

When a man builds a house, the thing of chief importance is the *foundation*. Mistakes in the shape of the house, in the size of the rooms, or the colors of the paint, &c., can be corrected; but if the *foundation* is insecure, there is neither comfort nor safety in occupying ever so convenient a house.

The folly of the man who builds a house on the sand is used by our blessed Saviour to show the greater folly of him who does not hear and obey the instructions of the Gospel. As the winds and storms will surely bring such a house to ruin, so any hope of salvation will be, sooner or later, swept away, which does not rest on faith in Christ, and obedience to His holy laws. Hear his words:—

“And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.” Matt. vii. 26, 27.

#### “If I could only see my Mother.”

“If I could only see my mother!”

Again and again was that yearning cry repeated,—

“If I could only see my mother!”

The vessel rocked, and the waters, chased by a fresh wind, played musically against the side of the ship. The sailor, a second mate, quite youthful, lay in his narrow bed, his eye glazing, his limbs stiffening, his breath failing. It was not pleasant to die thus in this shaking, plunging ship; but he seemed not to mind his bodily comfort; his eye looked far away, and ever and anon broke forth that grieving cry,—

“If I could only see my mother!”

An old sailor sat by, the Bible in his hand, from which he had been reading. He bent above the young man, and asked him why he was so anxious to see the mother he had so willfully left.

“Oh, that’s the reason,” he cried in anguish; “I’ve nearly broken her heart, and I can’t die in peace. She was a good mother to me—Oh, so good a mother she bore everything from her wild boy, and once she said, ‘My son, when you come to die, you will remember this.’ Oh, if I could only see my mother!”

He never saw his mother. He died with that cry upon his lips, as many a one has died who has slighted the mother who loved him.

#### Why I attend Church on rainy Sabbaths.

1. Because God has blessed the Sabbath and hallowed it, making no exception for rainy Sabbaths.

2. Because I expect *my minister* to be there: I should be surprised if he were to stay at home for the weather.

3. Because, if his hands fall through weakness, I shall have great reason to blame myself, unless I sustain him by my prayers and my presence.

4. Because, by staying away, I may lose the sermon that would have done me great good, and the prayers which bring God’s blessing.

5. Because my presence is more needed on Sabbaths when there are few, than on those days when the church is crowded.

6. Because, whatever station I hold in the church, my example must influence others: if I stay away why may not they.

7. Because, on any important business, bad weather does not keep me at home; and church attendance is in God’s sight, very important. See Heb. x: 25.

8. Because among the crowds of pleasure seekers, I see that no bad weather keeps the delicate female from the ball, the party, or the concert.

9. Because, among other blessings, such weather will show me on what foundation my faith is built. It will prove how much I love Christ: true love rarely fails to keep an appointment.

10. Because those who stay from church because it is too warm, or too cold, or too rainy, frequently absent themselves on fair Sabbaths.

11. Because, though my excuses satisfy myself, they still must undergo God’s scrutiny; and they must be well-grounded to bear that. Luke xiv: 18.

12. Because there is a *special* promise, that where two or three meet together in God’s name, he will be in the midst of them.

13. Because an avoidable absence from church is an infallible evidence of spiritual decay. Disciples first follow Christ at a distance, and then, like Peter, do not know him.

14. Because my faith is to be known by my self-denying, Christian life, and not by the rise or fall of the thermometer.

15. Because such yielding to surmountable difficulties prepares for yielding to those merely imaginary, until thousands never enter a church, and yet think they have good reason for such neglect.

16. Because, by a suitable arrangement on Saturday, I shall be able to attend church without exhaustion; otherwise my late work on Saturday night will be as great a sin as though I worked on the Sabbath itself.

17. Because I know not how many more Sabbaths God may give me; and it would be a poor preparation for my first Sabbath in heaven to have slighted my last Sabbath on earth.