing on his own account. Leave your cares with God, and care for him,

"Make you *his* service your delight,
Your wants shall be *his* care."

The subject would not be complete if I did not add that these carking cares, of whose guilt perhaps we think so little, *do very great damage to our blessed and holy cause*. Your sad and miserable countenances hinder souls who are anxious, and they present a ready excuse for souls who are careless. "Look," say they, "look, that man is a Christian man, the whole of the winters of a century have left their stormrifts on his forehead, and all the winds of ages seem to have ruffled his brow, he has no peace, no joy;—Who would be a Christian to be so miserable?" Thus the careless man says he will not have hell here, he will leave that for hereafter, while even anxious spirits say, "It cannot be that this religion is true, for if it were really true one would think it would be able to support its followers in the troubles of life. If God's Word be true that God will sustain his people, then Christians would be sustained, and believers would be cheered and comforted; but I see that they are as much fretful as other men, as impatient as they are, and that So-and-so, who makes a profession, is quite as weak, quite as easily bowed before the storm as yonder man who has no God in whom to trust, and no promises on which to lean." Ah! let it not be said so Christian through you; open not the enemy's mouth to blaspheme; let not the dragon find food through you who are of the seed of the woman, but rather seek, casting your care on God, to disentangle yourself of all personal hindrances that you may be avenged upon your Master's adversaries as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. I close the description of this matter by saying that in the most frightful manner cares have brought many to the poisoned cup, the halter, and the knife, and hundreds to the mad-house. What makes the constant increase of our lunatic asylums; why is it that in almost every country in England new asylums have to be erected, wing after wing being added to these buildings in which the imbecile and the raving are confined? It is because we *will* carry what we have no business to carry—our own cares, and until there shall be a general keeping of the day of rest throughout England, and until there shall be a more general resting of our souls and all we have upon God, we must expect to hear of increasing suicides and increasing lunacies. So long as the present system of competition in business shall continue—and there seems no hope that it will ever cease, for rather the signs of the times forbode that the battle will grow sterner every day—it will become a more stern duty with each of us to cast our care on God, unless we would see reason reel, and would be howling maniacs in our cells. Oh, for your own sake and for your children's sake, for Christ's sake and for his Church's sake, I pray you spoil not the fair house which God has builded, cast not out the lovely tenant, leave not the temple of the Lord to be the prison-house of madness. Away with evil cares if you would still be a man.

II. I shall now want your attention to the second part of the subject, THE BLESSED REMEDY TO BE APPLIED.

Somebody must carry these cares. If I cannot do it myself, can I find any one who will? My Father who is in heaven stands waiting to be my burden-bearer. With broad shoulders, with omnipotence as his strength, he says "My child, roll thy burden upon thy God." Blessed privilege, dare I neglect it; can I be wicked enough to reject it and to bear my cares myself. Here is the blessed remedy, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord and he will sustain thee."

Now in order rather to apply this remedy than to describe it, by the help of God's Holy Spirit I will mention some of those fears, those cares which are legitimate enough in their objects, but which can only be relieved by leaving them with God. One of the first and most natural cares with which we are vexed is *the care for daily bread*. "I should be content" says one "with food and raiment; if I can but provide things honest in the sight of all men, and see my family cared for, I shall then be happy." "But" saith one, "what shall I eat, what shall I drink, wherewithal shall I be clothed? without a situation, having therefore no opportunity to earn my livelihood; without substance, having therefore nothing to look upon by which I may be supported without labour; without friend or patron who might give me his generous assistance; what shall I do?" You are a Christian are you; you must use all diligence, that is your duty: but oh, if God shall help you, mingle no fretfulness with the diligence, no impatience with your suffering, and no distrust with your trials. No, remember what Jesus has said so sweetly to the point, "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you That even Solomon in his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore, take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Such a care as that I say is natural enough, and to bid a man shake it off when he is in actual need is cruelly absurd, unless you have a sure consolation to offer him; but you can say, "Cast your trial upon God." Use your most earnest endeavours, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God; if you cannot do one thing do another; if you cannot earn your bread as a gentleman earn it as a poor man; if you cannot earn it by the sweat of your brains do it by the sweat of your brow, do something for an honest living; sweep a crossing if you cannot do anything else, for if a man will not work neither let him eat; but having brought yourself to that, if still every door is shut, "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

