

GOSPEL SERMONS

as

Sam P. Jones

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SERMON TWO

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

We invite your prayerful attention to these words from the second chapter of Paul's epistle to Titus, and the 11th and 12th verses.

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world.”

REDEEMED BY THE DIVINE BLOOD

“We are not redeemed,” said the apostle, **“by corruptible things, as gold and silver . . . but with the precious blood of Christ.”** When that precious blood came gushing from his side, the recording angel dipped his pen in that blood and in Heaven's chancery wrote on mercy's page:

“Peace on earth and good will to men.”

The grace of God that bringeth salvation, not the grace of God that makes me feel that I am a sinner; not the grace of God that saves me from sin, but the grace of God that bringeth **“salvation”** in all of its incomprehensible sense, hath unto all men appeared.

I am so glad that I can put my eyes on this book, and lay my hand on my heart and say, I believe that Jesus died for me personally; that he died for my precious wife; that he died for each one of my children. He died, not for me only, but for you and your wife and children, and your children's children to all generations. Oh, I am so glad this work is reaching a right conclusion; that God is not mad with anybody; that he loves the bad man as well as the best man. I am so glad the pulpit has got where it can look up to God, who is the author of pulpits, and say, **“Jesus Christ tasted death for every man.”** Oh, what a truth! God not only wills the salvation of all kind, but he has provided for the salvation of each individual.

I believe if it were possible to find one immortal soul for whom Jesus did not die, that Jesus would leave Heaven, come back and suffer again on Calvary for that one immortal soul. No man was ever doomed to death and Hell that did not have a good chance to get to Heaven, and about all any man can claim is one good chance to get to Heaven. A refusal to accept that chance ought to bring eternal damnation.

A great many men think that about all religion is? Or is to prepare them in some mysterious way for a happy death and a home by and by in Heaven; and really we have wasted about nine-tenths of our time thinking of a home over yonder in the Promised Land. I have quit thinking about a heaven over yonder. I want it here in Missouri.

It is like preaching everlastingly for heavenly recognition. I tell them that I want earthly recognition. I want to be recognized here. When I get to Heaven and have a crown on my head and a harp in my hand, and am a heavenly millionaire, you need not recognize me. I do not want it then I want earthly recognition; I want heaven here; I want to shun hell in St. Louis, although there is a good deal of it to the square inch here. Let us quit this everlasting harping about heaven and hell hereafter. Let us talk about heaven and hell down here in our midst, for I declare that no man will ever go to Heaven until by some means he manufactures him a little heaven to go to Heaven in; and no man will ever go to Hell until he generates enough brimstone to go with

THE TRANSFORMATION

Some talk about angels carrying souls to Heaven. When a soul goes to Heaven it outstrips the speed of angels' wings; but there are some of you who would never get to Heaven unless some angel band should take you there To get to Heaven you have got to turn or back up on the golden gates. There is no doubt about that.

There is too much heart religion in this world. It is generally locked in the heart and never seen upon the surface. Religion is as much a thing of the head, of the foot, of the tongue and of the brain as it is of the heart. If I could only have religion in one place I would have it in my right hand, so that I could go out and do something for Christ.

There is nothing in heart religion, and I have told our colored brethren down South that they have run this heart religion until many of them have run themselves into a hen roost There is grace enough in this universe for every man of us to have every square inch of him full of grace. I have a contempt for heart religion. There are people who are afraid to say anything about their religion. They are afraid of being ranked as Pharisees. I have seen a great many different characters, but I never saw a Pharisee.

I reckon that if Dr. Tudor had one in his congregation he would make him president of the board of trustees. A Pharisee would give one tenth of all he had to God; he would fast once a week and perform other sacrifices. There is not one of you who need be uneasy or afraid of being set down as a Pharisee. There is no use talking about grace taking us to Heaven as we are. There is many a fellow if he could get to Heaven as he is who would not be there long until there would be confusion.

A MORTGAGE ON HEAVEN

Take a money monger, one of those 20 per-cent fellows; if he were to be let into Heaven he would set up immediately on a corner lot and have a mortgage on half of Heaven. I am glad God Almighty will not let such men into Heaven.

Take one of those old demijohns and carry him to Heaven as he is. When he would awake next morning the first thing he would want would be a drink , and if there was a low place in the fence he would jump over it, repair to the nearest barroom, and be back again before breakfast.

