

jects in which men are deeply interested, and with which they are personally concerned—the lost state of man by nature, the injury to himself, the dishonour to God, the danger to which he exposes himself by sin, the infinitely tender compassion and love of God, the perfect salvation which He has provided in Christ Jesus, the help of His grace through the appointed means, the assistance and illumination of His Holy Spirit, the blessed hope of the second coming in glory of our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, the unshakable truth of His Holy Word, alike in its threats and promises; and all these as matters of our own personal experience, and pressed home upon the consciences of our people, so that some shall cry out, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved? and others shall find the word sweet to their taste, while with all the word of the Lord shall have free course and be glorified. We are ever to keep in mind that we are to be, even as the Apostle Paul was, “A sweet Saviour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the savour of death, unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life.” Well may we, under the influence of so momentous a thought, exclaim with him “And who is sufficient for these things!” Sure I am the more all this sinks deeply into our souls, so that we are filled with it, and out of the abundance of our hearts, our mouths do speak, we shall have the joyful experience of saying, as he does in another place, “Our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able Ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter but of the spirit for the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life.” To be ourselves spiritually quickened, and daily renewed by His Holy Spirit, will be the secret source of such power in our preaching as will constrain the hearers to receive it, “not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh in them that believe.”

I have seen notices occasionally in the newspapers of what is called “a movement to provide pleasant Sunday afternoons for the people.” Every sensible man, one would think, would approve and whatever effort might be made by any to relieve the weekly day of rest of any gloom or sadness, and especially to deliver the masses of our population from the amusements of the beer saloon, with their tendency to end in drunkenness and other sins, or from the idleness which is so often Satan’s opportunity for leading men into mischief. It may be a question with some whether the opening of museums and picture galleries in the afternoons of the Lord’s day (on which a debate has recently taken place in the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, initiated by the Bishop of Rochester, who presented a petition to that body in favor of such a course) would be for good or evil; and whether concerts of sacred music and lectures upon scientific and other subjects of common interest and knowledge would be beneficial or no. But what I am concerned about is the keeping of our Churches and Chapels for the purpose for which they were built, namely: the worship of God and the instruction of the people in divine things, a *holy* place, which may sensibly impart its special peculiarity of holiness to our common every day life, and lift that to a higher level which of itself has ever a tendency to sink to a lower. Believe me, it is my profound conviction, you will not make people recognize the sacredness of so-called secular things, by having concerts and scientific or historical lectures in the House of God, but will rather thereby secularise religion itself; while the more strictly the Church building is kept for its special use and purpose only, will its spirit infect our means of amusement and instruction.

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