



Is Drinking Your Stumbling Block?

YOU can't hold your job if you drink liquor to excess. You know it and so do I. Let's pass over all the other phases of the drinking question and look at the matter from a cold dollars and cents standpoint. Just the same as any other business question.

If your health was badly impaired and you could be restored again to perfect vigor and strength for a few hundred dollars you would gladly spend the money, wouldn't you? You would consider it a good investment.

Now that's just the situation in taking the Keeley cure. The drinking habit is impairing your health and your earning power, until even your job is uncertain.

You say you could stop drinking if you wanted to. Perhaps you could. But then you don't. So the same endless loss goes on.

We can stop this loss of earning power for you and stop it now. In just a few weeks we can give you new health, new energy and new ambition, and put you again on the high road to greater business success. It's a business opportunity that will pay you many thousand per cent on the investment. As a cold business proposition— isn't it worth looking into?

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W. H. OSBORN, President

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IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD

What Church Folk Are Thinking About and Doing

TRYING TO TRAP A TEACHER.

The International Sunday School Lesson for September 12 is "Three Questions" Matt. 22:15-22.

The third degree, as practiced by the police in an endeavor to extort evidence, or a confession of guilt, has been the subject of much controversy. It is no modern device, being really but a modification of the ancient practice of trial by torture. The insincerity and cruelty of it had an illustration in the case of Jesus. The big men of his time were hounding him to death. They were determined to trip him up in his speech and to put an evil construction upon his words, so that they might have a semblance of evidence against him.

A conspiracy was entered into between two opposite parties, the Pharisees, who were bitterly anti-Roman, and the Herodians, who truckled to Rome. That "politics makes strange bedfellows" is no new observation. They sent students, arched seekers after knowledge, having thereby to catch Jesus off his guard by the plausibility of their questions. Doubtless all the parties to this petty plot thought themselves the servants of the cause of religion, being for from the best of them, the leaders of religious institutions have stooped to unholy means to reach what they regard as holy ends. Somehow the passion for truth, which is the brightest torch lighted at the altar of God, grows dim and flickers and goes out in the close atmosphere of institution-sold Christianity, and the real prophets are too often found outside the churches.

Our Gallant Generation. The controversy was a one between guile and simple sincerity. Somewhat it seems to be the tendency of a highly organized society to depart from simplicity and directness. Guile and sophistication are fashionable fallacies. Consider the "civilized" spectacles may be contemplated for a moment all the "white lies" that have been told this week in society. Imagine the hostesses who have returned the message "not at home" to unwelcome guests; the acquaintances who, face to face, have been "so glad to see you" when they were inwardly annoyed at the meeting; the guests who have told hostesses they "have had such a lovely time," whereas the function has been an ordeal.

But stay; let us get on the safer and more comfortable ground of the odious insincerity of those professed seekers after light who came to Jesus with subtle and dishonest questions; forgetting that God desires truth in the inward part, and that all falsehood is a repudiation of the God of truth. There is no sight among men fairer than the sincere quest after truth; and none more disheartening than wisdom and knowledge being used to buttress an unholy or insincere position.

Some Hypocrites and a Question. These questioners, confident that they could impale Jesus on one horn of the dilemma or the other, asked, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not?" If he said yes, the Jewish patriot party would be about his ears; if he said no, Rome and its adherents would have to be reckoned with. The Teacher, unperplexed and unafraid, pierced through the question to the spirit of the false and flattering questioners. "Ye hypocrites!" No gentle speech that for craft and guilefulness and dishonesty on the part of religious teachers are not to be dealt with tenderly, as one deals with the sinful and the ignorant. God pity the Church that forgets how to be patient with the erring weak and impatient with her own deliberately wrong leaders.

The question itself was easily and strikingly answered by the clear judgment of Jesus. He called for a piece of tribute money, bearing the image and name of the reigning emperor. Their very use of the coin showed that they were under obligation to the civil government for currency, for law and order, for highways, and multitudinous conveniences. "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." Of course there are earthly loyalties and obligations. A man is a poor citizen of the kingdom of heaven who is not also a good citizen of his own country. Patriotism is a religious duty. Christian citizens have ever been the best citizens, as many a bloody page of history records. The existence of bad government is a reflection upon the fidelity of Christian citizenship.

As coins are stamped, so are souls. The human spirit bears the image and superscription of God. Therefore render "unto God the things that are God's." The life belongs to the Lord; the heart was made in his likeness and it only finds its full mission in his service. Whosoever is not obedient allegiance to the Creator is a lost coin.

An Old Marriage Problem. The sex question is a widely-discussed theme today. It has always engaged the thought of serious persons. The subject is one that lends itself readily to morbid and distorted and curious views. A favorite catch question of the Sadducees, who did not believe in a resurrection, which they had often foolishly used to the confusion of the Pharisees, had to do with the marriage relation. It was a hypothetical question of seven brothers, dying one after another and each taking the same woman to wife, and some leaving children. The question would the woman be in the resurrection. That was what John Elliot used to tell his Indians was "a papoose question." It was only a "smart" quibble in the same class with the common one of scoffers, "can God make a stone so big he cannot lift it?" The common sense of people revolts against such a trifling state of mind. These Sadducees missed the glory and greatness of the future life in their zeal to defend a theory. They thought of the infinities of heaven in very small earth terms. I remember as a little boy weeping when told by my mother that there was no night or sleeping in heaven, and she had to reassure me by saying that there would be a little bed for me in heaven if I should want it! The anthropomorphism of all Christian teaching made necessary by our crude understanding put limitations upon the great conceptions of God and eternity. Heaven is more than earth perpetuated, purified and perfected. The problems that perplex us here will be no problems there. The wise word about the future is that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Next September Party. Next September, we cannot but be grateful for these questions. They throw a flood of light upon contemporary conditions and duties. There was the question as to which was the greater commandment, Jesus answered by the word which all devout Jews venerate in their phylacteries, "Hear, O Israel the Lord our God, the Lord is one." That lesson of monotheism, sorely needed in a land partly peopled by and entirely

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surrounded by polytheists, has been learned by Christendom. The unity of God is accepted by all who accept God at all.

Society today reverses the divine order as to the greatest commandment—for Jesus enunciated two: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." The second is this: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The present fashion is to put the second commandment first. There is a glorious emphasis in our time upon man's duty to man. The gospel of brotherly love is being preached from a wonderful array of modern pulpits. In many tongues understood of the common people. Every Christian must thrill with exultation over the way in which God's great word is echoing throughout the world and reshaping human society.

Nevertheless, that is not the first commandment. Of this new and noble mood we may say, as Jesus said concerning the scribe, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." But there is deep need that we should put into first place the premier commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." More humanitarianism is a fruit of the gospel, but it is not Christianity. Religion is more than the relation of man to man. It is first of all, and essentially, a personal relationship existing between the individual and Jehovah. The wealth of the evangelists, "of right with God," is eternally true and supremely important. Our times will be out of joint until men give God first place in all things.

Bluffed and fogged, the enemies of Jesus turned away. They could not fight him in his words. Their insulations caught only themselves. So they

gave up as hopeless this line of pursuit. Meanwhile, "the common people heard him gladly." The vindication of Jesus is not in the least apparent in the eyes of the masses, but in the devotion of the great mass of ordinary men and women who have proved him and found him true.

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