

CHAPMAN'S SERMON

WEDNESDAY DISCOURSE BY THE NOTED PASTOR-EVANGELIST.

Subject: Rabboni—The Death of Christ a Step to All. For by It He Takes Away From Us All the Sting and From the Grave Its Victory.

NEW YORK CITY.—The following interesting sermon has been prepared for the press by the popular pastor-evangelist, the Rev. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman, the subject of the discourse is "Rabboni," which was preached from the text, "Jesus saith unto her, Mary! Rabboni! which is to say, Master." John 20: 16.

The burial of Christ lies between His humiliation and His exaltation; it is one of the resting points in His history, and He passed through it into His glorious resurrection. For the crucifixion is represented as another then the burial of Christ is like a valley, and since it is true that in every valley mentioned in the Scriptures there is a well of water or a spring, so strange as it may seem in this world, which seems to be filled only with shadows, one stoops to drink at the well of comfort, for the death of Christ is the greatest possible comfort and help to all who are in His death. He takes away from us all the sting and from the grave its victory, for the tomb of the Christian in all the years this side of the burial of Christ has been tenanted with angels, but we have not so much to do with His burial as with His resurrection. John gives no narrative of the resurrection itself, but rather an account of the manner in which he himself was convinced that the resurrection had taken place. It is not so much an argument, although on the basis of it the strongest arguments have been presented; it is rather a beautiful testimony and a thrilling story. When Mary brought the startling intelligence that the tomb was empty Peter and John made for the spot at the top of their speed. John outruns Peter, but naturally reverence keeps him from entering the tomb. He looks in, however, to convince himself that the body has not been removed by the enemies of Christ, for the linen clothes in which He had been wrapped were carefully taken off and left behind. When Peter comes up they two enter the tomb together, and their inferences are reached after they have carefully studied the surroundings. This simple narrative will be to many minds more convincing than a great argument. It is told clearly by an eye witness of all the events. We see Mary breathlessly giving out the startling news, and we watch the hasty springing up of the two men and their rapid racing along the streets out through the gates to the garden. We behold John standing panting at the rock-hewn sepulcher and we catch a vision of Peter tottering up behind but not hesitating a moment. We see him entering and gazing at the tomb and that, till the articles in the tomb have told their story and the two men leave the sepulcher together awed and convinced, and the eye witness who thus beautifully relates what he knew of that wonderful morning adds, "He saw and believed."

Mary came after that as quickly as she could, but exhausted with her rapid carrying of the news to Peter and John was not able to keep pace with them as they ran to the tomb, and before she arrived they were gone. She may have missed them in the streets as she came out of the city. At any rate, finding the tomb still empty, and no one present to explain the reason of it, she stands there heart-broken and pours out her distress in tears. The grave being empty the whole earth is empty to her; the dead Christ was more to her than a living world. She can but stand and lay her head upon the stone and let her tears flow as from a broken heart. So absorbing is her grief that the vision of angels does not astonish her; she had but the one thought, "They have taken away my Lord." She supposed, too, that all about her must know her loss and understand what she is seeking, so that when she sees the gardener as she supposes she cries out, "If thou have borne Him hence." She does not even mention His name, for she cannot imagine that any one is thinking of any other than He who fills her whole mind and heart. (John 20: 11-13). "But Mary stood without at the sepulcher weeping; and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the sepulcher, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." As Mary answers the angels she heard a step behind her and the door of the tomb is darkened by a shadow, and on turning discerns dimly through her tears a figure which naturally enough she supposes to be the gardener, because he was the likeliest person to be going about the garden at that early hour. (John 20: 14-16). "And when she had thus said she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if Thou have borne Him hence, tell me where Thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary! She turned herself and saith unto Him, Rabboni! which is to say, Master!"

The utterance of her name was enough to tell her it was some one who knew her that was there. The voice seemed again to command a calm within her, for once before that voice had banished from her nature the evil spirits that had taken possession of her, but now again she steps out of darkness into light, and from being broken-hearted she becomes the happiest creature in the world. Undoubtedly there is very much more to the ministry of angels than we imagine. Their attendance upon Jesus' birth, their constant presence during all His life, and even the guarding of His dead body is but an example of their service to each of us. All the providential dealings of God are administered by angels, and in the next dispensation we do not know but that this may be our own ministry. Hebrews 2: 2, "For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." There are some special thoughts which ought to be drawn this morning from a story so beautiful as the meeting of Mary with her Lord in the garden.