Heaven is a prepared place for the prepared. Jesus said: "**I go and prepare a place for you.**" My only concern is, shall I be prepared to live in such a home as he shall make for me. It is said that the great trouble with nineteenth century religion is that the truth is not preached. There has not been a sermon preached during the past fifty years that has not contained enough truth to save every man, woman and child in Christendom. What is the trouble then? No one has any room for truth. Every fellow is chock-full of his own opinions.

One says, "It is my opinion there is no harm in a social game at cards, if you do not bet." Another will say, "It is my opinion there is no harm in going to the theater." Another will say, "It is my opinion I can live out of the church and be just as good as I can be in the church."

I assert that no man has a right to an opinion on a moral question. The only way to tell whether a man is crooked or straight is to put the straight-edge to him. It is no use standing up like a fool and guessing whether he is crooked or straight. Here is the straight-edge (pointing to the Bible). I don't say a man has not a right to his opinions on doctrinal questions but the constant iteration of "It is my opinion," by professing Christians, is crushing the life out of the church and damning the world.

THE WHISKY DRINKERS

I can sort of put up with a fellow who drinks whisky if he hangs his head down like a dog, but when he holds his head up and says he likes to drink it, I have a contempt for him. I can put up with a Methodist who goes to the theater if he wears a hang-dog look; but if he gets up and argues for it, I would not wipe my feet on him. I can sort of put up with a member of the church when he plays cards, but when he advocates card playing I have a contempt for him.

I have as much contempt for a member of a church that does these things as I have for a Georgia chain-gang convict, and that is pretty tough. A man once asked me how long it had been since I was at a theater. I told him I had not been at the theater since I had quit being a vagabond. But I am glad we have theaters, because they draw the line. A man in my own town once said to me: "If you will convince me it is wrong to play cards, I will never touch them again."

I replied: "There is one thing you are already convinced of; you are of no account in your church."

"Yes," he said, "I know that."

"Then," I returned, "If you are of no account in your church I have no time to fool away with you," and I walked off and left him. When a man is of no account in his church, it is of no use trying to convince him of anything. Such men should examine themselves and shun the sins that render them of no account.

It is not the lying, thieving, and drunken members of the church that do the most harm, but it is the tide of worldliness that is sweeping over the people and paralyzing their Christian life and ruining their children, about whom a bulwark of sin is being erected which the Gospel cannot overreach.

CONTEMPT FOR THE COLORFUL

I have the profoundest contempt for those Colonels and Majors and Judges who grace our curbstones and saloons. They have nothing to commend them to God but their money and their means. If there is anybody I want to see go to Heaven it is poor folks. The Colonels and those big fellows who have had such a good time here can sorter afford to go to Hell. We can't. When the Colonel says, "It's my opinion," he claims that his opinions are original with him. They are not. He got them from Hell, and they are going back to Hell if they take the old Colonel with them.

If there is anything I hate, and hate with a bitter and uncompromising hatred, it is whisky. It blights the world, demoralizes society, damns souls, and peoples Hell with immortal beings. We talk about pitching into revival work here, and at best we shall but bring 2,500 or 3,000 souls to God, while there are 1,800 saloons here damning the city week after week. We need some old-fashioned preaching. The only safe latitude for Christians to travel in is family prayer, the reading of the Scriptures and undying devotion to right. In the work I have undertaken here, I want your co-operation.

Some of you may leave and say, "I can't endorse that man." I don't want you to endorse me; I don't think it would do me any good to be endorsed by a one-horse member of a church. But I want every clerical and lay brother in town to come and help us. The daughter of a minister once said to me, "My father does not believe in revivals."

"Your father and the devil are together in that," I replied. I do not know how they stood on other things. I once said to a brother who attended one of my meetings that his church was but the Lord's crocheting society. He went away insulted. I also told him that if the Lord did not change him somehow he would not be in Heaven three days before he would have all the angels rigged out in lace. He came back a few nights afterward, and standing upon the platform, he said: "Brother Jones was right, and I am wrong. I have received a blessing. Call it what you will, getting religion or being converted, I have got it, I have got it." There are a good many listening to me who would be a sight on wheels, but who are not now worth killing. Be prepared and keep right.

~ end of sermon 2 ~

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