

GOSPEL SERMONS

as

Sam P. Jones

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SERMON SEVEN

WALKING WITH CHRIST

We invite your attention to three words to be found in the first verse of the eighth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. I will read the whole verse:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”

These are the three words: **“In Christ Jesus . . . who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.”**

In the verses of the preceding chapter, Paul goes into a psychological analysis of the law of God and its bearings upon the conscience and conduct. We will read a few of these verses.

"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Romans 7:14-25).

“The law,” said Blackstone, “is a rule of action prescribed by the supreme power of the State, commanding what is right and prohibiting what is wrong.” The law is a rule; the law is a line; the law is a straight-edge. And the law of God may map out, and does map out, a rule of action, but has nothing in itself to give me an inspiration that would incline me to walk upon it and to walk straightly by it. The law of God in this sense is a mirror and simply a mirror. A mirror placed before my form would reveal any defects of my face, any mud or smut, and I might see plainly the defects and I might plainly see the mud and smut, but if I wanted to wash it off I could not wash it off with a mirror.

The mirror would simply show me it is there and has no power to remove it. The law of God reveals my defects. It shows me how crooked I am, without any power in the world to straighten me. And the man who sees right, the man who admits that the rule is right and straight, and at the same time has no inspiration, no power within him, no help within him to keep him on this straight line, realizes just what Paul did when he said:

“Oh, wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”

THE DEAD BODY OF SIN

Who will take and loose from me this dead body that is chained to me and carry it away from me? The memories of my imperfections, my frailties, my short-comings, are like a body of death chained to me. They are a weight of guilt. And the offensive odors of past sins are indeed like a dead body chained to a man. Now, our Saviour lifts the curtain. The book lifts the curtain. Further along it tells us that:

“Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

It tells us again that with faith unfeigned and a pure conscience we may know what it is to be in Christ Jesus a new creature.

Now, understand that depravity I never discuss at all, as to whether it is partial or total; whether it is simply innate or developed. We say nothing about it. But I meet every man on the face of this earth, and look him in the eye and tell him: “Naturally, innately, you have meanness enough in you to damn you, and I don't know what a fellow wants with any more than that. He is greedier than I have ever been if he wants any more than that. Whether it is partial or total, I have no capacity, may be, and I am satisfied no time or inclination, to discuss.

Now, before us we have a straight line, and we all admit we cannot walk on it, and heaven is just at the other end of that straight line for every one of us. Now, some people propose to dodge and shirk and beat round and come out all right. Well now, if you can tell me how a man can take a short cut on a straight road, then I'll be able to tell something about how a fellow can whip round and jerk round and come out even at the end I could sort of understand it then. But straight is the gate, and straight is the line and straight is the way, and there's no right cuts on a straight road that I know anything about.

A NOTABLE CONCLUSION

And Paul reaches the conclusion that I wish we would all reach to-night. This seventh chapter of Romans is full of mystery, and I think with the preacher who said that if we had gotten out of the seventh chapter of Romans into the eighth, the devil would get us all. I think that he was about right. And now we come to the first verse of the eighth chapter:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”

"In Christ Jesus."

Being **"in Christ Jesus"** and having **"Christ in you"** are interchangeable terms in Scripture.

Having Christ in you, form the hope of glory, is one way to put it. Another is:

"If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature."

Our Saviour amplified the thought when He said:

"Behold I stand at the door and knock. If you will open unto me I will come in and sup with you."

Oh, blessed thought! Christ my guest! I am ashamed of what I have to offer him. I am ashamed of the table I set him down to. I am ashamed of everything in the home I invite him into. But he sits there, and he is my guest but a moment until he stands up and says: "Now you be my guest and I will be host" Oh, what a privilege, to sit at a table with Christ as host, and have him feed us on Heaven's bread and angels' food.

"In Christ Jesus."

If you be in Christ Jesus you are a new creature, if he form in you the hope of glory. I want to say that it is peculiarly true of Christianity that we need a Christ. Not a Christ of history; not a Christ of eighteen hundred years ago; not a Christ on Calvary; but we need a present abiding Christ You can run Mormonism with Joe Smith and Brigham Young in their graves; it goes right on. You can run Confucianism without Confucius. But you can't run Christianity without Christ.

