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My brothers in Christ:

In thinking over what message I might bring you this evening I decided that it would be most appropriate to present for your example and encouragement one of the Old Testament prophets, namely Amos. You will find much in the life and teachings of Amos that is similar to your own situation and much that should inspire you to go forward with determination and without fear. Amos was not a man who was in religious work because his father had been or because it was the profession to which he had been born and trained. He was a herdsman on the fields of Tekoa and there God called him to go and prophecy to the people of Israel. He himself declares that he was not a prophet nor the son of a prophet but one whom the Lord took from other work and called to be his messenger. (Amos 7:14, 15).

The Old Testament prophet was a man who spoke for God. He declared the message which God desired His people should hear. A large part of his work consisted in calling them to obedience to what had already been given on the written word of God but the Old Testament prophet had a special function which made him a prophet. It was the call to receive his message directly from the hand of God and to speak to the people as the direct mouth piece of God. In this respect you cannot expect to be like the Old Testament prophet. With the completion of the giving of the Bible, God ceased to speak directly through human beings. His message to us is complete in written form. You can speak just as truly God's message as Amos did. You can speak with as much authority but your message will not come directly from God, but will be mediated through His established Word.

An outstanding feature of the prophecy of Amos is the compulsion which he felt to deliver God's message. God had called him and he could not refuse. All the ecclesiastical pressure of his day was brought to bear upon him to silence him. Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, ordered him to cease speaking (Amos 7:12, 13) but Amos was speaking for God. He refused to be silenced because of the commands of Apostate ecclesiastical dignitaries (Amos 3:8). He cried "The lion hath roared, who will not fear, the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophecy." That same compulsion was upon him which was upon Paul who cried out "Woe is me if I