

GOSPEL SERMONS

as

Sam P. Jones

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SERMON NINE

EXHORTING AN INTRODUCTORY TALK

Mr. Jones, after announcing a service for men only, said: I want to ask every good woman in the house to pray devoutly to-night and in the morning, and especially watch your clock, and when the minute hand stands at 12 and the hour hand at 8, will you go to some secret place and pray the blessing of God upon this men's service? I am very much encouraged, indeed, in the work of this meeting before us. I receive letters from many places, saying: "Our prayers are being poured out to God for St. Louis and for the success of your work there." I verily believe, brethren, there are not less than 500,000 Christian people to-day praying to God to bless St. Louis. And how can these services be otherwise than a blessing to your city? Let us unite our hands and our hearts in this work. I hope next week the harvest will begin — the harvest of souls.

BEATING THE GOATS

I have had nothing to say to the irreligious out of church this week, and I have frequently thought of the old brother who asked the preacher to preach from a certain text.

"Well," said the preacher, "what text is it!"

"Well," he said, "it is that text where the Saviour asked Simon Peter, did he love him, and Simon said, 'Yes, Lord,' and the Saviour said, 'Well, then, beat my sheep.'"

"No," said the preacher, "feed my sheep."

"Oh," said the old brother, "I thought you misread that place. I thought you read it this way: 'Beat my sheep.'"

Now, I want it distinctly understood I have not misread that passage of Scripture. My role is to feed the sheep and beat the goats, and if you have been struck at all it's because you are a goat. You can put that down. I haven't struck a sheep since I have been here. I don't strike them, but feed the sheep — strike the goats — and it's owing to what you are whether you have been hit or not, and I hope after this that we shall all be sheep in the pastures of the Lord, and that we will go to the work in true love and sympathy.

The sermon which followed was by Brother Sam W. Small, of Atlanta, upon the sins of modern idolatry, such as blasphemy, Sabbath-breaking, lying and drinking - a good, square sermon, with plenty of classical allusions. At the close, Mr. Jones rose to his feet and said:

This service, brethren, is rather an unusual service in the city — Saturday night service — and we wind up the business of this week. And we'll wind up life after a while. What will we be then? Oh, to be a grand, a pure, a noble man, is the assurance, and the only assurance, that well be happy and pure and noble forever. I am very anxious indeed to see us not only right ourselves, but I am so anxious to see the sinners of this town saved. When all the church members get right — if such a consummation could be brought about — then we have only prepared ourselves to do the work God wants us to do.

I will tell you how I feel about it I have been feeling a good deal since I have been here. I have pulled, and pulled, and pulled at different times in different places in my life; and here I have pulled and pulled. Sometimes it looked like all the world was a load and I was pulling. And, brethren, I have reached the point now where you ought to pull some and you ought to push some. I will tell you what is true. If God Almighty had blessed me with the money that some of you have — and you may not have a great deal — if God Almighty had blessed me with such a home as some of you have, and with so many blessings as He has blessed you, I'd put in the next week for Him as no Christian in this town ever put in a week for God.

TOO FOND OF NICKELS

We'll never do anything with this town, with this city, when the Christian world looks like you can just take nickels and scatter them along, one every ten feet, and tote them right into Hell with them. We'll never do anything with this world, never! Three thousand people out at night, five hundred out in daytime. What's the difference? No nickels at night to be gathered up around as they are in the daytime. "I believe I'll gather nickels and let souls go to Hell" — that's about the schedule they run.

I will tell you another thing. You need not say I am a fool — and all that sort of thing. I've got a wife and I've got children to support, just like you have, and I love my wife and children, just as you do; but I tell you one thing, here is one man that is going to do his duty every day to God and the right, and if me and my wife and children starve to death we'll make out like we died with typhoid fever; we'll not say one word about it in any way, shape or form. But I want to see one man starve that is doing his duty. And we'll never take this town for Christ, and you downtown at your business every hour of the day, and when night comes pin on the pinions of an old owl, and flap out and come to meeting. We won't do it.

YES, THEY WOULD BE

I will tell you. God Almighty sent this very work along here in St. Louis to prepare some of you members of the church for your coffins, and to prepare many a sinner in this town for eternity. And if an angel were to light on this stand this moment and say, "Ten Methodists in this town will be in their coffins next Saturday night" Ah, me! — Without mentioning any names — I'll tell you every soul that is in this house to-night would be here every time this bell rings.