I. We must surely be impressed with the thought that those who love Christ most diligently and perseveringly are those who receive the most privileges from Christ's hand. It is worthy of note that Mary Magdalene would not leave the sepulcher when Peter and John went away to their homes. Love to her Master

would not let her leave the place where He had lain. Where He was now she did not know, but love made her linger. His precious body had been seen by mortal eyes, and her love reaped a rich reward. She was the first to see her Lord after He rose from the dead; the bold conversation with Him. All believers have not the same degree of faith or love or knowledge or courage or wisdom, but it is certainly true that those who love Christ most fervently and cleave to Him most closely will always enjoy the most communion with Him.

First—Notice the instruction given to us in this story concerning love in its different phases and elements. In Peter it is subjection, in John it is objection. The reply of Peter to the Lord was "I love Thee," while John's constant description of himself was, "The disciple whom Jesus loved." May we not learn, therefore, of the apprehension of Jesus' love for us instead of being occupied with our own pitiful, flickering life, for He is that which will give greatest joy to the soul. The exhortation of the Scriptures is "Keep yourself in the love of God." In Mary we discover these elements properly combined. Tracing her history we find that Jesus had delivered her from an awful bondage. "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils." Mark 16: 9. Truly she might realize the words of Hezekiah, Isaiah 38: 17, "Behold for peace I had great bitterness, but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back." Marginal reading, "Thou hast loved up my soul from the pit of corruption." Therefore being so much forgiven she loved much. That is, Jesus' love was the source and her love was the inevitable result. There are some elements of Mary's love which ought to be studied here.

(a) The vision of angels did not terrify her. In Matthew's gospel the angels reassured the woman by saying "Fear not," as they were afraid, but with Mary she was too completely filled with thoughts of Christ to be in any way afraid of the sight of angels. Undoubtedly she was absolutely forgetful of her physical weakness, for she said to Him whom she supposed to be the gardener, "Sir, if Thou have borne Him hence, tell me where Thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." How would it have been possible for her to handle the body of one who was dead, and yet doubtless she would have found a way. It is certainly true that intense devotion to the Lord takes away every thought of the burden of service, and those who have an absorbing love for Christ may perform deeds which would be impossible under ordinary circumstances. There are three people whom we may remember as representing the three graces, faith, hope and love; Mary, of Bethany, who believed that He was to be crucified and buried, anointed His body for the burial, showing her faith; the penitent thief upon the cross expected that Christ would come in His kingdom, revealing His hope, but this Mary Magdalene is a beautiful representation of love.

We find again in this story an illustration of the fact that fears and sorrows of believers are often quite needless. We are told that Mary stood at the sepulcher weeping as if nothing could comfort her. The angels spoke to her and still she wept. The Lord Himself addressed her saying, "Why weepest thou?" and the burden of her complaint was always the same, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him," and yet all this time her risen Master was close to her. Her tears, therefore, were needless, and her sorrow was groundless. Doubtless Mary failed to recognize Jesus.

First—Because she was not expecting Him, and so we often miss our choicest blessings for want of looking for them, and have doubtless mistaken them when right before us, but doubtless, also, she failed to recognize Him because of the fact that it was hardly light in the morning, and she saw Him but dimly. Thus again she is an illustration of ourselves as we behold Him, not so much face to face as we realize His presence with the heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," and yet what thoughtful Christian can fail to see that we have a picture of many a believer's experience. How often we are anxious when there is no cause for anxiety. How frequently we mourn about the absence of things which are really within our grasp. Two-thirds of the things we fear in life never happen at all, and many of the tears we shed are shed in vain. If Mary had found the seal of the tomb unbroken she might well have wept. The very absence of the body which made her weep was a token for good and a cause of joy for herself and for all mankind.