Business men, who have not exactly to hunt for the necessities of life, are often tormented with the anxieties of large transactions and extended commerce. The failures of others, frequent bad debts, changes in the markets, monetary pressures, and sudden panics, cause a world of trouble. Through our fashion of credit in this age, it is very hard for a Christian to conduct business in the sober substantial fashion which a tender conscience would prefer. "Owe no man anything,"—if that could be interwoven into the system of trade, it would I do not doubt, cure ten thousand ills which now grow out of that credit system, which seems to be unavoidable, but which I am sure involves many of the crimes which are committed, and very much of the care which racks business men. Well, through the present high-pressure system of trade there is naturally much care. If any man here can say that he can go into his office having many in his employ, and never at all have care, I should think he must be a *rara avis* in the world, surely he might walk till he dropped with weariness before he would meet with another of the same order. But if there be a brother here who has a business so extensive that he does not sleep at night, that he lies there tossing on his bed, thinking about this servant who may have robbed him, or about that vessel that is out at sea, or about the low prices of a certain article which has gone down since he laid in a large stock, and all those little things which all of you know—then I say, "Brother, hold hard here, what are you doing? what are you doing? Are you sure that in this you have used your best prudence and wisdom, and your best industry, and given it your best attention?" "Yes." Well then, what more have you to do? Suppose you like to weep all night, will that keep your ship from going on the Goodwin sands? Suppose you could cry your eyes out, will that make a thief honest? Suppose you could fret yourself till you could not eat, would that raise the price of goods? One would think if you were just to say, "Well, I have done all that is to be done, now I will leave it with God," that you might go about your business and have the full use of your senses to attend to it. Whereas now, you fritter away your senses, and then commit blunders, and so multiply your troubles by that very fretfulness by which you hoped to remove them. There—let them alone! We say, "Leave well alone," but I say, "Leave ill alone," leave them both alone, and with your two hands, for you will want both hands to do it,—with the hand of prayer, "In everything by prayer and supplication, making known your wants unto God," and with the other hand, the hand of faith, trusting in God—lift your load right off from your own shoulders, and let the whole crushing weight be left with your eternal God, for "he will sustain thee, he will never suffer the righteous to be moved."

Another anxiety of a personal kind which is very natural, and indeed very proper if it be not carried to excess, is the care of your *children*. Blessed be God for our children. We do not sympathise with those who look upon them as afflictions, for we believe them still to be a heritage of the Lord. But what anxieties they involve, how shall we bring them up, how shall they be provided for? Will they honour their parents, or will they bring disgrace upon the name they bear? A child may be the greatest curse his parents ever had, while he may be their choicest

comfort. "All these," as an old puritan said, "are doubtful blessings, and may be certain curses," yet I will not have it that there is any doubt about their being blessings, as God sends them. A Christian parent must have care about his children, and all the more because he is a Christian, since he will not be satisfied with their getting on in business, he will never be content till his children walk in the truth. Mother, father, you have prayed for your children, you trust you have set them a holy example, you labour day by day to teach them the truth as it is in Jesus; you have travailed in birth for their souls till Christ be formed in them; it is well, now let your souls quietly expect the blessing, leave your offspring with God; cast your sons and daughters upon their father's God; let no impatience intrude if they are not converted in your time, and let no distrust distract your mind if they should seem to belie your hopes. I met yesterday with a few verses, which sound like the warblings of an American songstress; they exactly suit my subject, and in reading them in private they have touched my heart. Excuse me therefore, if though I never read a sermon, I should for once read a part of one.

- "The Master has come over Jordan,"
 Said Hannah, the mother, one day ;
 "He is healing the people who throng Him,
 With a touch of His finger, they say.
 And now I shall carry the children,
 Little Rachel, and Samuel, and John
 I shall carry the baby, Esther,
 For the Lord to look upon."
 The father looked at her kindly,
 But he shook his head, and smiled:
 "Now, who but a doating mother
 Would think of a thing so wild?
 If the children were tortured by demons,
 Or dying of fever 'twere well ;
 Or had they the taint of the leper,
 Like many in Israel."
- "Nay, do not hinder me, Nathan ;
 I feel such a burden of care :
 If I carry it to the Master,
 Perhaps I shall leave it there.
 If He lay His hand on the children,
 My heart will be lighter, I know :
 For a blessing for ever and ever
 Will follow them as they go."
 So, over the hills of Judah,
 Along by the vine-rows green,
 With Esther asleep on her bosom,
 And Rachel her brothers between ;
 'Mong the people who hung on His teaching,
 Or waited His touch and His word,
 Through the row of proud Pharisees listening,
 She pressed to the feet of the Lord.
- "Now, why should'st thou hinder the Master,"
 Said Peter, "with children like these ?
 Seest not how, from morning till evening,
 He teacheth and healeth disease ?"

