

EFFECTUAL CALLING— ILLUSTRATED BY THE CALL OF ABRAM

“They went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.”

Genesis 12:5

IF you desire to know the character of a child, you will probably learn much about it from observing the father. The young bird flies and sings as its father did before it. If we would know the life of the child of faith, we should study the history of the “father of the faithful.” Abraham, the man of faith, is a type of all believing men, and the narrative of his life, if rightly considered, is the mirror of the history of all the saints of God. The commencement of his career of faith, when he first became separated from his own country and went into the land of Canaan, is a most instructive representation of our effectual calling—when we are, by a work of Omnipotent Grace, separated from the world, and made to obey the great precept, “Come you out from among them, be you separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and you shall be My sons and daughters.”

The life of the Believer is as Abram’s was, a separated life, a life regulated by other affections than those which arise from the relationships of flesh and blood. It is a life of walking in the unseen, in which God’s command, Presence and approval are paramount considerations. It is a life in which faith guides the soul, sitting like a pilot at the helm of the vessel. Abram denied the flesh, took up the cross, went outside the camp, became sanctified unto the Lord, and lived and died the friend of God and a stranger among men. The commencement of his separated life is a lively picture of the commencement of the same life in ourselves. The calling of Abram is a representation of our calling, and to that matter I shall ask your earnest attention this morning.

1. First, EFFECTUAL CALLING IS ILLUSTRATED IN THE CALL OF ABRAM. We have been reading the whole of the story and therefore I shall only need to refresh your memories with it. Read carefully the last verses of chapter 11, and the whole of chapter 12 and get the thread of the story. Abram’s call was, in the first place, the result of the Sovereign Grace of God. The world, as a whole, was lying in heathenism. Men had gradually gone astray from the one God to the worship of engraved images. Here and there there might be an exception, as in the case of a Job or a Melchisedec, but thick darkness covered the people.

God had determined that He would select one family which should afterwards grow into a distinct nation, to be the conservators of the true faith. Why He selected Abram, He Himself only knows, for we know that Terah, the father of Abram, had declined into the worship of false gods. “Your fathers,” Joshua tells us in his 24th chapter, and second verse, “dwelt on the other side of the flood in old times, even Terah, the father of Abram, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.”

That family, if not quite so corrupt as the rest of mankind, had, at any rate, become corrupted. And we find the idols in the house of Laban, their descendant. Yet the Sovereign Grace of God pitched upon the household of Terah, and out of that favored family the Lord of Hosts made a Divine selection of the person of Abram. Why, I say again, why, remains in the inscrutable

purposes of God, a thing unrevealed to us, though doubtless the choice was made by the Lord for the wisest and most God-like reasons. Abram was a man with faults. "A man, also, with many virtues," you reply. Yes, but those virtues given to him by God's Spirit, and not the cause of his election, but the result. He is an instance of the Sovereignty of God carrying out the Divine declaration, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

The Prophets often spoke of Abraham as though the Lord's mercy to him was a matter to be admired, and they by no means ascribed his favored position to any personal merit in the Patriarch. "Look," says Isaiah, "unto the rock from where you are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from where you were dug. Look unto Abraham, your father, and unto Sarah that bore you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." Here he is compared, as it were, to a quarry, or to a pit out of which the nation was dug, and to this pit they are bid to look as to a sight that will humble them—consequently, I gather—not to the merit of their fathers, but to the Grace of God.

And again, "A Syrian ready to perish, was your father." Called a Syrian, as if to show that by nature he was as others—and as the Syrians were idolaters, even was he. "A Syrian ready to perish," by which I understand not perishing with physical hunger or disease, but through spiritual darkness and declension from the true God. "Ready to perish," and yet the Eternal Mercy looked on him and saved him! Yes, whether men will accept it or not, that Truth of God stands fast, forever, that "whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called." Effectual calling in all cases, follows the eternal purpose. Predestination, according to the Divine good pleasure, is the wellhead of all the Covenant blessings which the Believer enjoys—

*"Never had you felt the guilt of sin,
Nor sweets of pardoning love,
Unless your worthless names had been
Enrolled to life above."*

The call of Abram, in the next place, was Divinely applied and enforced. We neither read that an angel called him, nor a Prophet, nor that he came out of Ur of the Chaldeans by the motion of his own mind spontaneously. "The God of Glory appeared unto our father Abraham," says Stephen, in his dying address, "when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran." There was made to his mind a remarkable revelation of the existence and the Character of the one only true God—and then, after he had been enlightened so that he knew in his inmost soul the Existence and Glory of Jehovah—then the message came, perhaps in audible sounds, perhaps by a forcible impression upon his mind, "Get you out from your kindred and from your father's house."