This Christianity is the personal living embodiment of Christ. And the question comes up there, and it is the question of this nineteenth century: Who is Christ? What is Christ? Do you know there have been more lives of Christ written since I was born than were ever written before I was born. In the last thirty-eight years there have been written more lives of Christ than in all the past ages since he walked among men. Isn't that a singular fact! Isn't it carrying out the thought expressed by him:

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

WHO IS CHRIST?

Who is Christ? What is Christ? This world has always been eager to know and eager to see. Thousands of years ago, when the people of this old world groped in darkness and mingled as orphans at one tomb, they grew restless and turned their eyes up in the darkened heavens and bent their ear upward, and almost in the language of despair they said, "Oh, tell us who thou art, thou great infinite one. Are we here simply by accident, or is there a great first cause? Tell us who thou art" And as they eagerly listened a voice issued out from the darkness — a still, small voice — and answered back, **"I am."** They caught it up and repeated it — **"I am."** They said, "Here is some light, but oh, how dark it is."

And the world groped on in darkness for centuries, and by and by, restless and nervous and impatient, they turned their faces back up to heaven and bent their ear and cried again, "Oh tell us who thou art, what thou art to us!"

And the voice answered back: "**I am what I am. I am that I am.**" And they caught it up and said: "I am that I am. Here's a little more light. We are thankful for any light. Oh, how dark it is."

And by and by the earth grew restless and rushed right up on one who was speaking, and they said; "Be quiet. Let us see what he says." And he answered and said: "**I am**" — and they caught it up, "**I am.**" We have heard that before. Listen, we will get a light now. "**I am.**" Everything and everybody be quiet. Let us hear him speak, and he said: "**I am the way.**"

"Oh, ye lost men that have been wandering in the wilderness for hundreds of years hear him speak! Here's a thoroughfare, a highway, a road we may walk in. Oh, ye lost men of earth come into this way and rejoice that you are in a highway."

Listen! He is going to speak again: "**I am the truth.**"

Oh! This old world has been wrapped in error thousands of years, and now we are seeing the truth. We have not seen the truth for thousands of years. And now let us listen; we have the truth from him who is the very embodiment of truth: "**I am the truth.**"

FOR HUNGRY SOULS

Listen! He speaks again: "**I am the bread.**" Oh, listen, ye hungry souls! Here's bread enough and to spare. Come and eat and be satisfied.

Listen! He is speaking again: "**I am the water.**" Oh, ye thirsty men that have been famishing upon the desert of life, listen! Here's the living fountain and ye may drink and never be thirsty any more.

Listen! He speaks again: "**I am the door.**" And "**door**" means house and home, and hospitality and comfort.

Oh, ye poor wandering houseless men, listen! Here is home for all the children of men.

Listen! He speaks again: "**I am the light**" You old world that has groped in darkness wake up under this golden light and let them see just as God would have them see!

"**In Christ Jesus.**"

Do you recollect the occasion where the apostles went to the Master and said: "Master, there is a great multitude has been following us now for days, and they have famished for hunger! Master, bid them go away and get something to eat."

Jesus looked at his disciples — you recollect — and he said a thing world-wide in its meaning and that has given me comfort in the darkest hours of my religious life — do you recollect what Jesus said?" They need not depart. They needn't go away from me for anything. You get out your little loaves and fishes and I will multiply them until this multitude shall be fed and until they shall realize that around Christ centers all, and that he is all and in all."

Blessed be God! A man need not go away from Christ to get anything that is necessary for him in time or "necessary for him in eternity.

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

"In Christ Jesus."

Now, with such a one before you, I want to say the question comes up, "Who is Christ?" at last. What is Christ? That is the question. Our finest authors have written and I have been charmed with Beattie and with Farrar and with Young and with our best authors on this subject, but, brother, do you know one of the disciples wrote the history of Christ in a single line — I believe in four words: **"He went about doing good."**

There's a life of the blessed Christ in a single line of five monosyllabic utterances:

"In Christ Jesus."

Well, now, when we bring this problem down to where we can get hold of it, we see that Jesus Christ was the living, personal, embodiment of wisdom, and justice and love and mercy and truth and of all the characteristics that make God lovely. That is it. And if my salvation or your salvation to-night depended upon our picking a single flaw in the life of Christ, or picking out a single utterance of His that was below the dignity of God, we would essentially and inevitably be damned forever, for after all infidelity has said it cannot pick a flaw in His life or find an utterance that was below the dignity of a God.

What is Christ? The living personal embodiment of wisdom and justice and truth and love and mercy and forgiveness and all those attributes that make the character of God lovely. That's it.

