

MAN WITHOUT GOD.

DR. CHAPMAN'S SUNDAY SERMON

Pitiable Condition of a Man Without a Country.—Beauties of a Christian Life.

NEW YORK CITY.—The Rev. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman, the noted pastor-evangelist, continues to excite popular interest by the series of remarkable sermons he is delivering in the Fourth Presbyterian Church. Apropos of patriotic celebrations he has prepared the following discourse for the press, entitled "A Man Without a Country." It is preached from the text, Ephesians 2: 12, "Having no hope and without God in the world."

This is one of the saddest texts in the New Testament, for while it describes our own condition when we were aliens from Christ and strangers to the covenant and promise of God, yet I take it in my presentation of this subject to describe those who have wilfully rejected Christ and who have deliberately decided that they will not accept Him as a Saviour. With this interpretation put upon the Scripture we have in the text the saddest expression possible in human language. I suppose there is no one of my hearers to whom the words may be strictly applied, for if we take hope out of a man's life it is not worth the living. The young man may have failed yesterday, but he has hoped that he may succeed to-morrow; the business man who has lost his fortune in the wreck of past days is not discouraged because hope buoyed him up, and he is confident that prosperity will be his once again. Take hope from our lives and we are of all men most miserable, and if in addition to being deprived of hope we have no God we are not only hopeless for time, but hopeless also for eternity, for since we were made to be filled with God and all our being was so adjusted as to be at tune to His nature, there is no sadder picture than to be without Him. Some years ago I came across that interesting and pathetic story written by Edward Everett Hale entitled "The Man Without a Country," and it has furnished for me an illustration of this text to which your attention is invited. I found in the man who drifted everywhere across the sea without being able to enter a harbor a presentation of many a man who has buried Christ out of his life. The man was Philip Noland by name. Whether the story be truth or fiction it does not matter, for the illustration is the same. This young lieutenant in the army had come under the influence of Aaron Burr, and he had fascinated him. The young soldier wrote to Burr long letters expressing his hopes and his desires that he might serve him, but had no letters from Burr in reply. At last he came one day to see the young man, and then his hold upon him was complete. The regular life of the soldier became tame; he was utterly unfitted for service. There came a time when in company with others who were also under the influence of Burr he must appear before the army court to be tried for misdemeanor. The others for one reason or another escaped sentence, but Philip Noland was pronounced guilty. He was asked by the judge if he had anything to say why sentence should not be passed upon him because he had been false to his country and had sinned against the United States. His reply was an oath, and in the presence of the court he cursed his country and said that he wished he might never again hear the sound of the name United States; that he hated his native land. The judge, with a white face, answered, "It shall be as you say, and subject to the approval of the President of the United States, you shall never again hear of your country." At this Philip Noland laughed, but no one else did; there was a deathlike stillness over the court. He was taken to New Orleans, given over into the charge of a commander of one of the vessels, with the distinct understanding that no one was ever again to speak to him of the United States, and he was to be allowed to speak to no one of his old home. He was at last put upon a Government vessel and given quarters befitting his late rank. It was expressly stipulated that he was to be exposed to no indignity; he was not to be reminded of the fact that he was a prisoner, and while he could wear the uniform yet he must not have the buttons of the United States Government upon this uniform. Indeed he was to be a man without a country from this time on. He was permitted once each day to dine with the officers, but they did not care to have him, because when he was present they could not talk of home; under no circumstances was he to ever see his country again and never was he to hear of it. He was not permitted to go on shore wherever the landing might be. If he read books at all they must contain no reference to his home, and if he read the foreign papers it was only after some one had carefully cut out every reference to the United States. If the vessel upon which he was a passenger came near his country it must wait until it would be overtaken by another vessel going seaward. Philip Noland became a passenger with his face set away from his home. It has ever been to me one of the saddest illustrations I know, and yet a perfect picture of the man who has deliberately rejected Christ, has said, "I will not have this man to rule over me," and who is, therefore, described by the words of the text as "having no hope and without God in the world."

