

Think you not that they were cruel, that their wrath was fierce, that their malignity was bitter and terrible? You even are offered at them too, wonder how there can be forgiveness for them. You too think that some reparation must be made to God, and His Majesty ere such insulters can be admitted to His favor and forgiveness.

But these, my friends, are only *representative* men. They alone are not the wicked ones of the human race. They, in this act of theirs, in this malignity of theirs, in this hate of theirs, in this savage outburst of offended pride, they are not alone, they are but representatives of the whole human race. What they did, others, had they been there, would have done. What they did, you, sinner, had you been there, would have done,—you would have spat as contemptuously, struck as fiercely, laughed as loudly, at the smiting of the Lord of Glory, as any there present. This very thing you have already done, and are doing, in your rebellion against God. True in your case it has not come to the same visibility; your malignity, your sin and hatred, and fierce enmity have not been thus brought forth in palpable form and manifestation; yet not the less does it exist, and not the less has it been practised; not the less have you mocked God, struck at God, insulted, dared Him, and as far as in you lay, done that to God these men did. Ah! but you cannot see that.

But come sinner! and come too, O believer! and here, at the foot of the cross of Christ, behold the malignity, and hatred of the human heart,—its hatred of God,—its deep and fierce enmity towards Him,—“for the carnal mind is enmity against God,”—its savage enmity, persecuting the Lord of Glory even to the very gates of death, with suffering, taunt and mockery unparalleled! You see this hatred here, at the foot of the cross, you see it coming forth into visible shape, taking form and substance.

But now some will plead these mockers and murderers of the Lord did not know it was God they were thus mocking. Nor, did you believer, know that you were mocking and insulting and smiting with your fist at God. And alas! that it should be so, that such excellence appeared on earth—such a glorious Being as God manifest in the flesh, and yet men knew him not. And will it avail to say they knew Him not? This is adding crime to crime; “that light came into the world, and that the world should not know it.” And you know not, you say, that it was God you were smiting at, that you hated, that you were wroth against. Ah! but that will avail you nothing. It only adds to your sin.

And you too, in your rebellion, were in the same offence. You too were in the same condemnation. True indeed, Christ cannot be coming in human form to every sinner, to bring out into visible form and shape the malignity of each sinner in particular. It was enough that He has shown it to exist in the human heart; not in some solitary breast, not in the breasts of an isolated and unknown people, but in the breasts of the most favoured of nations. He has