Then Christ said, "Forbid not the children,
 Permit them to come unto Me!"
 And He took in His arms little Esther,
 And Rachel He set on His knee :
 And the heavy heart of the mother
 Was lifted all earth-care above,
 As He laid His hands on the brothers,
 And blest them with tenderest love ;
 As He said of the babes in His bosom,
 "Of such are the kingdom of heaven ;"
 And strength for all duty and trial
 That hour to her spirit was given.

Thus do ye, and thus inherit the blessing.

But each Christian will in his time have personal troubles of a higher order, namely, *spiritual cares*. He is begotten again unto a lively hope, but he fears that his faith will yet die. He hopes he has some spark of spiritual joy, but there are dark and dreary nights which lower over him, and he fears that his lamp will die out in darkness. As yet he has been victorious, but he trembles lest he should one day fall by the hand of the enemy. Beloved, I beseech thee; cast this care upon God for he careth for you. "I am persuaded that he that hath begun a good work in you will carry it on and perfect it unto the day of Christ." He hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." "No good thing will I withhold from them that walk uprightly." "I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Why, one might keep you all this morning, and this afternoon and evening too, repeating the precious promises of God, and we might close them all by saying,

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
 You who unto Jesus for refuge hath fled?"

Away then with dark suspicions and anxieties! Is it care about past sin? "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Is it present temptation? "There hath no temptation happened to you but such as is common to men: but God who is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Is it future peril? O leave thou that with him, for neither "things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." If you begin to think always of yourself, you must be miserable. Why, it is Christ that makes you what you are before the eyes of God; look then to Jesus in order to find out what you are in God's esteem. Soul, I say again look at Christ, and not at yourself. Never let anxieties about

sanctification destroy your confidence of justification. What if you be a sinner! Christ died to save sinners. What if you be undeserving! "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." Grace is free. The invitation is still open to you; rest the whole burden of your soul's salvation where it must rest. Do not be an Uzza, lay no hasty hand upon the ark of the Lord; above all, do not be an Uzziah, attempt not to offer sacrifices or usurp the priesthood, for Christ must stand for you, you cannot stand or do for yourself. Cast, then, your care on him, for he careth for you.

I shall want your patient attention two or three minutes more, while trying to apply this remedy, when I notice that there are many cares not of a personal but rather of an *ecclesiastical* character, which often insinuate themselves and plead for life, but which must nevertheless be put away. I am sorry to confess, that if I do not preach to any one else this morning, I shall now be preaching to myself. There are cares about *how God's work is to be carried on*. I know a foolish young man who lies awake many nights thinking about that, and who sometimes by day makes himself foolishly sad, because with large purposes of heart and with great designs in his soul he sees not the way by which they are to be carried out, and has not yet attained the faith which

"Laughs at impossibilities,
And says, 'It shall be done.'"

If any of you are suffering from the same sad disease, let me exhort you from the words of Peter, to cast the care about God's work *upon God*. He never sent us a warfare at our own charge; he never did require us to do *his* work; that he will attend to himself; and we ought to feel that if God does not enable us to do as much as we would, it is a blessed thing to be enabled and permitted to do as much as we can. If we think there are few men to work, or little means with which to work, we must not be fretful about where the means, or the men shall come from. We may properly pray, "Lord, send labourers," and with equal propriety we may ask that he who has the silver and the gold, may give them for his own work; but after that we must cast our care on God. Then, if we get over that, there will be another anxiety,—one which frets me often enough—which is, *the success of God's work*. Oh! when there are souls converted, how our heart leaps for joy; when the Church keeps continually increasing, how glad we are! But if there is even a little lull, we feel so sad; if we do not see God's arm always bare, we are ready to lie down and say, "Lord, let me die, I am no better than my fathers." When we are in a low state of body and heart too, that weakening sickness of unbelief, like the woman's issue of blood, comes over us, and we feel that life is ebbing as success decreases. Now, this is a care we must cast on God. Husbandman, your Great Employer sent you out to sow the seed, but if no grain of it should ever come up, if you sowed the seed as he told you, and where he told you, he will never lay the blame of a defective harvest to you. It is ours to preach, but to convert souls is God's; it is ours to labour, but the success depends alone on him. "They that go through the valley of Baca make

it a well,"—that is *their* business, to dig wells—"the rain also filleth the pools,"—it is not their business to fill the wells; and the wells do not get full from the bottom as they do in our country, it is the rain that fills the pools,—the blessing comes from on high; and if we have dug the wells, and we have prayed six times, and as yet the rain has not descended, go again seven times, and the rain shall yet descend, and the pools shall be filled to the brim. Do not, therefore, let us have cares about success.

