

Well did Melancthon say, "Old Adam was too strong for young Melancthon." As well might a little child seek to "compel" a Samson, as I seek to lead a sinner to the Cross of Christ. And yet my Master sends me about the errand. Lo! I see before me the great mountain of human depravity and stolid indifference, but by faith I cry, "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." Does my Master say, "compel them to come in?" Then, though the sinner be like Samson and I a child, I shall lead him with a thread. If God saith, "do it," if I attempt it "in faith, it shall be done;" and if with a groaning, struggling, and weeping heart, I so seek this day to compel sinners to come to Christ, the sweet compulsions of the Holy Spirit shall go with every word, and some indeed shall be compelled to come in.

II. And now to the work—directly to the work. Unconverted, unreconciled, unregenerate men and women, I am to "COMPEL YOU TO COME IN." Permit me first of all to accost you in "the highways" of sin, and tell you over again my errand. The God of grace this day sends a gracious invitation to you. He says, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but rather that he should turn unto me and live;" Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Dear brothers, it makes my heart rejoice to think that I should have such good news to tell you; and yet I confess my soul is heavy, because I see you do not think it good news but turn away from it, and do not give it due regard. Permit me to tell you what the Lord has done for you. He knew your guilt. He foresaw that you would ruin yourself. He knew that His justice would demand your life; and in order that this difficulty might be escaped—that His justice might have its full due, and that you might yet be saved, "Jesus Christ hath died." Will you just for a moment glance at this picture. You see that man there on his knees, in the garden of Gethsemane, sweating drops of blood. You see this next; you see that sufferer tied to a pillar and lashed with terrible scourges, till the shoulder bones are seen in the midst

of a sea of blood. Again you see this third picture: it is the same being, hanging on the cross, with hands extended, and with feet nailed fast, groaning, bleeding, dying; and worst of all, you see him forsaken of God, and enduring the righteous vengeance of heaven for sins not his own; methought the picture spoke and said, "It is finished." Now all this hath Jesus Christ of Nazareth suffered, in order that God, consistently with his justice, might pardon sin; and the message to you this day is this—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." That is, trust him—renounce thy works and thy ways, and set thine heart alone on this mighty Saviour, who gave himself for sinners.

Well, brother, I have told you the message; what sayest thou unto it? Do you turn away? You tell me it is nothing to you; you cannot listen to it; that you will hear me by-and-by; but this day you will go your ways, and attend to your farm and merchandise. Stop, brother; I was not told merely to tell you, and then go about my business. No; I am told "to compel you to come in;" and permit me to observe to you before I go further, that there is one thing I can say—and to which God is my witness this day—that I am in earnest with you in my desire that you should comply with this command of God. You may despise your own salvation, but I do not despise it. You may go away and forget what you hear, but you will please to remember that the things I now say, cost me many a groan ere I came here to utter them. My inmost soul is speaking out to you, my poor brother, when I beseech you by Him "that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore," consider my Master's message, which he bids me now address to you.

But do you spurn it? Do you still refuse it? Then I must change my tone a minute. I will not merely tell you the message, and invite you, as I do with all earnestness and sincere affection—I will go further. "Sinner in God's name, I COM-MAND you to repent and believe." Do you ask me whence my authority? I am an ambassador of heaven. My credentials, some of them secret, and in my own heart; and others of them open before you this day in the seals of my ministry, sitting and standing in this hall, where God has given