I. We have rejected Him. He has said in His word, "He that is not with Me is against Me," and not to accept is to reject. It is true we have never said in so many words that we would not have Him as our Saviour, but we have resisted the entreaties of the minister and spurned the prayers of our loved ones, and what we have not been bold enough to say with the lips we have said in our hearts, and God knoweth the language of the heart as men know the language of the lips. I am very sure that Philip Noland did not mean what he said. He had spoken in a passion, and I am perfectly positive that no one here could for a moment reject Christ if he felt that Christ would take him at his word, and possibly he might never have a chance again. Mr. Moody used to say that no one wanted to be excused. "Would you sign a letter like this?" he said. "Sitting in the house of God this Sunday evening I received a pressing invitation from one of your servants to be present at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. I pray thee, have me excused." No one would sign it. Then, would you sign this? "Sitting in the house of God this Sunday evening I received a pressing invitation from one of your servants to be present at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. By the grace of God I will be there." If you could but say that there would be joy in heaven and joy in your own heart.

II. We are by nature afar off. Our hearts are deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Our minds are carnal and therefore at enmity with God; our wills are stubborn and will not yield to the touch of His power; we are in midnight darkness, and it is in this condition that He comes to us. In the 13th verse of the second chapter of Ephesians we read, "But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ," and to all the unsaved it is my privilege to say that by the grace of God you are brought nigh to Christ. This is true because you have been under the influence of the Spirit, and you may be saved if you will, but if you reject Christ no word can describe this sin of which you are guilty. In the Old Testament the man who despised Moses' God died without mercy among two or three enemies, of how much greater need of mercy shall he be that hath trodden under foot the Son of God, hath counted the blood whereof He was glorified a common thing, and has insulted the Spirit of grace. In this picture of Philip Noland, a sailor on the sea without a harbor, I find an illustration of the man who in spite of God's grace has rejected the offer of mercy.

III. We begin to break away, not by great sins, but by small sins. Have you ever noticed in the three verses in the first chapter of Romans that wonderful description of sin, indeed the most remarkable of any the world has ever seen. In the 24th verse we read, "God gave them up to uncleanness;" in the 26th verse, "God gave them up to vile affections," while in the 28th verse we read, "God gave them up to a reprobate mind." The uncleanness may have been sin of an insignificant character; to be given up to vile affections is to be permitted to set our hearts upon those things which are not right, and draw them to us as with hooks of steel, but to be given over to a reprobate mind is to be hopeless. I make an appeal to-day in behalf of those whose lives are in the least touched by sin; it is a dangerous position.

IV. What is the greatest sin in all the catalogue as written in God's word? If this question were put to men there would be almost as many answers as there are men. It is not impurity, nor dishonesty. These things are not even to be considered in the light of the greatest sin of all, which is unbelief. When we read in the gospels that the Holy Ghost is to come, it is said that He will remove the world of sin, and that sin is described as not believing on Him. To reject Christ, therefore, is the chiefest of all transgressions.

V. Having no hope. I cannot imagine that any of my hearers would for a moment think of giving way to unbelief or taking refuge in infidelity. That is, indeed, hopeless. It is said that Adoniram Judson when he was a student in Brown University came under the influence of a fellow student who was an infidel. On his return to Providence at one time he was obliged to stop at a country inn. The innkeeper told him he had but one room, and that was next to a man who was supposed to be dying. Judson cared nothing for this, and said he would take the room. All through the night he heard this man crying out to God for mercy, shrieking in terror because of his unbelief, and at last Judson utterly worn out fell asleep. When the morning came all was quiet in the adjoining room, but the man was dead. What was the student's horror to find out that the dying man was his companion in infidelity, and when he came to the end there was no hope for him, and infidelity prevailed him nothing. It is an awful thing to be without Christ in the world.

VI. Without God. If you could imagine God taken out of your life for a moment it would be a position of terror. No one would ever again say no to Him if they realized that they might say no for the last time. To have no help in temptation and no comfort in the hour of sorrow, and no support in the day of death would indeed be an awful thing. A friend of mine told me of a man in the West who had been constantly besought by his friends to come to Christ, and had resisted all their entreaties. He had been in prosperity and in adversity, and at last the calls became so marked that it was as if God had actually spoken to him, and at last in a heat of passion he cried out as if he were speaking to God, "Oh, God, let me alone," and He did, and until the day of his death it is said he never again had even a faint desire to go to Christ. It is dangerous to resist God; the man who says no to Christ and speaks for the last time, and then comes to the place where he had no hope and is without God in the world.