You are going to die next Saturday night. I don't know whether it is me or somebody else, there's ten of us, and maybe fifty of you, will be in your coffins next Saturday night.

We have no time to throw away in this work. One third of my time is gone now. I have no time or disposition to come here and camp with you all through the winter — three or four or six months. I expect to be away from here, and before the first day of February I expect to see thousands of souls converted in another city. I expect to; eerily I do. I have no time to fool away with you all. If you want me and you say so, I am your man, under God; but if you don't, I want you to say so. I will take the first train that leaves this town Monday morning. You ain't in earnest. You don't mean anything. I can buy out your interest in this meeting for a quarter, and I expect a great many of you haven't made a quarter each day while we were here serving and praying and working the best way we could.

A DEATH OF GOOD WOMEN

I believe it's the first meeting I ever run in my life when there were more men out at any service than women; and I tell you when it gets so good women in a city are scarce, things are getting mighty bad, they are, sures you're born. There ain't any doubt about that I've seen a few towns where good men were scarce, but I believe you've got less earnest Christian women in this town than any town I have ever known of its size. What do you think about that?

Now, there is no use in quibbling over the matter at all, brethren. If St. Joseph can rush up under a tent four times a day and turn everything loose — and God has blessed that town as I scarcely know God has ever blessed a town in the United States of America of its size — almost literally redeemed St. Joseph, Mo., how came that? The people got interested and took stock; don't you see? That was all. Now, how may we obtain just such a blessing? By getting interested and taking stock.

ST. LOUIS AS A TOMB FOR EVANGELISTS

I will tell you how I feel about it. I can afford to fail. Christ could afford to fail in some places, for in some places he didn't do many wonderful works. What paper is it — the Catholic paper in your city — that that article was in today that you spoke of about burying? Bro. Small. — Yes; the *Western Watchman*.

Bro. Jones. — The **Western Watchman** says: “Jones has come here to be buried.” It says: “We buried Moody here, and he has never done anything since; and we buried Harrison here, and he has never done anything since.” I believe that is about the sense of the article. “And Jones has come to St. Louis to be buried.”

Yes; I will be the livest man that was ever buried in this community. You'll never bury Jones — I'll say that to you. My faith in God and faith in the right and faith in the cross of Christ will be as strong when I leave this city if not a single soul is blessed as it shall be if 100,000 are blessed. My faith in God Almighty don't depend upon what the Christian people in St. Louis will or will not do.

I have no notion of going into my grave till I die and then I will go in as gracefully and as dignified as a man ever did but I will never be graceful or dignified until I do die. That is just the way I feel about it.

Well, now, I don't like to call up the memories of the war, not at all; and if there is any section in all America that the war question brings up sad memories it is here in Missouri. I would not lift the mantle and veil of charity from a single scar that was left by the war. Not that.

A BATTLE STORY

But let me tell you a little war incident. I do not care which side you were on. You admire a brave man, to whichever side he belonged. I do. I love a brave man to-day, whether he wore the blue or wore the gray. I like a brave man, for me or against me. I despise a coward in blue or gray. When Johnston turned over his army to Hood in Atlanta — Joe Johnston, that carried his army on back and back, retreating before Sherman until he reached Atlanta — and there Johnston turned over his army to Hood.

Hood was a gallant and brave man. He had already lost one of his limbs, one of his legs, in battle, and when he took charge of Johnston's army, he came round back into Tennessee with it, and, you recollect, fought the bloody battle of Franklin, perhaps one of the most bloody battles of the war.

When that battle was waging hot and thick, Gen. Hood's tent was on a prominence, and from that prominence Gen. Hood in walking up and down in front of his Tent could see the battle. He could see lines and he could hear the booming of the cannon and the rattle of the musketry. And as he walked up and down in front of the tent, halting with his artificial leg, every time he turned his eyes down toward the lines he saw that there was a fort out in the locust grove that was literally hewing down his ranks by the hundred. Every time he walked up and down in front of his tent, limping as he walked, and every time he turned his face toward the lines, he saw that fort in the locust grove was literally hewing down his ranks.

And he watched the fight for more than an hour, perhaps, and then he called his adjutant-general to him. That officer rode up on his bloody horse and Gen. Hood said: "Adjutant, go and present my compliments to Gen. Cheatham, and tell him I ask at his hands that fort in the locust grove."

