

MOODY'S LATEST SERMONS

AUTHORIZED EDITION PRINTED FROM VERBATIM REPORTS

by Dwight L. Moody

Copyright @ 1900

THE MOODY PRESS Chicago

SERMON FOUR -

FOUR QUESTIONS FROM GOD

I WANT to call your attention to four questions that GOD has put: the first question ever put to man, "**Where art thou?**" the first question ever put to woman, "**What is this that thou hast done?**" the question put to Cain, "**Where is... thy brother?**" and the question put to Elijah, "**What doest thou here?**"

"WHERE ART THOU?"

A man said to me, "How do you know that GOD put that question to Adam?"

The best answer I can give is, Because He has put it to me many a time. I doubt whether there ever has been a son or a daughter of Adam who has not heard that voice ringing through their souls many a time. Who am I? What am I? Where am I going? So let us put the question to ourselves personally, "Where am I?" - not in the sight of man; that is of very little account; but where am I in the sight of GOD? - that is the question.

Adam ought to have been the first seeker. Adam ought to have gone up and down Eden crying: "My GOD, my GOD, where art THOU? I have sinned. I have fallen."

But GOD, then, as now, took the place of the seeker. No man, from the time that Adam fell down to the present hour, ever thought of seeking GOD until GOD first sought for him. "**The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost,**" I believe that the Son of Man who uttered those words is the same whose voice was heard back there in Eden, Adam, "**Where art thou?**" For six thousand years GOD has been seeking for man.

In the fifteenth chapter of Luke there are three parables just to teach us that GOD is the seeker.

- It was not the sheep that was seeking the shepherd; it was the shepherd going out into the desert to hunt until he found the lost sheep.
- It was not that piece of silver seeking the woman; it was the woman seeking for the lost piece of silver.

Those parables are given to teach us that GOD is the great Seeker. If you can discover yourself and find out who you are, and what you are, that will be the greatest discovery you can ever

make. That is what the prodigal did when he came to himself - he found out who he was.

Most of us live away from home. We are hiding as Adam did in the bushes of Eden. There was a time when GOD's voice thrilled Adam's soul with joy and gladness, and he thrilled GOD's heart with joy. They lived in sweet fellowship with each other. GOD had lifted Adam to the very gates of Heaven, and had made him Lord over all creation. I haven't a doubt that He had plans to raise Adam still higher - higher than the angels, higher than seraphim and cherubim, higher than Gabriel, who stands in the presence of JEHOVAH, and Michael, the archangel. But the man turned and became a traitor to Him who wanted to bless him.

"WHAT HAST THOU DONE?"

Now look for a moment to see what GOD said to the woman. **"What is this that thou has done?"**

What had she done? She had disobeyed. She had turned from the fountain of life to the fountain of death, and drank from that fountain. She had introduced sin into this world, and GOD let her live long enough on the face of the earth to see what she had done. The first child that was born after the fall was a murderer. Bear in mind that sin leaped into this world full grown. The woman had gained for herself a fallen nature, and she transmitted it to her posterity. She lived nearly a thousand years if she lived as long as Adam, and had a chance to see something of the untold woe and misery she had introduced into this world.

Look at the wretchedness and agony caused by sin in all our great cities! We don't have to go back into history or into other lands to see what Eve did when she introduced sin into this world.

What hast thou done? It was a terrible thing to turn away from the living GOD to the enemy of all righteousness; but, thank GOD, right then and there He put a lamp of promise in her hand. The only ray of hope that shone forth for two thousand years, as far as we know, was the hope GOD gave then when He said that He would put enmity between the woman's seed and the serpent, and while it should bruise His heel, He should bruise the serpent's head. Thank GOD for that promise!

JESUS CHRIST, the purest being who ever came to this earth to save mankind, was crucified. I believe if Gabriel should come down from Heaven with all the glory of that upper world, and try to save men, they would try to blacken his character inside of a week. The ungodly do not like the godly. The impure do not like the pure. There is enmity still. Men may cavil and discuss as much as they like, but there is the fact. GOD's prediction is fulfilled. The serpent shall have its head bruised, and every man of us should do all he can to bruise it. Our worst enemy is sin.

