

LAST WEEK OF REVIVAL OPENED AUSPICIOUSLY

(Continued From Page One).
I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." I am quite sure that no one could be so thoughtless as to be indifferent to Him, and no one could be so wicked as to mock Him.

The story is told of an old stage-driver in the early days of the history of California. He was accustomed to guide his eight horses drawing the old-fashioned stage coach around the most dangerous places in some of the mountain drives in California. He used to put his foot upon the brake and hold the stage coach as steadily as if they were moving upon level ground. He was impatient, profane in every way, and indifferent to the claims of God. He mocked His openly, and when he was dying, still impatient, they saw his foot moving and a look of terror upon his face, and, bending over him, heard him say: "I am on the down grade, and I cannot find the brake. My God, we are lost!"

This text is in its setting in the New Testament. It warns us against the squandering of our time and talent here. It gives us the picture of the sower scattering broadcast the seed and sowing from his own resources. We do the same thing, and we do it in the same way. God has given us a mind, and with that mind we think of impure things instead of the pure. He has given us a heart, and in that heart we cherish that which is wrong instead of encouraging love. He has given us a will, and with that will we choose the sinful rather than the way which leads along the paths of righteousness. He has given us a body, and we yield that body to the way of passion instead of placing it upon the altar, a living sacrifice for Him. We are all the time sowing and it is well for us to know what God is saying in His Word: "Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap." It is well, also, to keep in mind the thought that the emphasis is on the word "whatsoever."

There is a general principle in this whole matter of judgment. It applies, of course, in part to those of us who are Christians. It is true that we shall never stand before the great white throne if we have not accepted Christ. Do not for a moment imagine that this will ever be possible for you, for it could not be. God would be manifestly unfair should He judge my substitute and then judge me too; but it must be remembered that for the way we use our time and talents we shall render an account unto Him.

In first Corinthians, third chapter, 13th, 14th and 15th verses, we read: "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." The foundation is all right in every case. It is laid in the good providence of God by His own hands, but the superstructure depends upon the builder.

If upon the good foundation we build wood, hay and stubble, the testing day is coming when not only our service, but the motives back of the service shall be tried; when not only our sermons, but the thought that inspired them shall feel the touch of fire, when all our gifts and offerings shall be counted worth while or worthless just in proportion as we have had the right motive in bestowing them. It is a sad thing to make a failure of life just for time, but to fail in the future and to have Him say that in spite of time and talent we have been faithless to Him would be sad indeed.

There are certain great facts which we must remember, if this text is to make any impression upon us, the first of which is that we shall reap if we sow. Sow an act and reap a habit; sow a habit and reap a character; sow a character and reap a destiny. God pity you if in the face of all His warnings you sow in the wrong way. Second, we shall reap what we sow. So many times we hear men (speaking of young men who are living a life of sin and shame) say: "Let them sow their wild oats; they will get over them in a little while." But that is not true. If we sow wild oats, we shall reap that harvest; and the sad thing is that we hurt others as well as ourselves. No man sinneth unto himself alone.

Intertwined with the history of these semi-tropic isles are many tragic stories which do not appear in print. An old resident of Thursday Island told me the following sad history. A mothered living on Hammond Island became aware that her two children were suffering from leprosy in its initial stages. Unwilling to be parted from her boy and girl, she concealed the fact of their ill disease, and in this she was aided by the friendly doctor who visited them, and the husband and father who guarded the dread secret with his wealth. But secrets of such a deadly nature are difficult to hide. It is common knowledge on the islands now that the mother, in her blind love for her little boy and girl, sent them to the public school on Thursday Island, half hoping, half believing that they had recovered, and entirely overlooking the danger to other children.

How the secret leaked out, and the arm of the law began to move; how the anxious father approached the government offering to buy up one of the smaller islands and to completely isolate himself and his family if they might be permitted to retain the children; how the government, inexorable as such machinery usually is, refused to grant his request on the ground that it would establish a dangerous precedent—these are the details in the tragedy that went step by step to its inevitable climax. Before the law could operate, the mother, half frantic with grief, escaped with the children to Sydney. For 12 months she remained in hiding in that city, daily expecting discovery, hourly dreading it. Then the blow fell. One day, by accident, the police discovered her, and taking the little boy and girl sent them to the leper colony. The woman, bereft and heartbroken, returned to her husband.