The adjutant general loped off with all the speed of his horse. In a few minutes he returned and said: "Gen. Hood, Gen. Cheatham is missing. They think he has been killed. He has not been seen in two hours."

Gen. Hood drooped his head and marched up and down in front of his tent, and every time he turned his face to the lines that fort in the locust grove was literally hewing his ranks to the ground. And directly he called his adjutant-general again and he said: "Adjutant-general, go and present my compliments to Gen. Claiborne, and tell him I ask at his hands the fort in the locust grove."

The adjutant general loped off down the lines and in a few moments came back and said: Gen. Hood, Gen. Claiborne is dead on the battle field.”

CALLING ON COCKRELL

Gen. Hood drooped his head and the tears ran down his cheeks as he marched up and down in front of his tent. He looked through the tears as they glistened in his eyes and saw that the fort in the locust grove was hewing down his ranks to the ground. And directly he called his adjutant-general again and he said: “Adjutant-general, go and present my love” — he is softening down now, no longer compliments — “Adjutant-general, go and present my love to Gen. Cockrell and tell him I ask at his hands that fort in the locust grove.”

The adjutant-general loped off down the line and up to Gen. Cockrell — I believe he is, perhaps, from your city or State — one of the youngest generals in the Southern army. The adjutant-general rode up to him and said: “Gen. Cockrell, Gen. Hood sends you his love, and says he asks at your hands that fort in the locust grove.”

Gen. Cockrell straightened himself up in his saddle and said: “First Missouri Brigade, attention!” and he dropped his fingers on that fort. They charged upon the fort with intrepid courage and captured it, and Gen. Cockrell called his adjutant-general and said: “Adjutant-general, go and present my love to Gen. Hood, and tell him that I also present him the fort in the locust grove.”

And I want to tell you Christian people here to-night, whether that incident be true or not, it illustrates what I desire to say to you. I am here as the adjutant-general of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I say to you Christian people, as I point over this wicked city, that the Lord Jesus Christ presents his love to you Christian people, and he wants at your hands every fort of sin in this community, and in less than thirty days I hope you all with one accord will say:

“Lord Jesus, we present our love to Thee, and we also present the city redeemed by Thy grace.”

THE EXHORTATION

I want every Christian man that is ready to march out into line, not to fight his fellow man, but to bring his neighbors and friends to God and do what he can for the race. This coming week I will do my best, and I want every Christian in this house of every denomination who feels like saying: “God is my helper; I will go into the fight and pray and work and do my best;” I want every such an one to stand up; and I hope you will all stand up immediately and say: “That Is my honest conviction. I want to go into the fight I want to do my best.”

All in the church rose to their feet.

Well, thank God for this Saturday night meeting. God bless this service to the good of every Christian here. Now, we say to you all, we want the battle to begin now; “we want the battle to be pushed on now, and to-morrow morning, at 10:30 o'clock, I am to preach here; at 3 o'clock sharp to men only, in the Music Hall, and Lord God help me to take “that fort in the locust grove” to-morrow afternoon.

If you good women will pray as you ought, you will hear of such a meeting as St. Louis never had before. God, give us power, and I want to tell you nothing but the power of God can ever reach this city. Nothing but the power of God. God Almighty does not ask any more odds in St. Louis if you take hold right than he does in the smallest town in the State. He is an omnipotent God, and can do all he undertakes. Now we are going to sing "Hold the fort for I am coming." I want everybody to join in that song, and afterward we will pronounce the benediction.

"Hold the fort" having been sung with much spirit, the services were closed with the benediction.

WHAT FATHER PHELAN SAID

The paragraph in a Catholic paper to which Sam Jones paid his respects in his address, is from the *Western Watchman*, of November 28th, and is as follows:

Sam Jones, the unparsable revivalist, tells us he means to fire this old town a shaking up.

This old town has been the *bete noir* of all the evangelists. They may abuse her to their heart's content, but she refuses to be "shaken." St. Louis has been the mausoleum of all the evangelical mountebanks who have ventured within her gates. Hammond came and died. Moody and Sankey came and were heard of no more. Harrison sniffed at her atmosphere, and his youthful stomach is not in working order yet. Varley came and went back to his butcher stall. Now Sam Jones braves her basilisk eye. He, too, might as well prepare to go out of the revival business. The reason is Protestantism is dead in this town; and Catholics have no use for religious burlesque.

~ end of chapter 9 ~

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