"WHERE IS THY BROTHER?"

But I come to the third question: **"Where is... thy brother?"**

Here is a young man. He is the only son of a widowed mother, whose husband died and left her bankrupt. She has toiled hard to give her son an education. She has watched over him with the tenderest care, and he leaves home with high hopes of being a comfort and blessing to that

mother in her declining years. He has gone down to college, and, as is so often said, he is "easily influenced." If he is easily influenced for bad, why not for good! Somebody has tempted him, and has led him into sins of which he had never dreamed. He has fallen into the depths of wickedness, and is fast reaping the wages of sin.

Many a young man has gone from a home like that, and before his college course has closed has been put into his coffin and sent back to his mother. Where is thy brother? where is he? Is your answer going to be like that of Cain: "**Am I my brother's keeper?** What is that to me? I have nothing to do with Abel. I shift the responsibility. I deny that am responsible for anyone. I mind my own business, and let every man mind his. I am not going to take any interest in that man"?

In a western city, some years ago, they tried to get a very influential merchant to throw his influence against the saloon. He was a temperance man and had a lovely family, but he thought it might affect his business if he should identify himself with prohibitionists. He had influence enough to have carried that town for no license; but he said it was none of his business, and would not interfere. The town voted for license.

A few months later he went to the station, with his carriage and his footman, to get his wife and daughter, who were coming from the East. The train failed to arrive, and soon it flashed over the wires that there had been a wreck, and that this man's wife and daughter were dead. When they came to make an investigation they found that the engineer was drunk.

Was it none of that man's business whether or not liquor was sold?

Some years ago a man living on the banks of a lake, one cold night when the thermometer was below zero, heard a cry of distress. A man out skating had gone through the ice, and it is supposed that he had got hold of the ice, and kept his head above the water, and called for help. the man heard his cries, but said:

"It is none of my business. It is a cold night, and I don't want to get up and go out. No one had any business to go out there skating, anyway."

The cries became fainter and fainter, and finally ceased. The next day the body was found. The man was foolish enough to tell what he had heard, and that whole population rose up in indignation and hounded him out of town. They said he wasn't fit to live among them.

Every one would say, "That is true" and yet is he any worse than one who will see a young man go down through drink, and not lift his hand to help him? Where is thy brother?

There is a story told of a great storm on the coast. The life boat was being manned, and a mother came rushing down to the shore to find that her boy was going out in it. She cried:

"My boy, it will kill me to have you go. You know you are all I have left. Willie was lost at sea. Don't go."

But there was the wreck out there, and men on the wreck, and he felt compelled to go and rescue his fellow men. The mother saw that boat rise and fall on the billows, and it seemed as if the

storm would dash it to pieces, and all would be lost.

At last they reached the wreck, and rescued the men. That mother listened, and looked out into the storm that seemed to be raging harder and harder. By and by the boat came near enough so that the son could call to his mother. He put his hand to his mouth, and cried:

"Mother, I've saved Willie!"

His own brother, whom they thought was lost, was on board.

Oh friends, have you ever tried to save anyone? I do not ask you if you have succeeded, but have you ever tried? GOD pity the man who never tried to save anyone! GOD pity him! If you haven't. Make up your mind to-day that you will do it. Wouldn't you like to have the joy that they have in Heaven over someone that repents? What a grand day this would be if you could be the instrument in GOD's hands of turning someone from darkness to light, and from the power of sin unto GOD!

You can join with Cain and say, "**Am I my brother's keeper?**" But, thank GOD, you can do something better than that. You can say, "By the help of GOD I will save someone, and my life shall not be a failure."

I was on the *Spre* when the shaft broke and knocked a hole in the ship's bottom. The stem sank thirty feet in mid ocean, and for a whole week, if a storm had burst upon us, we would have gone down. One man was so bewildered and terrified that he jumped overboard. I remember how wretched I felt to think I couldn't help him, to see him left out there in mid ocean, head above the waves, looking at us. The passengers took life preservers and whatever they could find, and threw them to him, but all fell short. I never forgot the look of that man; it has followed me all these years. But what would you have said of me, if the life-line had laid right at my feet and I had refused to throw it to him? What would you say?