II. "Jesus saith unto her, Mary! She turned herself and saith unto Him, Rabboni! which is to say, Master!" The way in which Mary addresses her Lord is most significant. It is a term often applied to Him and always wisely. In Matthew 23: 8, we read, "For one is your Master, even Christ." It will be a happy day for the church when we yield to the mastery of Jesus Christ. It is true that men are frequently indifferent to this claim, as, for example, in Matthew 23: 25, "Then Judas, which betrayed Him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said." Many a man has claimed to yield to the mastery of Christ and yet has betrayed Him by an inconsistent life, as again in Matthew 26: 49, when Judas says yet again, "Hail, Master! and kissed Him." There can be no basic betrayal Him. The utterance of her name was enough to tell her it was some one who knew her that was there. The voice seemed again to command a calm within her, for once before that voice had banished from her nature the evil spirits that had taken possession of her, but now again she steps out of darkness into light, and from being broken-hearted she becomes the happiest creature in the world. Undoubtedly there is very much more to the ministry of angels than we imagine. Their attendance upon Jesus' birth, their constant presence during all His life, and even the guarding of His dead body is but an example of their service to each of us. All the providential dealings of God are administered by angels, and in the next dispensation we do not know but that this may be our own ministry. Hebrews 2: 2, "For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." There are some special thoughts which ought to be drawn this morning from a story so beautiful as the meeting of Mary with her Lord in the garden.

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ing said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net." The disciples are fishing and all the night they have toiled and taken nothing, but the Master makes a simple suggestion, as a result of which they gather in so many fish that their net brake and their partners came to help them and fill both the ships so that they began to sink. He is the Master to help us in the time of adversity and trial and business difficulty. There is no annoyance in the home but what might be right if He were in control; there is no anxiety in business but what might be avoided or met if He were really in the seat of power in our lives; there is no difficulty so great or no annoyance so trifling as to be beneath His thoughtful suggestion. If, as He said Himself, the very hairs of our head are numbered, and not a sparrow falls to the ground without God's care, then we may rest assured that He will turn to us with complete deliverance if He only be recognized as Master.

Third—He is the Master of the home particularly, and is the secret of victory in every time of difficulty or trial. John 11: 28, "And when she had so said, she went her way and called Mary, her sister, secretly, saying, The Master is come and calleth for thee." There is no home more beautiful in all the world than the home of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, only because the chief guest of that home was Jesus, and the one controlling their every movement was the Son of God. Again in Luke 9: 38, we read, "And being a man of the company cried out saying, Master, I beseech Thee, look upon my son; for he is mine only child." It will be a happy time when we have learned to bring our children to Him, to place our loved ones in His care, in a word, to recognize Him as the Master of us all.

A very dear friend of mine, one of a family of seven sons, told me that his old Scotch mother almost broke her heart in the old land because one of her seven sons was a profligate. There came into her home one day an aged neighbor who said, "Why do you sorrow so; you have six sons saved; let John go." And my mother, said my friend, rose tremblingly, leaning upon the chair heavily and said, "I will never let him go. I gave him to God before he was born. I carried him into the kirk as soon as I could walk, and he is God's child, and He will have him if He lives long enough, said my friend, to see him a Christian, a Judge of the highest courts in America and an officer in the church."

Fourth—But of all the expressions the one used by Mary in the text is the most striking, "Rabboni," which is to say, "My Master!" Since He has redeemed us and God has given us to Him, and we have ourselves in a way yielded to Him, would it not be well for us to let Him be our Master in fact as well as in name, and make this sort of a covenant with Him on this day?

First—I will let Him rule in my mind, and will think only of those things that are pure and good and true and shall tend to make me like Him.

Second—I will let Him dwell in my heart, remembering that out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh, and remembering also that the heart is a fountain sending forth streams either bitter or sweet according as either Christ or His great enemy be in control.

Third—He shall be the Master of my hands. I will lay hold of no thing that would be against Him, and I will remember that I am in this world in His stead to minister as He would minister and help as He would help.

Fourth—He shall have absolute control of my feet. I will strive to go on errands of mercy as He would go, to do the things that I feel sure would have the seal of His approval. In a word, I will give Him control of my whole being, spirit, soul and body shall be under the sweep of His influence. As a matter of fact He does now control in our spirits. He came here the day of regeneration, and the Spirit in the body of a man is like the holy of holies in the plan of the Tabernacle, for just as when Christ was crucified the veil of the temple was rent in twain, so now I make a covenant that I will lay hold upon Him as my Master, counting myself to have been crucified with Him, buried with Him, risen with Him and seated with Him, believing that He will thus infuse my whole being, breaking down any barriers between my nature and making me to be as He would have me be.

Won by the Lord's Prayer.

