

Some Disappointments at the Judgment

by John Hames

The sermon warns against the disappointments that will occur at the Judgment, particularly for those who are pretending to be Christians, those who have become backslidden in heart, and those who put off salvation until cornered by death.

Scripture: Psalm 139:1, Proverbs 6:16, Matthew 7:21, Romans 2:16, 2 Corinthians 5:17, James 1:26

Topics: "False Professions", "True Salvation"

Description

John Hames preaches about the various disappointments at the judgment day, emphasizing that many will be shocked to hear Jesus say 'I never knew you' due to their false professions and lack of genuine salvation. He warns against mistaking reformation for salvation and depending on past experiences or victories, stressing the necessity of a true transformation by the Holy Ghost. Hames also highlights the dangers of having a backslidden heart, secret sins, and being a secret backbiter, pointing out the importance of genuine repentance and living a truly transformed life in Christ.

Transcript

"Not every one that saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?' And then will I profess unto them, 'I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.' Matt. 7:21-23."

My subject for tonight is some disappointments at the judgment. While there are many disappointments in this life, such as financial reverses, unhappy marriages, betrayal of friendship, loss of health, and a number of other things we could mention, most of these can be remedied here. Not so at the judgment - the disappointments there are final and eternal.

There are several classes I wish to mention at this hour who will be awfully disappointed in that day. The very face of our text brings out this thought. Notice it did not say that the gamblers, murderers and drunkards in that day will say, "Lord, Lord, did not we do so and so in thy name in yonder world," but it was a class of people who had palmed themselves off as Christian workers. But Jesus said, "I never knew you," that is, they had never been saved.

The first class that we shall mention is the people who took reformation for salvation. Their names are legion. Christianity does not consist of church joining, water baptism, accepting certain articles of faith, good works, nor is it all these together.

It is possible to have your soul's emotional nature stirred without ever being regenerated. A lot of these so-called conversions in these big union meetings are nothing more or less than an emotional stir. The sublime oratory may lift your soul to raptures of delight, the perfect harmonies of the classic hymn may charm your cultivated taste, but this is not religious feeling; it is mere psychology. It is only kindling of the human mind which has nothing to do with the Holy Ghost.

Someone may ask, 'What is a Christian then?' It is a person who has been made partaker of the "Divine nature" begotten by the Holy Ghost. Whenever this takes place the change is so great that he in whom and upon whom it has been wrought is said to be a "New Creation." This wonderful change from nature to grace, from darkness to light, from hatred to love, from sorrow to gladness, does not only make the soul a partaker of the divine nature, but it powerfully transforms the entire life and makes your outward conduct correspond to your inner life. Let me give you a perfect description of a regenerated soul:

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away, and all things are become new." 2 Cor. 5:17.

Old things are passed away; gossiping, smutty joking, theater-going, card playing, ball playing, circus going, ungodly company are all gone. We are new creatures now. We have a new heart, a new spirit. We now have new desires, new appetites, new tempers, new dispositions and affections which cause us to seek new associations, even the company and fellowship of God's people. My, what a change. This is just the first work of grace, the work of regeneration which it will take to stand in that day. Let me warn you, don't try to substitute a few tears, church going, and patching up the old Adam for that marvelous change known as the new birth.

Another class which will be disappointed in that day are the men and women who are depending upon past experiences and victories to take them through. They have allowed the fire and glory to leak out of their experience while they still keep up a profession and are active in church work. Yet they have a hard look on their faces. The unction has left their voices, the throb has gone from the heart, the luster from the eyes and the brightness from their countenances. This class can take up a lot of time talking about their Jerichos and former victories, but the old-time power has gone from their lives.

Still another class which will be disappointed at the judgment is the backslidden in heart. Notice, I did not say backslidden in life, but heart. You can keep up an outward profession after the sweet spirit of love has leaked out, and the Divine glory has departed. Listen to my text again: "Many will say to me in that day (Judgment Day), 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?'" Don't you see it is possible to keep up an outward profession, sing, pray, preach, anoint the sick, run orphanages, write articles on holiness, and not have the Spirit of Christ?

Let's notice some evidences of a backslidden heart so that we may examine ourselves. A fault-finding, censorious spirit is a conclusive evidence of a backslidden heart. This kind of a spirit takes delight impugning wrong motives to their brethren. A touchy spirit is a sure evidence that Christ has left the heart. When you see people always getting offended and their feelings hurt, it is a sure evidence that the Spirit of Christ is gone. Listen to this: "Great peace have they who love thy law, and nothing shall offend them."

Whenever you get what the prophet is talking about here you will not feel hurt or sore or be looking for slights or wounds. They can sit down on you, push you forward or backward, leave you off the official board - and you simply refuse to be offended. Amen.

An ungoverned temper is another sign of a backslidden heart. When perfect love fills the heart, the temper and disposition will be sweet. An uncontrolled temper has done more to wreck homes, separate friends, split churches, keep the divorce mills running, and damn humanity than all other sins combined. Yes, I will go further. It has wrecked more lives and brought more discord in the home than the open saloon ever had time to do. A bad temper crucifies love, grieves the Holy Ghost and leaves the heart blank dark and cold. Say, if you are having breaks in your Christian experience, you had better rush to the altar or some secret place of prayer at once, and have the cantankerousness taken out of you before it wrecks your life.

