

He said to his son, "Amos! have you committed a wrong action for every one of these nails? "Yes, father," said Amos. The father said sorrowfully, "What a bad boy you must be, Amos! Why will you not turn about and try to be a good boy?" Amos remained thoughtful for a few moments, and then said, "Father, I will try; I have been altogether too bad; I will try to be a better boy!" His father said, "Take the hammer, and for every good act you do, draw out a nail, and put it into your keg." In a few weeks the boy came again to his father, and said, "Come, father, and see the nails in the keg again. For every good act I have done, I have pulled out a nail. See, the keg is full again." "I am glad of it, my son. But Amos! the holes are left; the holes are left."

What did he mean, my young friends? Why, he just meant this, that the holes were the marks, or the stains of his sins, and that they remained, notwithstanding all his good actions, to attest his guilt, and to speak against him. You can never, by all your good deeds—what you may consider good, but God