Well, now, how may a man determine whether he has Christ or not? If he be in Christ Jesus, then he is a wise man and a just man and true man and forgiving man and a lovely character. Don't you see? Paul said: **"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."**

That is, "Christ propels these hands and feet and tongue just as he did his own hands and feet and tongue."

THE SECRET OF CHRISTIAN HAPPINESS

"I die daily."

There is the secret of a Christian's happy life. And Paul meant by that about this: "The first thing I do in the morning when I open my eyes is to fall down on my knees and die to this world; die to its pleasures, its profits, its fruits, its smiles, its condemnations; die to its threats; die to money; die to all it can do." And when Paul got up from his knees in the morning he was as dead to this world as he was afterwards when his head was severed from his body and his body buried out of the sight of men. And a man never truly lives until he dies in this sense, and when a man dies in this sense he is the livest man that ever walked on the face of the earth.

A Christian must essentially be a wise man. What is wisdom? It is the skillful application of knowledge. It is using what I have at command to the best end in the best way. That's it.

Wisdom! Wisdom! There are a great many knowing men in this world, but very few wise men. We have knowledge enough to run about four such worlds as this, but haven't wisdom enough to keep out of jail a large class of society, and a larger other class, perhaps, ought to be there.

ST. LOUIS' FOLLY

Why, St. Louis hasn't wisdom enough to run her town, and to save her soul she can't see how she could run her town if she were to shut up her saloons! Why, it would increase our taxes, and it would bankrupt our town, and it would go to the dogs. I want to see one town that died because it was a prohibitionist town. I want to visit its funeral; or rather I want to funeralize her. I have got a text I could make things bounce on if I could just find a town like that that died because she "went dry."

Thank God, Atlanta, with her 58,000 or 60,000 inhabitants, yesterday voted this devil's stuff out of her midst, and I want to say to you that this is but a quiet speaking out to every city in America. It is no longer a question of how many bushels of grain are stilled up; it is not a question of how many dollars are sunk yearly in the trade; it is not a question of statistics. It is a question of blood and death and hell! We are getting tired. These wives are getting tired seeing their husbands staggering into drunkards' graves. These mothers are tired of seeing their precious boys debauched and damned and ruined forever. It is a question of blood and death and hell!

It is not a question of how many dollars and cents or how much grain is stilled up. Recollect that. We cannot run our town unless we have wisdom to do it. I expect a great many professing Christians in this town will be astonished when they get to Heaven to find how God Almighty can run the Celestial City without a few saloons to help keep up the taxes.

A LITTLE MORE WISDOM

Wisdom — sense enough, and the right use of sense enough, to do the best thing and do it in the best way. Well, now, what is the wisdom of Christianity? I tell you it is the use of the best means to the best ends. And I tell you how I look at it. I have been listening ever since I was converted; and I want to say right here, upon this point, that I never heard a man tell his experience, and state in his experience some Christian duty that helped him to be religious, that I didn't adopt that myself. I just think, "Well, old fellow, if that helped you, I think it will help me. I have started in cold-blooded earnest to get to the good world, and I'll adopt anything that will help me along.

That's my program.”

When I heard an old Christian say: “Family prayer was a great blessing,” thinks I to myself, “God helping me, I'll adopt it. I want everything that will help me to get on, and I want to adopt every plank in the platform that ever helped a man to be good, and ever helped a man to overcome sin, and overcome wickedness.

These little, slow Christians in this land; they have just got two planks in their religious platform. Saying a little prayer, and reading a little Bible, is just as far as they ever get That is all there is in their religion — saying a prayer every night before they go to bed, and reading the Bible a little occasional and that's about as far as they ever get. I tell you they sometimes remind me of these little two-wheel engines they made when they first started to make engines. They just put two wheels under them and they made schedule time, three miles an hour, right along.

A NEW SCHEDULE WANTED

But people got tired of that sort of schedule. Wisdom says, “That won't do! Three miles an hour for a locomotive engine.” Well, now what do they do? They just put jackscrews under that engine and prized it up, and put six more wheels beneath her. That's all; and now you can go fifty or sixty or even seventy-nine miles an hour. What do you say to that? That is a good schedule. And now brother, sister, God help you to be willing, anxious for God Almighty to prize you up and put more wheels under you. These little two-wheeled fellows; they start out toward the good world and have been running the Christian race for forty years, and haven't gotten ten miles on their journey. The devil can take one of these little two-wheeled fellows and give him a ten miles head start, and then catch him before breakfast, every time. That's the plain truth about it.