Now mark that in every gracious call by which a man is truly saved, the call comes immediately from God Himself. Agents are generally used—the minister speaks, the Bible becomes a living light, the Providence is a warning which is not misunderstood—but neither minister, nor Bible, nor Providence can call a man effectually apart from the direct manifestation of the Divine power in the heart of each individual. Ah, my Brothers and Sisters, we may labor after souls, but until God puts His hand to the work, nothing is done!

Our calls to dead souls leave them still in their sleep, but the voice of Jesus brings Lazarus out of the tomb! I would have you who are listeners to the Truth of God never be satisfied with the use of merely the means. Look to the God of the means! Ask Him to reveal His arm and the power of His Grace in you. And never be content with that which only penetrates to the outward ear, or abides upon a merely verbal memory—but ask that it may go into the heart and abide in the innermost spirit through the effectual working of God the Holy Spirit. "Christ in you" is the power of God, but there must be an inward receiving of Him by the Holy Spirit, or all will be in vain! There must be a supernatural work, or you cannot be saved.

Much as I wish to preach a free salvation, I cannot forget that, “you must be born-again,” and, “no man can come to Christ except the Father draw him.” Mere nature at its best falls short of eternal life—its bow is too weak to shoot to the mark—its puny arm too feeble to work so Divine a change! Effectual calling, then, springs from the Divine purpose and is worked by Divine energy. Dear Hearers, be this your prayer to the Lord who alone can save you—

*“With softening pity look,
And melt my hardness down.
Strike with Your love’s resistless stroke,
And break this heart of stone!”*

In the case of Abram, again, the call was personal, and it grew more personal as it proceeded. At first, when Abram was called in Ur of the Chaldeans, he probably thought that he could persuade Terah, his father, and the rest of the family to accompany him. And he appears to have prevailed to a degree, for they went as far as Haran. But there, for reasons not known, the family stopped for a long time. How frequently it is so with us! When God begins to work in our souls we would gladly have others go with us, and we are led, perhaps ourselves, to make a kind of compromise with them to stop half-way if they will come half-way. We vainly conceive that we may bring all of them to feel and act as we do, whereas if the effectual call does not come to them as it does to us, there must be a division.

Love may wish otherwise, but carnal nature and the renewed spirit cannot agree—the Lord has set a difference—and we must still expect to see Him take one of a city and two of a family and bring them to Zion, while others refuse to come. After awhile the message came to Abram again, “Get you out from your kindred,” not with your kindred, “and from your father’s house.” And so Abram, this time, is obliged to leave Haran, the halting-place, and to push forward resolutely and finally for Canaan.

Beloved, you and I, if ever we are to be the Lord’s, must have a distinct personal call. All the hearing of the Gospel in which I listen for other people, and am but one of a crowd, comes to nothing. But when I hearken for myself and the Truth of God comes home to me, describing my case, revealing my misery, inspiring my desire, enkindling my hope—then it is that it becomes the power of God unto salvation to my spirit! O dear Hearer, I beseech you individualize yourself! Put yourself, even in this great throng, into a mental solitude and let the voice of God come to you, even to you, like the bean dropped into the hole in the earth which the farmer has dug on purpose for it—that there it may swell and germinate and bring forth fruit! Nothing but a direct, distinct personal call coming home to heart and conscience will be of any avail!

This call to Abram was a call for separation. The separation must have been exceedingly painful to him, for it was so complete. “Get you out of your country”—expatriate yourself. Be an alien, a stranger, and a foreigner. “Get you out from your kindred.” Let the ties of Nature yield to the ties of Divine Grace. Form new relations and yield to bonds that are not of the flesh. “Get you from your father’s house,” from the place of comfort and rest, the place of heir-ship and affection. Acknowledge another father, and seek another house. “Get you unto a land that I will show you,” which you could not find by yourself, but which I must reveal to you.