Was True to Her Colors. A beautiful instance of Christian fidelity was that displayed by a distinguished Christian young woman who was spending a few weeks of summer at a certain hotel in a favorite resort in the East. An effort was made to induce her to attend a dance, in order that the affair might have the prestige bestowed by her presence, as she stood high in society. She declined all the importunities of her friends. Finally, an honorable Senator tried to persuade her to attend, saying, "Miss B—, this is quite a harmless affair, and we want the exceptional honor of your presence."

"Senator," said the lady, "I cannot do it; I am a Christian. I never do anything in my summer vacation, or wherever I go, that will injure the influence I have over the girls of my Sabbath-school class."

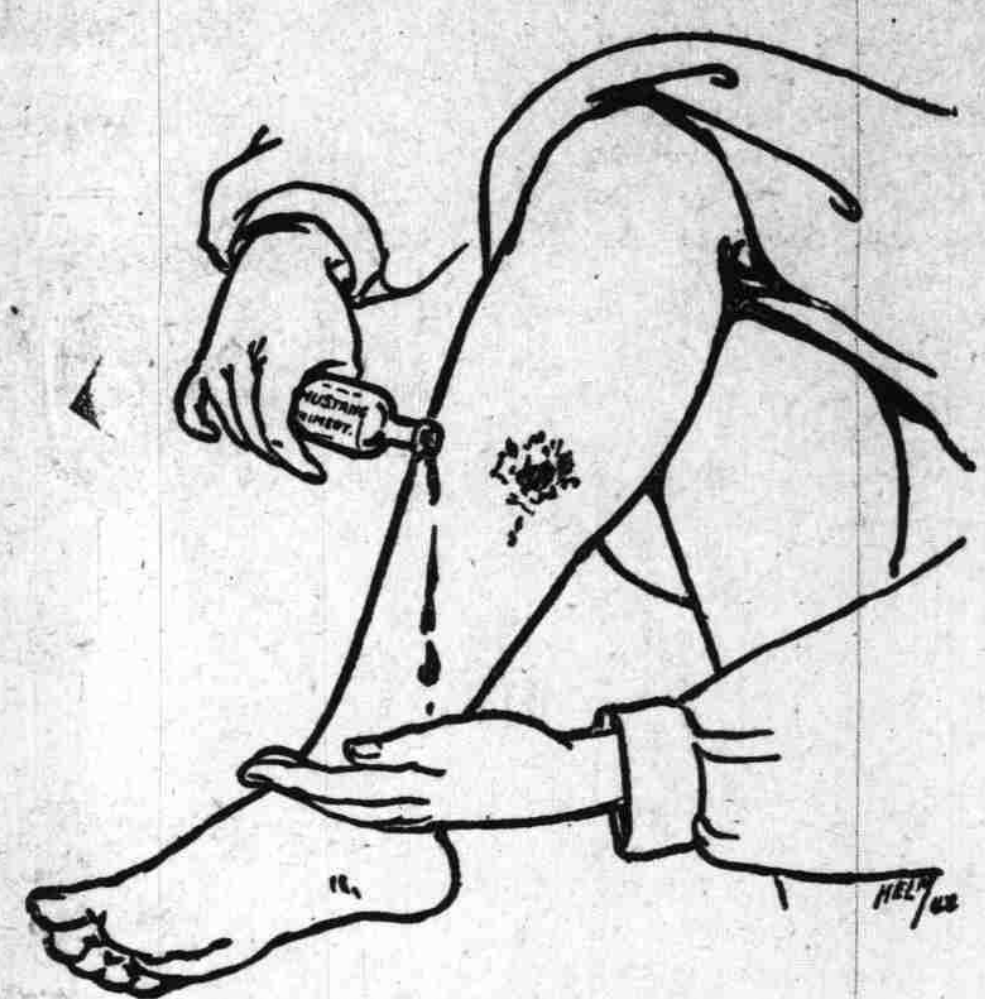
The Senator bowed and said: "I honor you; if there were more Christians like you, more men like myself would become Christians."