Oh, sir, wisdom says to me: “Be prized up closer to God, and let every Christian duty be a wheel put in, and then you will roll on to God successfully, and can outrun the devil in any race he wants to make with you. You move faster and you move more grandly.

Wisdom! Do the right thing and do it in the right way. Adopt every plank in your religious platform that ever helped a man to be good, and tear out every one that ever helped a man to be bad. Wisdom! Justice! Ah, justice!

I have heard people say, “Christ was a just man.” I have heard people say, “You had better be just than generous.” Did you know that it is ten times as hard to be just as to be generous? Most any man can pull out a \$10 bill and give it to a widow. That is generosity. But it takes a man — a true man — that will sit down and draw the line and give to God his dues, to his neighbors their dues, to his family their dues, and to the world its dues. It is very hard to find a generous man in this world, and it is ten thousand times harder to be just than generous. I like a man to be just to his family, just to his God, just to humanity. He will be a man that will be just in his relative duties to humanity and to himself. A just man weighs everything in the balance.

Ah, me! Burns told the truth when he said:

Ouch! Mankind are but unco weak
An' little to be trusted.
When self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted.

NUMEROUS CONVERTS

There are a great many preachers in this world — I may be one of them — I am no better than any of them — that have a great many converts every year, and they say, “I’ve had 200 conversions.” Well, converted from what and converted to what? That's the question! And when you ring the changes on the preacher right there, and say: “Brother, you say you got 200 converts?” “Yes.”

“Well, what have they been converted from, and what have they been converted to?”

Now, if you can find me a man that has been converted from the works of the flesh, which art manifest — idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, malice, riot, strife, sedition, heresy, licentiousness, and all that sort of thing — he is converted over to love and mercy and justice and wisdom, and all these other things that God approves of, then, I say, you get a fellow that is converted on the Bible platform, and I would not give a flip of my finger for a man converted on any other platform. Two hundred converts! A fellow out in the country gets up a big meeting and he has got 200 converts. Does he mean he has got 200 more like those he has got before — those quarter of a dollar and ten cents a year admission fellows and a demijohn sitting around in every house? Does he mean that he has got 200 more like that? My Lord! He is ruining this country if he is getting up any more like that.

Converted from what and converted to what? Christianity is not a song nor a sentiment, nor a shout nor a joining the church, but Christianity is a great principle, buoying up itself and manifest. It is wisdom, and love, and mercy, and justice, and every good word and work — that is it. Well, to be practical all along through — being in Christ Jesus presupposes, first, a longing desire for Christ, a longing desire for the true and the noble and the good and the just Oh, me! Brother, is there a man here to-night down in his heart that never had a longing desire for a better life and a nobler life and a truer life? Is there one? Is there a man here that never wished down in his soul, he was a wiser man, and a more just man, and a more loving man and a more forgiving man?

SPIRITUAL HUNGER

Brother, you know what the Scripture says is a healthy, good condition? Spiritual hungering and thirsting after righteousness. That is a healthful religions experience — hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Oh, brother, being in Christ Jesus presupposes a longing for Christ, a desire for Christ. That's it.

David said:

“My heart panteth after the living God as the heart panteth for the water brook.”

Longing for Christ; hungering, thirsting after righteousness. The supremest passion of a man's life is his hunger and his thirst. Did you ever locate the sensation of physical hunger — did you ever locate it? The little fellow struck it right. When you are next intensely hungry you locate the sensation and it is just at this point (indicating under the right eye), and the little fellow said, “Pa, I'm hungry,” and his father said, “Son, how do you feel when you feel hungry?” He said, “I feel like I want to chew something.”

Now, the little fellow had it rightly. Now, the sensation of physical hunger is located right here, but the sensation of spiritual hunger is located in the will, it is located in the affections, it is located in the inner man. I long for something better and nobler and truer and grander. I long for Him who was the embodiment of all that was true and all that was good. That's it. Longing for Christ! The soul never reaches Him until nothing but Christ will satisfy the soul.