Observe, then, the effectual call, wherever it comes to a man, is a separating sword, cutting him off from old associations. It makes him feel that this world is not his country. He lives in it as a stranger lives in a foreign land. He is in the world, but he is not of it. The Apostle says, “Our citizenship is in Heaven.” We become citizens of another city and are aliens in these cities of earth. For Christ’s sake the Christian man is therefore obliged to be separated in many respects from such of his family and kindred as remain in their sins. They are living according to the flesh. They are seeking this world. Their pleasure is here, their comfort below the skies. The man who is called by Divine Grace lives in the same house, but lives not under the influence of the same motives—nor is he ruled by the same desires.

He is so different from others that very soon they find him out, and, as Ishmael mocked Isaac, so the sons of the world mock the children of the Resurrection. The call of Grace, the more it is heard the more it completes the separation. At first, with some Believers, they only go part of the way in nonconformity to the world. They are only partly conformed to Jesus Christ's image and partly led out of worldly influences. Indeed, this is the case with most of us! But as we ripen in the things of God, our decision for God becomes more complete, our obedience to the Law of Christ becomes more perfect and there is a greater division set between us and the world.

Oh, I wish that all Christians would believe this great Truth of God, and carry it out, that, "you are not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world." To try to be a worldly Christian or a Christian worldling is to attempt an impossible thing! "You cannot serve God and mammon." "If God is God serve Him, and if Baal is god serve him." Whichever is the true and the right, give your heart to it—but attempt no compromises. The very essence of the Christian faith is being separate from the world! Not the separation of the monastic life—we are neither monks nor nuns, nor would God have us be so! Jesus Christ was a Man among men, eating and drinking as others did, professing no asceticism, never separating Himself from the rest of mankind, but a Man among men to perfection! Yet how separate from sinners was He! He was as distinct a Man from all others as though He had been an angel among a troop of devils. So must you and I be.

Go to the farm or to the merchandise, to the family and to the mart, but with all your mingling with mankind, still mingle not in their principles nor yield obedience to the demon that rules them! "I pray not," says our Lord, "that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the Evil One." Being kept from the Evil One, you will be carrying out spiritually what Abram did literally—you will be coming out from your kindred and your father's house under the influence of the effectual call. The call of Abram was made effectual in his heart and will, and I call your attention, for a minute, to his obedience to it. It was an obedience which involved, in his case, great sacrifice. It must have been hard to tear himself away from his kinsfolk.

At first, indeed, it seemed to have been too hard for him, for he stopped with his father, Terah, till he died at Haran. Brethren, it is no child's play to be a Christian. "If any man loves father or mother more than Me," says Christ, "he is not worthy of Me." In many cases the greatest foes to religion are our best friends. Many a man has found his soul's worst enemy lying in his bosom. Many a child has found that the father who nourished its body has done his best to destroy its soul. "A man's foes shall be they of his own household," says Christ. But no relationship is to stand in the way of our obedience to Christ. The fondest connection must sooner be severed than we must give up the faithfulness of our loyalty to our great Lord and King.

Take heed that you form no new association which may take you aside from Him. Be warned, Christian men and women, against being unequally yoked together with unbelievers—either in marriage or in any form of partnership—for it will bring you grievous sorrow. Let none but those who are in the favor of God be in your favor. And as you would not wish to be separated eternally from the beloved of your bosom, take care that you do not begin a union with those who are already separate from Christ Jesus your Lord! But if, being converted, you find yourself in connection and relationship with the ungodly, as may be very probably the case, love them! Love them more than you ever did! Be kinder than ever, more affectionate than ever—so that you may win them!

But never submit yourself to sin to please them, nor pollute the chastity of your heart, which belongs to Christ alone. Whatever it may cost you, if you are truly called by Divine Grace, come out and leave all behind. Sing with Jane Taylor—

*"You tempting sweets, forbear.
You dearest idols, fall.
My love you must not share,
Jesus shall have it all.*

*Though painful and acute the smart,
His love can heal the bleeding heart!"*

It must have required, in Abram's case, much faith to be so obedient. He set out to find a land which he had never seen. He is only told in which way to steer, and God will show him where it is. Remember that in those olden times a journey such as Abram took was a much more formidable thing than now. Those venerable men were rooted to the soil in which they grew. We can make a journey to America or Australia and think but little of it—but even our grandfathers thought it a most awful thing to go out of the county in which they lived—they looked upon it as going to the moon if any talked of emigrating to a foreign country!