Had as it is, the story would be a nice one if I might end it here. But I am recounting fact as they were related to me by one who followed the case throughout. Some curiosity was manifested as to how these children of apparently healthy parentage had been infected by leprosy. Medical inquiries were made, and it was ascertained that the mother, unwilling to fulfill the duties of motherhood and not caring to have her social life hampered when the children were born, had secured a South Sea Island woman to suckle the babies, and thus they had contracted the disease.

Third, we shall reap more than we sow. A missionary in Africa, carried with him as a memento of his days on the old farm at home a bottle full of beautiful grains of wheat. He kept this bottle ever before him, and as he looked at the golden wheat, he

was reminded of the sower of wheat, who sows the seed of truth, and those who are around about us.

Men count it an honor to serve the government, but they are slipshod and full of faults in too many instances when it comes to serving the King of Kings. When the old servant had finished his story he asked for Rebekah as the bride of his master's son and they said to her: "Wilt thou go with this man?" And she said: "I will go." What a story.

Abraham is like God; seeking a bride for Christ. The old servant is like Jesus; waiting for his bride, and the bride is the church. I have come to Asheville to present this Master and to say in the words of the text: "And now, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my Master, tell me, and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."—Genesis 24:42.

This is a striking story in which the text is found. The whole of the Bible is not only interesting but profitable, the only reason why men do not believe it is because they do not study it in the proper way. I believe every word of it. I have tested it in all lands and under all circumstances and conditions, and have never known it to fail.

In this particular story Abraham is choosing a bride for his son, Isaac, and he is sending his aged servant to his own people in a distant land, and is giving him the strongest commission which must be fulfilled. With a magnificent camel train, which was in every way in keeping with his position as the servant of a great man, he sets forth. As he comes to the end of the day he prays that when he reaches the well and gives his camels to drink, that she who comes forth to assist him might be the bride for Isaac; and it is written: "Before I had done speaking, Rebekah appeared." What an illustration of prayer. God says: "Before you call, I will answer."

Prayer can solve every problem, lift every burden, open every closed door, make every dark pathway bright and make earth like heaven. Abraham's servant makes his way from the well into the home of the father of Rebekah. They set food before him, and ask him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I have told you mine errand." What a magnificent spirit. It is the spirit which we must have today as the servants of Jesus Christ. Because we do not have it, we fail.

Too many things prevent our serving Christ faithfully. We are too tired we say, and we stay at home from church. We have a theater engagement, and we miss the prayer meeting; an invitation to a dance, and we turn away from important duties which might make life better for us and for others. We are selfish and sinful, and all the time men are drifting to perdition, while we who have had the commission to tell them of Christ, have sealed lips, and allow them to drift without a warning. When the old servant began to tell his story, he started in this way: "I am Abraham's servant." I can imagine the pride with which he said it. I can detect even in the Biblical story, the thrill that took possession of him.

It is never until we feel the importance of being servants of Jesus Christ, the dignity which has been conferred upon us, the importance of the work to which he has called us, that we are faithful to him and those

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Patton
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ham Lincoln, with Governor Todd by his side, entered the building where his famous address was to be delivered. An old soldier with tattered uniform attempted to follow him, and a guard stopped him. Abraham Lincoln immediately spoke to the guard, saying: "Officer, let this man go in; he is my man; he stood for the government at Gettysburg, and I stand for him here." This is an illustration of what Christ will do for us. If you are true to Him, there are three things you will do for Him. You will confess Him, I. e., you will acknowledge Him as your Saviour. You will follow Him, I. e., you will seek to walk in his footsteps, doing only the thing that would please Him. You will stand for Him in the presence of His enemies, and in the face of a sinful world.

Not long ago on the street of Liverpool in England an infidel orator was seeking to demolish Christ, and to ridicule faith in Him. When he had finished he said: "Now if any one has a word to say for this Christ, I will give him a chance to speak now." No one spoke for a moment, there was a death-like hush, when two girls stepped forward and one of them said, with trembling tone, "Please, sir, we can't speak for Him, we are too timid, but we should like to sing for Him." and while the crowd broke into a cheer they sang "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus, Ye Soldiers of the Cross."

I call the people of Asheville to be faithful to this Master of mine. I ask them to confess and forsake their sins, and I plead with them to do it now.

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