Elmer Gates of Washington, D. C., the great scientist of America, goes to prove that whenever a person gets angry his breath is poison, and even the perspiration which comes from the body while under the spirit of anger is so deadly poison that if given to insects it produces immediate death. Do you think a spirit like that could stand in that Day?

Poor, miserable backslider in heart! You are like Samson with his eyes out, grinding in the mill of the gods. He may shake himself but he fails to make others shake. If you have ever seen brighter, better days spiritually it ought to alarm you and send you to your knees.

Still another class that is going to be greatly disappointed at the Judgment is the secret backbiters. God pity that class. Do you know that there is a class of people today who dare to profess the name "Christian" and mingle with religious people who think more of sowing discord among the brethren than a farmer does of sowing down a field with grain? "Six things does the Lord hate" says Solomon, and among them is one that stands out so glaring, "Sowing discord among brethren." I have watched a farmer with a bucket under his arm, walk back and forth, swinging his arm to and fro until every foot of the newly plowed field is covered with seed. So the talebearer and backbiter from the full measure of scandal which he has carefully gathered sows down whole communities, churches and conferences. When his seed springs up, what a harvest of ruined reputations, blighted characters and good names covered with scandal! Who can begin to estimate the blight of one talebearer?

God alone knows the blasted hopes, broken and sad hearts. Ministers have been driven from the pulpit and into disgrace. Wives and husbands have been driven to the divorce courts until health, happiness and contentment have taken wings and flown away. All because of the scandalmongers. The very nature of this sin is to harden the heart, sear the conscience until all one has left is the empty shell of a false profession.

Backbiting and tale bearing are like a burning acid which eats a garment full of holes. One hour of unbrotherly criticism will eat all the Christlike spirit out of the soul, and leave one with a high and dry profession. It strikes through one's spirit like the touch of gall.

I would certainly hate to meet some people's record at the Judgment where they have separated friends and sowed the seed of discord which may take years to uproot and live down. Listen to this, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Notice, James did not say he was religious, but he "seemeth to be religious." He gives us to understand that the poor fellow is deceived, and has a vain religion.

Won't the Judgment be an awful scene when Christ uncovers all the false professions? If I were guilty of the sin of backbiting, I would repent, ask forgiveness of those I had injured, and go into a covenant never to be guilty again.

Another class which will be disappointed in that day is that class who think that they have succeeded in covering their secret sins. Brother, I tell you it is alarming if you only knew the things that are being practiced in secret places. Not only among the ungodly, but in the religious world it is surprising to know the scheming, the wire-pulling, the underhanded things that are being done; the pressure brought to bear in order to down some successful man of God whom heaven honors and the Holy Ghost uses. We could not do these things without first having had a break with God. The Judgment is going to bring out some surprises, as well as disappointments.

God knows this very moment where every car is parked, the number and name of every occupant. That trip you took and thought you fooled your wife. God knows. Your wife will meet you at the Judgment, old fellow, and that other woman too. Your life is going to be thrown on the canvas of the skies for the whole universe to see.

One more class I wish to speak of before closing. It is that class who put off salvation until cornered by death, then because of fear and not godly sorrow they cry for mercy. With a brain clouded they mutter a few words of prayer and tell their loved ones they are ready to go. While I know it is possible for God to save people in the very last moments, I tell you, brother, a man that can successfully thwart God's plan for his life, resist the Holy Spirit, insult Christ, and now take the ashes of a wasted, misspent life and fling them in the face of a good God and expect Him to save him is more than I can understand. Someone kept track of two thousand persons who professed to get saved in what they thought was their deathbed, but who got well and lived for years, and out of two thousand professions only two held out and made good, which goes to show that one thousand, nine hundred and eighty-eight were deceived, and if they had died at that time they would have gone to a devil's hell.

Some religious professors get their eyes open before death, and really get saved, but, oh, the multitudes that are going to be disappointed in that Day.

This one startling incident, and I close: A short time ago a young woman who belonged to a fashionable, worldly church but who made a high profession of religion, wielded a great influence over the young people in that church. As she was a leader in almost everything in the church, she became acquainted with a very godly, pious young woman who belonged to one of the holiness churches in the city. Whenever they were thrown together this godly, plain, pilgrim girl would reprove this worldly church member and say to her, "I don't see how you can do the things you do and make such a profession." The worldly young woman would resent it by saying, "Our church isn't narrow and does not believe like your church does in regards to the movies and worldly amusements."

Time went on, and all of a sudden this worldly-minded girl was smitten with an incurable disease, and when she was told that she would not live long she would laugh and say, "Won't it be fine to go to heaven soon?," and all during those days she lingered she would talk about going to heaven. Finally the last day came. Her friends and church folks gathered to say farewell. She said to each one, "Meet me in heaven." Just before she died she had a sinking spell, and the people looked to see a heavenly smile play over her face, but instead of that, all of a sudden she roused up and with an awful expression of fear on her countenance she gave a piercing scream saying, "Great God, I am lost, I am lost." Her worldly pastor

came running from the hall where he heard her cries to comfort her and when she saw him she cried and said, "Away with you, thou deceiver of men," and fell back on her pillow dead. Yes, and lost. Oh, God, wake us up here tonight!

The Judgment is going to be an awful scene. When the Judge upon the throne announces the awful sentence, "Depart, I never knew you," these words will sparkle on the table of God's eternity forever, and echo through the ears of a damned soul while eternal ages roll on. If I had the least shadow of doubt about my experience I would rush to this altar, regardless of past profession.

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