

one. They had heard in other days that their nation was going to be lifted up to a high pinnacle of greatness and prosperity. In a word, their minds were taken up with the same sort of things that your minds are taken up with—the things of the world. The result was, that when Jesus set before them the thing which they really did want, they turned their backs upon it. "We do not want eternal life; we want temporal glory instead," they said. "If you feed on Me, you shall never hunger," Jesus said; and their answer was, "Keep your gift!" And so they turned their back upon Him.

And what is it that keeps people away from Christ now? The self same thing. I sometimes think that the Mission preacher is able deeply to enter into the feelings of our Lord upon this matter. I do not for a moment say that all go away unblest,—I make no such general assertion; but I cannot help fearing that many rush away as if afraid of getting a blessing. Many are in the same condition of soul, and under the same influence, that induced the Jews to turn their backs on "the Light of the world." I conclude my sermon, and what happens? Eight hundred people go away. I watch them going, and I have to ask myself, What feelings now possess them as they go? I can do nothing but ask: How many belong to that class who put themselves out of the road of blessing by turning their backs on Christ? I watch the throng diminishing, until we have only a hundred out of the seven or eight hundred. Then comes our after-meeting, when another invitation is given. Perhaps we ask them to come forward; perhaps we make another arrangement. In some places we may have fifty or a hundred remain, perhaps ten, perhaps one or two; but in every place I have to ask myself, "Out of all that come to hear me preach, how few there are who determine to have the blessed gift which God has for them?"

I will suppose that in this church to-night there will be thirty or forty who may remain; but even among that number how many will there be, who, when asked to receive God's gift, will be so filled with their own dreams and fancies that they will not grasp it! By-and-by, perhaps, out of the seven hundred you have the joy of believing that some five or six, or eight or ten, or ten or twenty, are taking Christ at His word and receiving the gift. What has He done for the rest? Ah, what will become of the rest? We gaze on the receding multitude, and again we think of the preciousness of every soul. O souls of men and women, let me plead with you! What is there in the marred countenance of Jesus that will repel you? What is there in the sight of those wounded hands to thrust you away from the feast of everlasting life? What is there in the words He speaks

to drive you away? Come there not from His dying lips the words, "Will ye also go away?" Others have gone, but will ye? The Saviour asks the same question He did of old. He looks at men and women as He then did upon men and women who might be enjoying the full privileges of God's house, and rejoicing in the presence of all His people. He looks at each of you, and asks, "Will ye also go away?"

My friends, let us not lose the special word, "*also*." It is the very thing your forefathers have done that you do. If I were to go into the churchyard, and call the sleeping dead from their tombs, and let them bear their testimony, would it not be, "Take care! Beware of *my* sin—the bane of my life, the guilt of my past! The deep, damning sin above all is this, that I turned my back upon Him who called me, that I spurned His counsel, that I despised His salvation when it was brought to my very door, and now I am doomed! I have lost my opportunity for ever!"

Or, again, if I were to preach to-night one such sermon to such a congregation, and give such an address as I have given to you, and say, "Ye need not go away, for there is One here ready to receive you." Oh, with what a shout of acclaim would the offer be accepted! But their day is past. There is a force in that word "*also*," which ought not to be lost sight of. My friends, are there not enough down yonder in the dark? Are there not enough who have lived simply to buy and sell, to be married and given in marriage? Are there not enough who have lived the sinful life already described, and found it end in eternal doom? Will ye also go away? Are you coming, or are you going? To whom will you go? It is your soul that is going. Will you go to the world? Ah! you have tried it already. It was filled with broken cisterns that held no water. Will you fall back upon *indifference*—that rock upon which so many have foundered?

My friends, the awful moment of awakening is before you. You may succeed in driving the Holy Spirit from your bosom; you may succeed in losing your day of grace; but the awful hour will come when the realities of eternity will stand before your vision, and there will be an end of your apathy when you stand in the judgment. To whom then shall we go? Shall we go to *nominal religion*? Have we not had enough of that already? What profit has it been? What good has it done? Has it answered the deepest cravings of my being? Why should I die of starvation, when there is bread enough, and to spare? Why should I put up with the darkness of the shadow, when God Himself offers to be my light? Why go away unsatisfied, when all the time the Bread of Life is within your reach? You have but to stretch