NOTHING BUT CHRIST

I have seen the little two-year-old boy. The nurse has him in her arms and he is wringing and twisting and crying. His mother is out; his mother is gone to town; his mother is shopping; and little Willie twists and wrings and cries and kicks and slips; and away he goes, and the nurse gets his toys. “I don't want no toys,” and she gets his marbles. “I don't want no marbles,” and she gets him some candy. “I don't want no candy, I don't want no candy; I want mamma; I don't want those marbles; I want mamma; I don't want those playthings I want mamma.” And directly mamma steps in the door and the little fellow is satisfied and he runs up to her and throws his arms around her neck and he is as sweet as a little angel.

Mamma has come. That's what he wanted. And I like to see a Christian whose soul longs for Christ; that won't be satisfied with anything else. “Here is a ball.” “I don't want any ball.” “Here is a theater.” “I don't want any theater.” “Here is money.” “I don't want any money; I don't want anything; I want Christ and I won't have anything else,” and he won't want anything else. And Christ always comes to the soul that will have nothing but him, and he never comes to a soul while anything else would satisfy it. A fellow says: “I sought religion a whole month and I never got it.” You got something else. That is what satisfied you. And Christ never comes to the soul until the soul reaches the point where nothing will satisfy but Him.

WAITING FOR LOVED ONES

Sister, this last cruel war — some wives present to-night may know what I am talking about — this last cruel, bloody war — how husband kissed you in the early part of '61 “Good bye!” and he went to the cruel war, and how you watched every mail and watched all the telegraphic reports, and how anxiously you looked to the battle field, until by and by husband is gone two months, six months, ten months, twelve months, twenty months, thirty months. The sole desire of the wife's heart and soul was for her husband to return, and nothing would satisfy or gratify the longing, loving wife but the presence of her husband; and oh! How she looked, and how she longed and waited, and how all other pleasures and all other enjoyments faded away in her presence, in the presence of this one intense, eternal longing of her soul for husband's return.

PENELOPE

Take the case of Penelope, perhaps the most beautiful woman in the world's history.

When Ulysses went to the war, and after several months and two years he was gone, and all tidings of him were lost, and this beautiful woman had other suitors, and they pressed her hand, she waited to hear from him whom she loved, and they pressed her hand, and on for years they pressed her hand, and at last her suitors were so eager that she finally said: "Gentlemen, if you will wait until I weave out this piece of cloth in the loom, then I will give you an answer."

And then she sat and wove all day and unraveled it all night, and thus she worked and toiled, and for ten more long years in her weary weaving she kept the suitors off, and then Ulysses returned, and then she said: "Precious husband, I have been faithful in my love and thou are returned." And when the soul gets to the point where it says: "I am honest, I will stay in my devotions, I will leave and turn off every other suitor — the world, the flesh, and the devil — I will turn them all off and keep them at bay; I will look for the coming of my Lord, and I will keep them off until He does come" — oh, that is longing — and longing for Christ!

FLEEING TO CHRIST

And then this being in Christ Jesus presupposes another thing. It presupposes fleeing to Christ. Oh, brother, you better not let the grass grow up in the pathway between you and the cross — between you and Christ. Oh, safe is that soul that always knows its way to Christ, and always keeps the path beaten out between it and Christ. Fleeing to Christ — this idea we get from the criminal law. Under the old regime when a man committed an offense, the one question with him, "Can I make the city of refuge," and he dropped all things and he left all things and pressed with all his might to the city of refuge, and as soon as his hands reached the gatepost and he got inside the city, there was no power to arrest him or punish him. And so when the soul has sinned against Christ, then the only question that comes up at all is: "Can I make the city of refuge?"

The great John said:

"If any man sin we have an advocate with the Fathers - even Jesus Christ, the righteous."

Fleeing to Christ! Look here. If I wanted to make the powers of Satan tremble; if I wanted to put to flight all the armies of Hell, I would not order ten legions of angels from the skies and all the artillery of Heaven turned loose on him.

BEATING THE DEVIL

Do you know what I'd do! I would just fall down on my knees and pray, and:

Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

And no man was ever conquered on his knees in prayer to God.

I have been at the point where I could not do anything but pray; and, blessed be God! That's all I needed to do — just kneel down and pray. On my knees I have worked out problems and settled difficulties that I never could have settled on my feet. Fleeing to Christ! And that's what prayer is. He knows where you break down. He knows which wheel is broken and how many wheels are broken down. He knows whether it is the axle or whether it is the wheel. He knows whether it is the tongue of your wagon or whether it is simply a spoke of one of your wheels.

