

We may profitably note how earnestly our Lord kept to his work. It was his business to preach, and he did preach; he was always preaching. "What," say you, "did he not work miracles?" Yes, but his miracles were sermons; they were acted discourses, full of instruction. He preached when he was on the mountain, he equally preached when he sat at table in the Pharisee's house. All his actions were significant; he preached by every movement. He preached when he did not speak; his silence was as eloquent as his words. He preached when he gave, and he preached when he received; he was preaching a sermon when he lent his feet to the woman that she might wash them with her tears and wipe them with the hairs of her head, quite as much as when he was dividing the loaves and the fishes and feeding the multitude. He preached by his patience before Pilate, for there he witnessed a good confession. He preached from the bloody tree; with hands and feet fastened there, he delivered the most wonderful discourse of justice and of love, of vengeance and of grace, of death and of life, that was ever preached in this poor world. Oh, yes, he preached wondrously, he was always preaching; with all his heart and soul he preached. He prayed that he might obtain strength to preach. He wept in secret that he might the more compassionately speak the word which wipes men's tears away. Always a preacher, he was always ready, in season and out of season, with a good word. As he walked the streets he preached as he went along; and if he sought retirement, and the people thronged him, he sent them not away without a gracious word. This was his one calling, and this one calling he pursued in the power of the eternal Spirit; and he liked it so well, and thought so much of it, that he trained his eleven friends to the same work and sent them out to preach as he had done; and then he chose seventy more for the same errand, saying, "As ye go preach the gospel." Did he shave the head of one of them to make him a priest? Did he decorate one of them with a gown, or a chasuble, or a biretta? Did he teach one of them to say mass—to swing a censer, or to elevate the host? Did he instruct one of them to regenerate children by baptism? Did he bring them up to chant in surplices and march in processions? No, those things he never thought of, and neither will we. If he had thought of them it would only have been with utter contempt, for what is there in such childish things? The preaching of the cross—this it is which is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us who are saved it is the wisdom of God, and the power of God; for it pleaseth God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Nor at the close of his