

A BLAST OF THE TRUMPET AGAINST FALSE PEACE.

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"Peace, peace, when there is no peace."—Jer. vi, 14.

Ministers are fearfully guilty if they intentionally build up men in a false peace. I cannot imagine any man more greatly guilty of blood than he who plays jackal to the lion of hell, by pandering to the depraved tastes of vain, rebellious man. The physician who should pamper a man in his disease, who should feed his cancer, or inject continual poison into the system, while at the same time he promised sound health and long life—such a physician would not be one half so hideous a monster of cruelty as the professed minister of Christ who should bid his people take comfort, when, instead thereof, he ought to be crying, "Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion: be troubled, ye careless ones." The work of the ministry is no child's play; it is a labour which might fill an angel's hands—did fill the Saviour's heart. Much prayer we need that we may be kept honest, and much grace that we may not mislead the souls whom we are bound to guide. The pilot who should pretend to steer a ship toward its proper haven, but who should meanwhile occupy himself below with boring holes in her keel that she might sink, would not be a worse traitor than the man who takes the helm of a church, and professes to be steering it towards Christ, while all the while he is ruining it by diluting the truth as it is in Jesus, concealing unpalatable truths, and lulling men into security with soft and flattering words. We might sooner pardon the assassin who stretches forth his hand under the guise of friendship, and then stabs us to the heart, than we could forgive the man who comes towards us with smooth words, telling us that he is God's ambassador, but all the while fomenting rebellion in our hearts, and pacifies us while we are living in revolt against the majesty of heaven. In the great day when Jehovah shall launch his thunderbolts, methinks he will reserve one more dread and terrible than the rest, for some such traitor to the cross of Christ, who has

not only destroyed himself, but led others into hell.

The motive with these false prophets is an abominable one. Jeremiah tells us it was an evil covetousness. They preached smooth things because the people would have it so; because they thus brought grist to their own mill, and glory to their own names. Their design was abominable, and without doubt, their end shall be desperate—cast away with the refuse of mankind. These who professed to be the precious sons of God, comparable to fine gold, shall be esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter.

But, my dear hearers, it is a lamentable fact, that without any hireling-shepherd to cry, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," men will cry that for themselves. They need not the syren song to entice them to the rocks of presumption and rash confidence. There is a tendency in their own hearts to put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter—to think well of their evil estate and foster themselves in proud conceit. No man is ever too severe with himself. We hold the scales of justice with a very unsteady hand when our character is in the balance. We are too ready to say, "I am rich and increased in goods," when at the same time we are naked, and poor, and miserable. Let men alone, let no deluder seek to deceive them, hush for ever every false and tempting voice, they will themselves, impelled by their own pride, run to an evil conceit, and make themselves at ease, though God himself is in arms against them.

My solemn business this morning shall be, and O may God help me in it, to drag forth to the light some of you who have been pacifying your own consciences, and have been crying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

It is no uncommon thing with me to meet with people who say, "Well, I am happy enough. My conscience never troubles me. I believe if I were to die I should go