Blessed be God! When I ran to Him He can put His finger on the affected part, and He is a balm in Gilead to heal all my diseases and to re-arrange all my breakages. Run to Christ! I can get along without anything better than prayer. Prayer is the communion of the soul with God. I can get along without everything but prayer. I am willing that you take most everything in the world away from me but prayer. Leave me the privilege of rushing to God with prayer, and I shall make my way to Heaven.

SUBMISSION

And being in Christ Jesus presupposes again submission to Christ Now it is one thing to long for Him, another thing to run to Him in time of danger, and it is quite another thing to speak to Him when you get there. There are some mysterious things about the Bible. You say "Submit to Christ. What do you mean?"

I mean about this. Whatever He says do, you do it. Whatever He says thou oughtest not to do, that you let it alone. That is what I mean.

There are some people in this world who beg leave to differ with God on a great many propositions. God says:

"Look not on the wine when it is red; when it giveth its color to the cup."

A fellow looks up and says, "Why?"

"Because at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."

The fellow turns to his wife and says, "That's a mistake! I've been drinking for ten years and I ain't been bit yet, and I never will get bit. God is wrong about that," and in less than five years that wife sees him taken to bed delirious and drunk, and four men holding him, and when the lucid moment comes, he says, "Precious wife, God told the truth. At last, it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder, and the room is full of serpents and they are biting all the time." Oh. That man that differs with God has made a mistake as long as eternity.

PURITANISM

Oh, but you say "I don't believe in Puritanism. I don't believe in that. I believe the Lord means us to enjoy ourselves a little." Yes, that is the way I used to talk. "Why don't the Lord want us to dance? There ain't no harm in that."

PLAIN TALK ON DANCING

I can go to houses — houses morally dark and morally degrading as perdition itself — and I can look at that poor, lost woman and ask her, “Where did you take your first downward step to death and hell?”

“At a ball room.”

“Well, God advised us not to go into reveling.”

“Well I didn't think the Lord was right about that I differed with Him.”

“Well, how did you come out? How did you come out?”

There is not a family — I speak it because I believe it — there is not a family in the city of St. Louis where the father who trains his children for ball rooms and germans can lay his hands upon the head of his daughter and say: “This daughter will die as pure as an angel,” You cannot say it.

Other men's daughters as pure, as lovely as yours, have been down with the devil's feet on them — and a woman never gets up when the devil puts his feet on her once! I beg leave to differ with God about some things! Submission to Christ — there is the test.

CARDS

Well, I don't see any harm in a social game of cards. You see that man that has just lost his last cent, and his wife and children hungry? You see that man as he watches the winning character, and sees which room in the hotel he is registered at. You see him slip in with a false key into that room, and, by the pale, clear moonlight as he lifts the glittering dagger, he says: “I could not win it at cards, but I must have it,” and sticks the dagger deep in the victim's heart and pillages his pockets and walks out of the room. And that boy was raised in a Christian home and a Methodist father showed him first how to play cards! I beg leave to differ with God about some things — don't you see?

An old sinner ninety years old told me once — said he: “I never proved any but one passage of Scripture, but I know it is true.”

“What is that?”

“That passage,” he says, “which tells us, **The way of the transgressor is hard.**” That's so.

One of the soldiers in the last war told me a story which has an interesting application here. He said: “Jones, I fought in 100 different battles. I have faced the musket and the cannon as they flashed in my face, but, he said “the hardest thing I had to do during the war was to obey the order to lie down.”

He said: "Every man fell upon his face and the shell and shot just whizzed and buzzed over our forms as we lay sheltered there. The hardest thing I had to do during the whole war was to lie still under fire, but if I had got up I would have been riddled with bullets in a minute." Now, when Almighty God lets loose his grape and canister you had better lie low, you had. And every bullet hole you have in your body to-day, you have because you would not be still. That is it.

PARALYZING SINS

You say, "Jones, why don't you preach against stealing, lying and drunkenness?" It is because that ain't hurting the church. Nobody has any respect for you old red-nosed devils in the church. They don't notice you.

They have got no respect for you. Nobody has any respect for you if you are a liar. Nobody bothers with you if you steal. Nobody cares anything about you. I will tell you it ain't lying, stealing and drunkenness that is cursing the church and paralyzing her power and ruining the church of God. It is these worldly amusements that are sweeping over our homes and churches, and paralyzing us and making us to-day little better than a graveyard. That is it.

