

my sister, I do not say do not be ambitious, but I do say, in your calling be faithful and diligent. "Seest thou a man diligent in his business," says the proverb; "he shall stand before kings—he shall not stand before mean men." And if you want the call of God in the Gospel to surely and certainly settle on your head, be on hand when the call is made, be on hand when the offer is given.

I want to say a word about non-church-going. Man, you are playing the devil's game, and he is winning with that trump every time, since he got you to give up going to hear God's Gospel preachers, and since he made you think there is nothing in it. It is a lie, deep as hell; there is everything in it. Be a man, be faithful, be diligent, use all opportunities; do not miss such a splendid chance when it is going; you may rue with every vein in your heart to all eternity—the bad use to which you put the splendid opportunities that London gives for *being saved*, with all its badness and wickedness. Notwithstanding all, there is the Gospel, and God is behind it, and His offer is sincere; therefore, quit your careless ways and be on hand, be in the market when the marketing in heavenly merchandise is going on.

David got it because he was there to get it; and, last of all, *because he took it*. You can imagine David being just like the rest, and saying to Samuel, "I beg to decline. Really, Samuel, you have landed upon me too suddenly; don't you see, prophet, I have no time to think of this? I was out there keeping sheep, and I was suddenly called in; and here you are going to make me king, with all that that involves. I have no ambition that way; it is not for me; give it to Eliab"—I think they all thought Eliab was the man—"and let me go away back again."

"The pride the devil loves best to see,
Is the pride that apes humility."

Do not hang back and say, "It is not for me." Do not look on my face and say, "But, McNeill, man, have mercy on a fellow!" Almost unconsciously you say, "I came in to-night off the Strand, and never expected to be bombarded after this fashion. If you had only given me notice as to the lines you were going to take—really, I will need to go home and think over this." Don't. It does not need thinking over. Just as you are, and where you are, do what David did. I think there is nothing more splendid. It shows the *reach* of that young stipling's heart and mind, that when this was sprung upon him, he rose to the occasion. It was well done on both sides. Samuel did well, and David did well when he bowed his head and let the dignity and the honor with all the risk and peril, for a time

come down upon him. He stooped to conquer! So we all overcome our obstacles in connection with the acceptance of the Gospel. Do not take it home to think about it. The chances are—and here the parable of the sower comes in—that as surely as you go out into the Strand undecided, the devil will pick your pocket of my invitation and call to come to Christ. For many of us are like the wayside hearers. "The fowls of the air came," says Christ, "and picked up the seed." Before you get many blocks along the Strand, the devil with his black wing will have swept your mind bare and empty of every honest appeal that I have made to you to-night. He will, he does it; wherever the Gospel is preached, the devil is there you may be sure. Do not take it into further consideration; but I am here to-night to make an honest offer: "Whosoever will, let him take the Son of God freely." "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." Do what young David did; although it spring upon you, although you did not expect it, and although it seems to interfere with your other engagements, perhaps for to-night and for to-morrow. Ah! I know what is keeping some of you from yielding to my grip—for I have a grip of you by the heart, and by the conscience to-night. "Wot ye not that such a man as I am can certainly divine?" I have got you by the truth of God, I have grappled you to me as with a hook of steel, but the devil is whispering in your ear, "That engagement to-morrow night, it will break that—what are you to do about that?" *Put thy foot on that if thou wouldst be saved.* "That man you have to meet, that guilty assignation you have to meet—what about that?" says the devil. *The harlot's face comes up before your eyes.* God grant that may see the paint, and be sickened and disgusted; and, glad that you are here, clutch at my offer, and believe me, He into whose service you come to-night will stand by you to-night, will stand by you to-morrow. Break all your own engagements; allow all your own plans, your lawful plans as well as the unlawful ones—let them go to the winds. Christ has a plan for you, Christ has a purpose for you; it will catch you; and lift you; and will carry you forward to all eternity.

Ah! this great day that came to David did bring him trial, it did bring him trouble, it did bring him suffering. He was not called to the throne, nor after that to the skies,

"On flowery beds of ease;"

but he was kept, he was sustained, he came to the kingdom, and he came to the Eternal Kingdom in the fullness of time also. There were dark days when poor David was hunted among the hills, when he might have said