And sometimes there is another care, it is the care lest some little slip made by ourselves or others should give cause to the enemy to blaspheme. There are devils besides those in hell, there are some on earth; and some of these are too glad to find an opportunity, if there be a word that is ever so fitly spoken, to wrest it out of its connection and make stock and capital for blasphemy out of it. It is an easy task and one which any fool can accomplish, but this world is full of fools who are glad to find dirt to eat, and then having eaten it themselves to cram it down others' throats. One is sometimes afraid to walk for fear of breaking something in such a frail world as this; afraid to speak, lest we should say something which might open the enemy's mouth. A careful jealousy is very well if it leads to caution, but very ill if it leads to a carking, weak anxiety. What have you and I to do with what the enemy may do? if the Lord does not chain the devil I am sure we cannot, and if he does not shut the mouths of liars, I do not know that we ought to wish he would; for if he lets them open their mouths I have no doubt they are best open. Many a time, as Christ rode into Jerusalem on the back of an ass, the truth has ridden into the midst of Jerusalem in triumph on the back of its most despicable enemies. Beyond doubt, Christ has been lifted up even on the point of the spear, and the light of the gospel has beamed like a beacon from the stake where the martyr perished. Well, let us leave our enemies to do what they will, and only stand fast to the Lord and cast our care on him.

And then, one is so afraid of being unfaithful at the last, lest the blood of souls should be on our skirts. Oh! that thought has dashed me on my forehead on the floor many and many a time. This heavy burden crushes me into the most pitiable state, until the body sympathises with the mind so fully, that if you could see me with the tears running from my eyes, and the cold sweat starting from my head, you would say, "What a creature is that to go forth and preach." The thought of having all of you to address, and that I must be faithful or else your blood shall be required at my hands, is so awful a one that in private I never dare to think of it, for it utterly unmans me. But oh, blessed be God, if he has enabled us to do all we can by his Spirit, we must leave it there. We know that he will not ask more of us than he has given to us, and if he has helped us so far, his shall be the glory; but if we have failed, even that too shall be washed away through the precious blood, and with all his weight of responsibility the minister shall yet enter heaven and find a place amongst the sanctified.

III. I close my last point upon which only a word, of THE SWEET INDUCEMENT TO LEAVE YOUR BURDEN: "He careth for you."

Believe in an universal providence, the Lord cares for ants and angels,

for worms and for worlds ; he cares for cherubim and for sparrows, for seraphim and for insects. Cast your care on him, he that calleth the stars by their names, and leadeth them out by numbers, by their hosts. "Why sayest thou, Oh Jacob, and thinkest Oh Israel, my way is passed over from God and he has utterly forgotten me?" Let his universal providence cheer you. Think next of his particular providence over all the saints. "Precious shall their blood be in his sight." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose." Let the fact that while he is the Saviour of all men, he is specially the Saviour of them that believe, let that cheer and comfort you, that special providence which watches over the chosen, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him." And then, thirdly, let the thought of his special love *to you* be the very essence of your comfort. "I will never leave *thee*, nor forsake *thee*." God says, that as much to you, as he said it to any saint of old. "Fear not, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Oh! I would beloved, that the Holy Ghost would make you feel the promise as being spoken to *you*; out of this vast assembly forget the rest and only think of yourself, for the promises are unto you, meant for you. Oh! grasp them. It is ill to get into a way of reading Scripture for the whole Church, read it for yourselves, and specially hear the Master say to you this morning, "Let not *your* heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me." Think that ye hear him say, "I have prayed for *thee* that thy faith fail not." Think thou seest him walking on the waters of thy trouble, for he is there and he is saying, "Fear not, it is I, be not afraid." Oh! those sweet words of Christ! Lord speak them to me; speak them to thy poor sorrowing child yonder; speak them to each one of us; speak them to us, and let us hear thy voice and say, "Jesus whispers consolation, I cannot refuse it, I will sit under his shadow with great delight."

Sinners, ungodly persons here, you know not God. I send you away when I have said this one thing. What a blessed thing it is to be a Christian, to have some one who will take your cares for you! Why, you know you will have your cares whether you are Christians or not. you are sure to have troubles even in the world, but then you have no Christ! to comfort you, no God to sustain you, no promise to cheer you; you have the darkness without the lamp, you have to die without the immortality to follow. Oh that you knew what a Christian is, and your mouths would be a watering to know the Christian's privilege. But I say to you, cast your sins upon Christ. Jesus Christ can take them. If thou believest on him there is proof that *he did* take them of old, did carry them and suffered for them in his own person that thou mightest go free. Oh may we each this morning, saint and sinner, come even to the cross, and to the throne of grace, and say, "Lord, unload us of our burdens of guilt and care, and give us now to go on *our* way rejoicing," because God, all-sufficient, has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."