I never saw a spiritual man in my life that would stand up and ask me, "Do you think there is any harm in the dance?" Why don't you ask me if I think there is any harm in a prayer meeting, or if I think there is any harm in family prayer? You know there ain't. And whenever you hear a fellow asking if there is any harm in the dance, you can reply, "You lying old rascal, you know there is."

Mr. Jones, turning to the ministers seated behind him, asked: "Why don't you say Amen?"

Submission!

Oh, the wisest spirit ever manifested by mortal man is that spirit that first said, "I will be loyal to Him, and then lie still under fire. I will be loyal. Though He slay me, I will hope while I live."

PERSONAL IDEAS

And I will say this much. My Christianity has done this much for me. Hear me now, every one of you. I can say it, I think, as truthfully as I ever said anything. I have danced many a night. I have played cards a little. I never got much interested in them; for I think card-playing is the game of starvelings, mental and spiritual. If I had children that would not read a book, and would not be interested in anything that ought to be interesting to intelligent beings, I would learn them all to play cards. The little simpletons, I would run them on that line.

If I had a daughter that was such a simpleton that she had only just sense enough to behave herself, I would send her to a hook-nosed French dancing-master and I would tell him to make her graceful, and say: "Her head's a failure, and I want you to make it up on the feet." The law of compensation, of checks and balances ought to work here, ought it not? I would say to the hook-nosed Frenchman, "Bring her feet up right. She is a failure in her head."

I would learn her to dance gracefully, and marry her off to some ball-room dude and buy them a place away off in the country and tell them never to come and see me. When I got anxious to see them I would take her mother and go and see them.

METHODIST MOTHERS

A Methodist mother, taking her innocent children, and placing them in the care and under the training of an old hook-nosed Frenchman — the mean old devil — teaching people his manners! I have a contempt for that sort of people, and may be the rascal has not been out of jail three months before coming here and starting his dancing-school. Oh, if I have a contempt for a being in this universe that I cannot reach down to, it is a dancing-master. His only business is to go about through the community despoiling the spiritual interest of children and making them fall in love with giddy worldliness and foolishness that will damn them in the end. I have made many of them get in places where I have preached. I have gone into towns of 10,000 and 15,000 where such a fellow has a grand dancing-school, and I would not want more than forty-eight hours to bring him up. I would shell the woods for him a time or two and then you'd see him start hitting the ground about a mile a minute.

And that is the sentiment of every preacher here this night! It is your sentiment. It is the sentiment of all of us. If I was pastor here and had a sister in my church that sent her children to a dancing-school, I would turn her out. Not the little children, but the old hypocrite of a mother.

SIMPLE RELIGIOUS SENSE

Submission! Submission! It means if I swear loyalty to the right I will submit to it. No matter what it costs me; no matter what criticisms are brought to bear on me, I will do right, I will do right. Let people say he is a dolt; let people say he is simple, and that he has no better sense than to be religious. God bless you, there are a good many people in this world who have got just sense enough to be religious, and you will find on the Day of Judgment that they are the only sensible people in town — those fellows that had just sense enough to be religious. Submission! Submission!

I will do right because it is right, and I will not do wrong if I know it. That is what every Christian ought to say. Now, if worldlings and non-members of the church want to do otherwise we say it is in a line with their professions, but we do not want church members to follow in that line. A woman can be a perfect lady and dance, but she cannot be a Christian and dance. That is as true a thing as ever I uttered. A woman may be as true a lady as ever walked the earth and attend theaters, but she cannot be a Christian and do it, to save the world. A man may be as nice a gentleman as ever walked this earth, and play cards every night in his home but he cannot be a Christian and do it. That is as certain is this world exists.

HOW HE KNOWS IT

You ask me how I know. I got religion fourteen years ago, and I know how those things served me, and I reckon they serve about every fellow the same way.

If I, as a member of the church, were to begin dancing or playing cards or carousing in my family, I would go to the preacher and say, "Take my name off the roll. I will never be a hypocrite."

Submission! The idea is this: "Speak, Lord, Thy servant heareth; Thou art true and just. Oh, God, speak out and I will hear it, and when I hear I will obey." That is what I mean by submission. I think every Christian man in the world ought to give himself up as fully to God as one of those grand Roger engines gives itself up to the engineer.

I have stood on those engines, and as I talked with the engineer I have seen him stand with his hand on the throttle and his eye on the track. Presently he would pull his watch out and look at it quietly. Then I would see him pull the throttle a little wider open, as much as to say, "give me six or eight more miles an hour — we are getting a little behind."