God's Work Must Be Done. A poor field negro with a wooden leg hobbled up to the collection table to lay his offering upon it. He took from a pocket a handful of silver, and said, "That's for me, massa;" from another pocket, another handful, "That's for my wife, massa;" and from still another pocket, yet another handful, "That's for my child, massa." The pastor remonstrated with him for giving so much. "O massa!" said he, "God's work must be done, and I will have a part in it."

Commenting on this incident, Ida Q. Moulton says: "You and I want a part in it. Heaven's treasures will be given us throughout the eternal ages for a brief life of self-denial and self-sacrifice here, out of love for our dear Master. Take this motto to your strong, true, loving heart, fellow-Christian: 'God's work must be done, and I will have a part in it.'"

Cultivate Patience. Never be discouraged because good things get on so slowly here, and never fail to do daily that good which lies next to your hand. Do not be in a hurry, but be diligent. Enter into the sublime patience of the Lord.—George MacDonald.

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I have used Ripans Tablets with so much satisfaction that I can cheerfully recommend them. I have been troubled for about three years with what I called bilious attacks coming on regularly once a week. Was told by different physicians that it was caused by bad teeth, of which I had several. I had the teeth extracted, but the attacks continued. I had seen advertisements of Ripans Tablets in all the papers but had no faith in them, but about six weeks since a friend induced me to try them. Have taken but two of the small 5-cent boxes of the Tablets and have had no recurrence of the attacks. Have never given a testimonial for anything before, but the great amount of good which I believe has been done me by Ripans Tablets induces me to add mine to the many testimonials you doubtless have in your possession now.

I have been a great sufferer from constipation for over five years. Nothing gave me any relief. My feet and legs and abdomen were bloated so I could not wear shoes on my feet and only a loose dress. I saw Ripans Tablets advertised in our daily paper, bought some and took them as directed. Have taken them about three weeks and there is such a change! I am not constipated any more and I owe it all to Ripans Tablets. I am thirty-seven years old, have no occupation, only my household duties and nursing my sick husband. He has had the dropsy and I am trying Ripans Tablets for him. He feels some better but it will take some time, he has been sick so long. You may use my letter and name as you like.

I want to inform you, in words of highest praise, of the benefit I have derived from Ripans Tablets. I am a professional nurse and in this profession a clear head is always needed. Ripans Tablets does it. After one of my cases I found myself completely run down. Acting on the advice of Mr. Geo. Bowler, P. O. 338 Newark Ave., Jersey City, I took Ripans Tablets with grand results.

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I could never ride in a car or go into a crowded place without getting a headache and sick at my stomach. I heard about Ripans Tablets from an aunt of mine who was taking them for catarrh of the stomach. She had found such relief from their use she advised me to take them too, and I have been doing so since last October, and will say they have completely cured my headaches. I am twenty-nine years old. You are welcome to use this testimonial.

Mother was troubled with heartburn and sleeplessness, caused by indigestion, for a good many years. One day she saw a testimonial in the paper endorsing Ripans Tablets. She determined to give them a trial, was greatly relieved by their use and now takes the Tablets regularly. She keeps a few cartons Ripans Tablets in the house and says she will not be without them. The heartburn and sleeplessness have disappeared with the indigestion which was formerly so great a burden for her. Our whole family take the Tablets regularly, especially after a hearty meal. My mother is fifty years of age and is enjoying the best of health and spirits; also eats hearty meals, an impossibility before she took Ripans Tablets.

Reading some of the testimonials in favor of Ripans Tablets, I tried them. Ripans Tablets not only relieved but actually cured my youngster, the headaches have disappeared, bowels are in good condition and he never complains of his stomach. He is now a red, chubby-faced boy. This wonderful change I attribute to Ripans Tablets. I am satisfied that they will benefit any one (from the cradle to old age) if taken according to directions.

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