The further back you go you will discover a greater tenacity in men holding them to family roots. Well, Abram must be uprooted! At more than 70 years of age he must become an emigrant! He might have asked what kind of country, but he did not—it is enough for him that God appoints the journey—and away the pilgrim goes. So, Beloved, we must always unhesitatingly follow the guidance of our heavenly Father. If we are called by Divine Grace, we shall have abundant need to exercise faith. If you could understand the dealings of God with you. If everything went smoothly. If in all respects you prospered as the result of your religion, you might fear that you were not in the track of the people of God, for their track is marked with tribulations! It is through much tribulation that they inherit the kingdom. But if it requires all the faith that you can summon, and more, yet still hold on, for the promise of God will justify itself in the long run!

If God bids you do a thing, though it should seem to be the greatest folly conceivable, yet do it and the wisdom of God will glorify itself in your experience. I must still keep you for a few minutes longer attentive to Abram's obedience, for I want you to notice that while it involved much loss and required a vast amount of faith, yet it was based upon a very great promise—a promise most vast and unexampled. All were to be blessed who blessed him, and he was to become a blessing to the whole universe! Here is a strong inducement to obey, if faith can but believe the promise is true.

And, Brothers and Sisters, when we venture for Christ's sake to strike out into the path of separation, and to walk by faith, what a multitude of promises we have to cheer us onward—"Certainly I will be with you." "No good thing will I withhold from them that walk uprightly." "Trust in the Lord, and do good: so shall you dwell in the land, and verily you shall be fed." "I will never leave you nor forsake you." "He that believes in Him shall never be confused." "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." "For all things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Behold, Brothers and Sisters, the crown which is held forth to you! It is no other than everlasting life! Behold your reward! It is the city whose gates are pearls, and whose streets are gold! Your unrivalled portion is bliss ineffable—to be with Christ—to dwell with Him in ecstatic bliss, world without end. Be of good courage, then, since for all you lose by following Jesus you shall obtain a hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting! Be of good courage if you forsake the world and lose friends for Truth's sake—you shall obtain the friendship of immortal spirits, angels shall become your servitors, and the blood-washed shall be your Brethren—Christ Himself will be your Friend, and God your Father.

Onward you may well proceed if you can but believe the promise is true! You have everything to gain, and that which you have to lose compared with it is less than nothing. The present light affliction incident to a godly life is not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in you! See, then, Brothers and Sisters, and rejoice as you see it—if we have Abraham's difficulties we also have Abram's encouragements.

Now, having thus shown you what this effectual calling is, and the obedience it brings, I would only remind you that Abram never stopped until he actually arrived at Canaan. And so a child of God, when effectually called by Divine Grace, never gets peace or rest until he lays hold on Jesus, and so by believing enters into rest. Abram may be held up as an example to us in obeying the

Divine call because he went at once. He did not pause to ask a single question. He was bid to go to Canaan, and to Canaan he went. He did his work very thoroughly—he set out for Canaan, and to Canaan he came. Having once left Haran, he did, as it were, burn the bridges behind him.

He had given up all thoughts of ever returning again. If he had wished to return, he could have done so, the Apostle tells us. But he had given up, forever, all his old associations. He was bound for the promised kingdom, and on to the kingdom and the unseen blessing would he speed. O that God's Spirit may call every one of us after this same fashion and give us Grace to be obedient in the same style and to declare that if we had to give up all we have, and even life itself, yet without hesitation it should be done, for Jesus leads the way!—

*“The God of Abraham praise,
At whose supreme command,
From earth I rise, and seek the joys
At His right hand.
I all on earth forsake,
Its wisdom, fame, and power,
And Him my only portion make,
My shield and tower.
He by Himself has sworn,
I on His oath depend.
I shall, on eagles' wings upborne,
To Heaven ascend.
I shall behold His face,
I shall His power adore,
And sing the wonders of His Grace
Forevermore.”*

For a minute, I beg you to observe the difference between the Lord's effectual call and those common calls which so many receive. Brethren, there are many here, I fear, who have been called to glory and immortality, but the calling was of man and by man. Perhaps some of us who are professors have been called not by the Grace of God, but by the eloquence of a speaker, or by the excitement of a revival meeting. Beware, I pray you, of that river whose source lies not at the foot of the Throne of God. Take care of that salvation which does not take its rise in the work of God the Holy Spirit, for only that which comes from Him will lead to Him. The work which does not spring from eternal love will never land us in eternal life.