And I have seen him as he approached a station, shut the throttle off, drop the lever forward and stop the engine right where he wanted to stop it I think every Christian man should turn his soul over to God, just as the engine turns its throttle over to the engineer, and say: "Oh, Lord, if I get a little behind, open my soul and I will move faster, or if I am going too fast, all you have to do is to shut me off a little and I will slacken my speed."

MORAL AFFINITIES

Submission, and being in Christ Jesus, presupposes, lastly, affinities that control my nature in such a way that I am alike in every sense. I have gone into a room where there was a husband and wife who had been living together for fifty years and more. They had just had their golden wedding.

I sat down and looked at them a few minutes, and I said, "Well, well; that man and his wife look as much like brother and sister as any two people I have seen in my life. Did you ever see brother and sister more alike than that man and his wife?"

Then I commenced to talk to them and said: "Well, well; the very intonations of their voices are just alike." Then directly the old lady said so and so, and the old man said: "I was just going to ask that myself;" and I thought to myself: "Not only do they look alike, not only are the intonations of their voices alike, but they think alike."

Brother and sister, may our affinities lead us to where we not only look like good men, but where the very intonations of our voices are molded by the spirit of the Master. And not only that but when you speak out and say, "**Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,**" it will be said, "he talks like Christ talked. He looks like a good man, and I could have told he was a good man anywhere."

Oh, brethren, do not lose any time in hungering for the right, in looking for the right, and in submitting to the right, until you get right from head to foot and you become a big bundle of rightness.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

And if any man wants to be made whole, if you feel your weakness, go to Him of whom I have been talking to-night. He is approachable, He is available to every one of you, and the highway that leads to Him is a wide one, open to every soul here to-night.

I just want to tell you this in conclusion. Fourteen years ago last August there was an occurrence in my life that reminded me very much of an event that occurred when Christ was on earth. You recollect once He got on board a little ship with His disciples and started across the Lake of Genesaret. That little lake was hemmed in with mountains that towered hundreds of feet around it, and it seemed to be secure from the winds. At times, however, furious storms came, and it seemed as if the four winds of heaven were striving to see which should have charge of that little lake.

The winds came rushing and bearing down upon the lake that time and the waves began to roll and the water was lashed into foam. The little vessel rocked and pitched and creaked under the pressure of the waves, and the disciples, affrighted, ran and waked the Master and said:

"Master, we are engulfed, we are destroyed forever."

Jesus looked at the terrific storm. How the vessel shakes and pitches, and how the disciples trembled with fear. The Master awoke and wiped the spray from his forehead, and walked to the prow of the little ship. He reached down and pulled the angry wave on His knee and dandled it to sleep like a mother would an infant child. And the disciples said: "Oh, what a calm!"

THE EVERLASTING PEACE

One day, fourteen years ago, with my soul pitched and tossed and driven by the storms of temptation, I rushed right into His presence. He took me up and pulled me to his great loving heart, and he said: "**My peace I give unto thee,**" and I went away saying: "Now blessed be God; not a wave of trouble rolls across my peaceful breast" Oh, brother, here is a calm. The soul that was in the midst of storms all its life is enjoying that blessed calm to-day.

Oh, Christ, give us the words to-night that will bring a calm to every soul. Now we are going to dismiss you with the benediction, but before we dismiss you we make this proposition: I want every Christian man in this house — I do not care of what church you are a member, and if you have no church, you can accept the proposition — to say: "God helping me I intend to be a more circumspect Christian, and I am going to do better;" or you can say "I am going to do my best." I like that sort of fellows; Heaven is just on the other side of a fellow that is doing his best.

Brethren, I have but a few more messages to you as church members. I want every professor of religion in this house. I do not care whether he is a preacher or a member of the church or whether in the church or not, if you want to glorify God with a pure, thankful, loyal love, I want every one of you to stand up with me — and do not stand up unless you mean it — and breathe a prayer to God to keep you faithful unto death. Well, thank God, what a host.

Now if there is a non-professor who hears the prayers of these people, and you will stand up, we will pray for you the best we can. Thank God, nearly everybody stands up. I think you mean it; you look as if you mean it.

Now, blessed Lord God, baptize us in that resolution; fasten it on us, and may we be faithful from this hour until God shall say: "It is enough, come up higher."

~ end of chapter 7 ~

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