The following striking example of the power of Christ's words over a poor degraded people is related by Mr. Hay in his "Western Barbary." He says:

"I remember on one occasion traveling in the country with a companion who possessed some knowledge of medicine; we had arrived at a door near which we were to pitch our tents, when a crowd of Arabs surrounded us, cursing and swearing at the 'rebbers against God.' My friend, who spoke a little Arabic, turning around to an elderly person, whose garb bespoke him a priest, said: 'Who taught you that we were unbelievers? Hear my daily prayer, and judge for yourselves.' He then repeated the Lord's Prayer. All stood amazed and silent till the priest exclaimed, 'May God curse me if I ever curse again those who hold such belief! Nay, more, that prayer shall be my prayer till my hour be come. I pray thee, O Nazarene, repeat the prayer, that it may be remembered and written among us in letters of gold.'"

"That Silence Saved Me."

There is a very suggestive incident related illustrating how at times silence may be a greater power for good than any other agency.

A young man sat chatting with some giddy girls. Among them was a sweet, quiet young woman known as a Christian. The young man, thinking to tease her, bantered her about her religion. The silly girls tittered, but the object of his mirth remained silent. Then with the folly of youth and recklessness of impiety he uttered many infidel objections to Christianity. She did not smile, nor look at him, nor seem to notice him. Then he continued his harangue, hoping to force her to refute something. But she maintained the same sweet, dignified silence. A vision of his own stupidity broke over the young man and convicted him of sin. He said afterward, telling the story, "That silence saved me."

Life's Lesson.

It is well to keep in mind that no day leaves us just where it found us. We are with each departing day older in time and nearer to the grave. Some addition for good or ill is made to the record of life. We are made better or worse. Habit becomes a little stronger. Our opportunities in life lessen. The need of dispatch in the work of life increases. We have less time to waste.

TRAPPERS' KNELL SOUNDED.

Fur Farms Will Supply the Market in the Future.

The trapper's life is not all beer and skittles, not one round of pleasure and success. Every pelt that comes to his hand is procured only after a vast amount of work—work that would make the ordinary laborer shudder. And yet when the fashionable woman selects a garment that suits her fastidious taste, out of the many that are shown her, how little does she realize what that fur may have meant to the man who got it, the man who braved the bitter cold that he might contribute a few pelts to the great marts of the world, and get in exchange a bare livelihood! But, perhaps, after all, the trapper is a man to be envied, especially so if his country is one rich in fur-bearing animals for then he can make a good living, and, greatest of food animals—furs, too, are plentiful. The lives of trappers in different parts of the country are probably very much alike, varying chiefly with the climatic conditions. In Florida, for example, the life is seen in its easiest form—mild climate, and an abundance of food animals—furs, too, are plentiful, but owing to their thinness they are of much less value than those from the northern countries.

In Canada the furs are thicker and better, but the difficulties are increased because of the climate. The winters are long and snow-bound. There are days together of raging storm. Not only must the trapper know the weather, but he must be prepared to meet it with fortitude, wherever he may be. The country itself is immense in geographical area. The trapper must be self-reliant and know what to do in an emergency. Like the animal he hunts, his native wits become acute.

With the increasing demand for furs and the extravagant demands of fashion which requires that fur garments be of different shape and style each year, the fur-bearing animals in their wild state are becoming scarcer year by year, so it is safe to conjecture that fur farms will in the future supply the markets, and the trapper will be a man of the past. Those who come after us will read of his life and it will be like a fairy tale. As the large Indian birch-bark canoe laden to the gunwale with furs is passing down the quick-flowing rivers of time and civilization, so will the picturesque trapper slowly but surely fade out of existence. —Country Life in America.

Measurements of a large number of heads of those attending the universities of Great Britain show that the intelligence of a student, so far as it can be measured by his success as a scholar, has no relation to the size of his head.

Legacies to Employees.
In addition to leaving over £100,000 to Glasgow charities, Mr. James Dick, the Glasgow gutta-percha millionaire, whose will has just been registered at Edinburgh, has bequeathed handsome sums to all his employees: The cashier received £5,000. Each clerk gets £500. The manager of departments, £500. Each woman worker with thirty years' service, £300. Women workers with twenty years' service, £100. And every other woman worker is bequeathed £50. The men employees are not so handsomely provided for. Those with forty years' service get £100. Twenty years' service, £75. Fifteen years' service, £50. The remainder, £30 each. To his domestics, Mr. Dick also makes handsome legacies. The cook gets £2,000 and the housemaid, coachman, and the gardener £1,000 each.

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