The call of many men is such that when it comes to them they raise many questions as to whether they shall obey it or not. The Truth of God was earnestly and pathetically spoken, and they cannot help feeling somewhat of its power, but Lot's wife they look back and perish! Like Pliable, they travel as far as the Slough of Despond, but they like not the miry way and therefore they scamper out on the side nearest home and go back again to the City of Destruction. Many have I known who have had a call of a certain sort who have tried to go to Canaan and yet to stop at Haran. They would gladly serve God and yet live as they used to live.

They think it possible to be a Christian and yet to be a servant of the world! They attempt the huge impossibility of yoking the Lion of the tribe of Judah and the lion of the pit in the same chariot—and driving through the streets of life. Ah, Sirs, the call which comes from God brings a man right out—while the call which only comes to your fleshly nature leaves you with the rest of mankind, and will leave you there to be bound up in the same bundle with sinners and cast into the same fire! Many come out of Egypt but never arrive at Canaan. Like the children of Israel who left their

carcasses in the wilderness, their hearts are not sound towards the Lord. They start fairly, but the taste of the garlic and the onions lingers in their mouth and holds their minds by Egypt's fleshpots.

Like the planets, they are affected by two impulses—one would draw them to Heaven, but another would drive them off at a tangent to the world—and so they revolve, like the mill-horse, without making progress. They continue, still, to nominally fear the Lord and yet to serve other gods practically and in their hearts. Beware, dear Friends, of the call which makes you set out but does not lead you to hold out. Pray that this text may be true to you, "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and to the land of Canaan they came."

Do not be content with praying to be saved—never be satisfied until you are saved. Do not be content with trying to believe and trying to repent—come to Christ and both repent and believe—and give no slumber to your eyelids till you are a penitent Believer. Make a full and complete work of your believing! Strive not to reach the strait gate, but to enter it. For this you must have a call from the Lord of Heaven. I can call you as I have called many of you dozens of times, and you have gone a little way, and you have bid fair to go the whole way—but when your goodness has been as a morning cloud and as the early dew, it soon has been scattered and has gone. God grant you to receive the call of His Eternal Spirit, that you may be saved!

II. There are a few minutes remaining which I shall occupy by changing the subject. If our text may very well illustrate effectual calling, so may it PICTURE FINAL PERSEVERANCE. "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and to the land of Canaan they came." That is true of every child of God who is really converted and receives the faith of God's elect.

Oh, that miserable doctrine which says that the saints set out for Canaan but never reach the place! It is enough to make a Believer's life a very Hell upon earth! No matter how happy I might be, that doctrine would poison all my peace of mind. The doctrine which denies that the pilgrims to Glory go from strength to strength until every one of them in Zion appears before God, but which teaches that sheep of Christ may be torn by the wolves—that the stones in the spiritual temple may be scattered to the four winds, that the members of Christ may be torn away from His sacred body, and that the spouse of Christ may be mutilated—I say it shocks my reason, my experience, my faith, my entire spiritual nature!

I believe in the final perseverance of every man in whom the regenerating Grace of God has worked a change of nature. If he has been born of God he cannot die! If the living Seed is in Him the devil cannot destroy it, for it lives and abides forever! Because Christ lives, every Believer who is one with Jesus must live also! We set forth, then, to the land of Canaan, and, blessed be God, to the land of Canaan we shall come! God has purposed it. He purposes that the many sons should all be brought to Glory by the Captain of their salvation. And has He said it and shall He not do it? We shall reach our resting place, for the Armor-Bearer who leads the way is no other than Jesus Christ, the Covenant Angel, mighty to save! We shall be preserved, for round about us is a wall of fire, and above us is the shield of the Eternal and Immutable, even of Jehovah, whose love is everlasting!

The way shall not weary us—He shall give us shoes of iron and brass, and as our days so shall our strength be. The roughness of the road shall not cast us down—He will bear us as upon eagles' wings—He will give His angels charge over us, lest we dash our foot against a stone. The arrows of Hell shall not destroy us, for He gives us armor of proof—there shall no evil befall us. The snares of the devil shall not entrap us, for His wisdom shall surely make a way of escape out of every temptation that shall happen to His children. Glory be to God, it is not in the power of earth and Hell put together to stop a single one of the Lord's pilgrims from reaching the Celestial City!

"Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?" "I am persuaded that He which has begun a good work in you, will carry it on." "For the path of the just is as the shining light which shines more and more unto the perfect day."—

*"Each object of His love is sure
To reach the heavenly goal,
For neither sin nor Satan can
Destroy the blood-washed soul.
Satan may vex, and unbelief
The saved one may annoy,
But he must conquer; yes, as sure
As Jesus reigns in joy,
The precious blood of
God's dear Son
Shall never be spilt in vain!
The soul on Christ believing, must
With Christ forever reign."*

As you turn over this text, (this afternoon), I should like you to think of these three things—We have set forth for the land of Canaan—we know where we are going. Think much of your haven of rest. Study that precious Scripture which reveals the new Jerusalem. Be familiar with angelic harps. Come unto the general assembly and Church of the first-born. Let your Sabbath contemplations be of the everlasting Sabbath so soon to dawn.

In the next place, we know why we are going. We are going to Canaan because God has called us to go. He gives us strength to go and puts the life-force within us that makes us tend upward towards the eternal dwelling place, the happy harbor of the saints. And we know that we are going—that is another mercy. We do not hope we are going to Heaven, we know that we are going there! Christ is the road. The banner of love leads us. The fiery cloudy pillar of Providence directs us. The promise sustains us. The Holy Spirit dwells in us—of all this we are confident. Blessed be God, we doubt not these things!

Notice two or three thoughts in this text worth remembering. "They went forth." Energetic action! Men are not saved while they are asleep. No riding to Heaven on feather beds! "They went forth to the land of Canaan." Intelligent perception! They knew what they were doing. They did not go to work in a blundering manner, not understanding their drift. We must know Christ if we would be found in Him. It must be given us to look to Him, and trust to Him, understanding what is meant by so doing. Men are not to be saved through the blindness of an ignorant superstition. "They went forth to the land of Canaan, and to the land of Canaan they came." Firm resolution! They could put up with rebuffs, but they would not be put off from their resolves. They meant Canaan, and Canaan they would get. He that would be saved must take Heaven by violence. "To the land of Canaan they came." Perfect perseverance! "He that endures to the end, the same shall be saved." Not a spurt and a rest, but constant running wins the race. All these thoughts cluster around the one idea of final perseverance which the text brings out.

But, ah, dear Friends, how many there are who set out to go to Canaan, but unto Canaan they come not! Some are stopped by the first depression of spirits that they meet with. Like Pliable they run home with the mud of Despond on their boots. Others turn aside to self-righteousness. They follow the directions of Mr. Worldly Wiseman, and resort to Doctor Legality, or Mr. Civility—and Sinai falls upon them and crushes them. Some turn to the right hand with Hypocrisy, thinking that to pretend to be holy will be as good as being so. Others go on the left hand to Formality, imagining that sacraments and outward rites will be as effectual as inward purity and the work of the Spirit in their hearts.

Many fall down the silver mine where Demas broke his neck. Hundreds get into Despair's castle and leave their bones there because they will not trust Christ and so obtain eternal life. Some go

far, apparently, but, like Ignorance they never really go, and when they come to the river they perish at the very last. Some, like Turn-Away, become apostates, and are dragged away by the back door to Hell after all their professions. Some are frightened by the lions. Some are tempted by By-Path Meadow. Some would be saved but they must make a fortune. Many would be saved but they cannot bear to be laughed at.

Some would trust Christ, but they cannot endure His Cross. Many would wear the crown, but they cannot bear the labor by which they must attain it. Ah, you sons of men, you will turn aside to Madame Wanton, and to Madame Bubble! You will be bewitched with this, and that, and the other which ensures your destruction, but the beauties of the glorious Savior, the lasting joys, the real happiness which He has to give, these are too high for you! They are above you, and you reach not after them—or if you seek them for awhile, the dog returns to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

The stone thrown up mounts not to Heaven, for the attraction of earth brings it back again. O that God would be pleased to send Divine Grace into our hearts from His own Holy Spirit that we, too, might set out in the spirit of humility in confidence in Christ, in the power of the Spirit to the land of Canaan and to the land of Canaan may we truly come, and the Lord shall have the praise! Amen.