

THE GREATEST TRAGEDY IN THE UNIVERSE

TEXT: *Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Many preachers are giving up the idea about the Fall and the total depravity of man. People are not often plainly told how they are guilty sinners before a Holy God. The sermons of our forefathers are looked upon in many quarters as relics of the Dark Ages, only fit for the curiosity shop.



There is, however, one preacher left of the old school, and he speaks today as loudly and clearly as ever. He is not a popular preacher, though the world is his parish, and he travels over every part of the globe speaking in every language under the sun. He visits the poor; he calls upon the rich. You may meet him in the workhouse, or find him moving in the very highest circles of society. He preaches to both churchmen and dissenters, to people of every religion and of no religion; and whatever the text he may use, the substance of his sermon is always the same. He's a rather monotonous preacher, but he makes all listen to him.



Yet he is an eloquent preacher, often stirring feelings which no other preacher could touch, and bringing tears into eyes that are not used to weeping. He addresses himself to the intellect, the conscience, and the heart of his hearers. His arguments — none have been able to refute. There is no conscience on earth that has not at some time quailed in his presence, nor is there any that has remained.

Today, sin is considered just a derangement of the nervous system. Medication or a rest home, they say, should be administered rather than penitentiary wholly unmoved by the force of his weighty appeals. Most people hate him, but in one way or another, he makes everybody listen to him.



He is neither refined, nor polite. Indeed, he often interrupts the public arrangements, and breaks in rudely upon the private enjoyments of life. He lurks about the doors of the theater and the ballroom. His shadow falls sometimes on the card table. He has

a master key which gives him access to the most secluded chamber. **HIS NAME IS DEATH.**



You have heard many sermons from that old preacher. You cannot take up a newspaper without finding that he has a corner in it. Every tombstone serves him a pulpit. You may find him addressing you personally.

Will you turn this day to the Saviour? *Neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other.*

Acts 4:12: Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Galatians 6:7-8:

⁷ Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

⁸ For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

It is an invariable and inflexible law of God that “*whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap*”. Remember that sin pays wages.

Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And death hath passed upon all men *for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*

Romans 3:23: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

If you open your dictionary, you will find that the very first pages owe a great deal of their existence to sin. Yet, is it not a word that many are dropping out of their vocabulary? Nothing is more necessary than the recovery of our lost indignation against sin, for sin pays wages.

SIN!

The thought of the old Puritan attitude of fear, shame, and torment seems almost gone. The conviction that sin was an offense against God which caused Him infinite pain and aroused His just and awful indignation, has given place to the devilish notion that sin is only an incident of development, and that sin is only an indication that the Fall is a fall upward.

THE DEVIL'S DICTIONARY

It has always been the method of satan to employ smooth, soft, oily-tongued words to absolutely belittle sin. Satan has a dictionary of his own, and if men accept his definitions, everything in the pathway of disobedience seems clever and attractive.

He calls lying a smart evasion of trouble
He calls drunkenness jollification
Debt is a pecuniary obligation
Theft is defalcation
Robbery is profiteering
Adultery is conjugal infidelity
Cowardly silence is tactfulness
Gluttony is a love for good things
Immorality is just fast living



You may call poison by any name you like. You may analyze it and say that in its composition there are some very pleasant chemical elements, and that it is not so disagreeable after all. But flatter it and camouflage it as you will, poison kills just the same. And so it is with sin — it slays man's opportunities of getting right with God by its seductive wares, and eternally excludes all from the presence of God for all eternity who yield.



Does sin pay wages? It most certainly does, and the highest at that. In this life, sin deforms the body, deadens the mind, and blinds the eyes. The deaf mute who was brought to Jesus was incapable of hearing or speaking. He was destitute of two noble faculties. Two channels of communication with the outer world were closed to him, but Jesus . . . ah, if it were not for Him.

Luke 19:10: For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Matthew 20:28: Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His Life a ransom for many.

And Peter tells us:

1 Peter 3:18: For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

2 Corinthians 5:21: For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

This Jesus began His work of healing and salvation on the man's ears — upon the man's organs of reception. Sin robs man of the ability to hear God's voice. To hear is the first act of faith. Hear and your soul shall live. Then Jesus loosened the man's tongue. Sin robs man of his power to pray, and praise, and testify for the glory of God. It has made him dumb as well as deaf. When Jesus said, “Be opened”, both ears and tongue were set free.

**Sin robs man
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Romans 10:9-10:

⁹ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

¹⁰ For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

To be at enmity against God and living in sin is to be deformed. Could we but realize it, no deformity or hideousness that could strike the eye is half so repulsive and humbling as sin.

Instead of purity, there is impurity;

instead of beauty there is deformity;

instead of truth, there is falsehood;

instead of mercy, there is cruelty;

instead of justice, there is lying and cheating;

instead of light, there is darkness;

instead of life, there is death.



The wages of sin is death!

Oh beloved, that you would see tonight that your sins have separated between you and your God, between you and your friends.

The phenomenon of penitence is one peculiar to the spiritual experience of the God-seekers recorded in the Holy Scriptures. We shall not find anything approaching it in the pagan world outside of Israel. For the sense of sin is begotten when men come into contact with the Holiness of God. The living God, Who revealed Himself to Israel, impressed the fact of His Holiness upon His people.

Numbers 15:40: That ye may remember, and do all My Commandments, and be holy unto your God.

1 Peter 1:15: But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

To come into moral conformity to His Will alone made worship of such a Being possible. It was the sense of inability to measure up to the Divine requirements that plunged the true people of God into acute distress.