O, friends, the life-line lies at our feet. Men are sinking all around us. Let us throw out the life-line!

A father was told one day by a friend his boy had got into bad company and was drinking. The father wouldn't believe a word of it, and was quite indignant with the man for telling him. But one night he thought he would wait until his son came in.

It came to the small hours of the morning - it was a cold night in winter - and he heard someone trying to get the key into the door; he went to the door and found it was his boy, drunk. He shut the door in his face and told him never to come back to the house; he was a disgrace to him.

Then he went to bed and tried to sleep, but his conscience rose up and smote him. The thought came, "Have I ever tried to save my boy? I have often put strong drink before him on my table. Have I ever talked to him about a better life? Have I ever told him of a Saviour?"

The man got up and dressed himself, and went out on that cold night. He found the policeman on the beat, and hunted until he found the drunken son, and brought him home. When the boy was

sober the father confessed he hadn't done right himself, and asked his boy to forgive him. The result was the boy was saved.

Do you know if anyone is stumbling over you? You have been a professed Christian for many years, and you never have spoken to anyone about his soul. You have seen them go down all around you. Where is thy brother? Perhaps a letter written to him to-day may save him. Ask him to forgive you for not having spoken to him before, for not throwing out the life-line before. If he is easily influenced, say:

"GOD helping me, I will influence him to be good and to be right."

"WHAT DOEST THOU HERE?"

Elijah was out of communion with GOD. Elijah that was once so bold had become a coward. Elijah that had been up to this hour so successful, had taken his eyes off of his Master, and had fled out into the desert and sat down under the juniper tree and wished himself dead.

Some of you may have become discouraged and disheartened. You haven't had the success often you expected to have in Christian work. You have got your eyes off of the Master, and you have fled out into the desert, and you are trying to live a sort of hermit life. My dear friends, what we want, it seems to me, is to get right into the heat of battle and stay there until the Master calls us home. I would rather die than to outlive my usefulness. I would rather have the summons come right now than to live and not to be used of GOD. I cannot conceive of a greater calamity coming upon Elijah, the man often had been so wonderfully used, than to die there discouraged and disheartened. I would like to die in the harness.

One of Scotland's great preachers has brought out this thought:

"The wanderer was alone, yet not alone. A voice he could neither mistake nor misinterpret had sounded in his ears the thrilling question, "**What doest thou here, Elijah?**" Every syllable was pregnant with meaning and with rebuke. **'What doest thou here?'**

Life (and none should know better than thee) is a great doing; not hermit inaction, inglorious repose. **'What doest thou here?'**, - thou, my vicegerent in these degenerate days - thou whom I have honored above thy fellows, and who hast had proof upon proof of my faithfulness? **'What doest thou here'** - here in this desolate spot; away from duty; the Baal altars rebuilding; my own altar in ruins; the sword of persecution unsheathed, and the bleating flock left by thee, coward shepherd, to the ravening wolf?

'What doest thou here, Elijah' Thy very name rebukes thee! Where is GOD, thy strength? Where are the prayers and vows of Carmel? Child of weakness, belying thy name and destiny, **'What-doeest-thou-here?'**"

At this time Elijah missed the opportunity of his life, it never returned to him again. GOD permitted him to cast his mantle on Elisha, but when he came to the very place where GOD would have used him mightily, he fled like a coward. Many of us miss grand opportunities. If GOD calls you to some service, do not stop to discuss whether it is a higher service or not; leave

that to Him. If GOD calls you, say, "**Here am I; send me.**"

"**What doest thou here?**" Are you out of communion with GOD? Has some cursed sin come in and separated you from GOD, and your life is like a blasted tree in the desert without any power? If so, ask Him to forgive you. Return with your whole heart unto Him, and He will use you mightily.

~ end of chapter 4 ~
