

Where Art Thou?

by Lewis Williams

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of righteousness and obeying God's commands, as sin and disobedience lead to fear and guilt.

Topics: "Sin And Consequences", "Holy Living"

Description

Lewis Williams preaches about the consequences of sin and the importance of living a holy life in accordance with God's commands. He emphasizes the need to hate sin and love holiness, drawing parallels between godliness and devilish behavior. Williams highlights the story of Adam and Eve's fall, stressing the loss of their divine nature due to sin and the fear and hiding that resulted from disobedience. He challenges listeners to examine their spiritual state and asks where they stand in relation to God, urging sinners, professors, backsliders, and Christians to assess their lives and make necessary changes to align with God's will.

Transcript

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." I JOHN iii. 8,9.

"But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All the righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: In his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." EZEKIEL xviii. 24.

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." GEN. ii. 7-10.

"And the Lord God commanded the man saying. Of every tree of the garden thou mayest eat freely; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." GEN. ii. 16, 17.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." GEN. iii. 6-10.

A casual reader of the Bible would be impressed with the fact that the God revealed in the Bible is a God who hates sin and loves Holiness. That the devil revealed in the Bible is a devil that hates Holiness, but loves sin; therefore, to be godly, or godlike, we must hate sin and love Holiness, but if we hate Holiness and love sin we are devilish, or like the devil. There is no getting away from these facts.

Again, a casual reader of the Bible would be impressed with the fact that God demands absolute obedience to His commands, and that no one, in any state or condition, in this life can knowingly commit sin and retain the smile and approval of God. No where in the Book are these facts more plainly taught than in the Scriptures that I have read in your hearing. He that is born of God doth not commit sin. He that committeth sin is of the devil, but when a righteous man turneth away and doeth according to the wicked, in his sins that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. These truths are very plainly set forth in the story of the fall of our first parents.

I am well aware of the fact that there is much skepticism abroad regarding the account of the fall of our first parents; that it is only a Jewish myth or tale, and that it is not true. Also that the story of Jonah and the whale is not true; but right here allow me to place on record that I believe the whole Book from cover to cover. Of course, I understand that there are some errors in translating a word here and there from the original language, but not enough to destroy or alter the meaning so that it would lead one astray; but, then, I do not know what kind of a little two-by-four god some of you have. Why, sir, I have a great God.

I have stood on the rear platform of the overland limited and looked out over miles and miles of the plains as we swept over them, and I have said, "The hand of our God mapped them out." I have gone in behind, or under, the great falls of Niagara, and have stood in the great chasm beneath and said, "My God cut this out and started the water flowing over there." I have climbed to the summit of Pike's Peak and looked at that great pile of granite rearing its lofty head into the heavens, and have said, "My God piled up these rocks in this fashion." I have stood on the deck of the ocean steamer and looked out on the trackless, boundless expanse and said, "My God spread out these waters." I have gazed for hours at the starry heavens above me, and read in my Bible that they were placed there by my heavenly Father. I have looked at that great ball of brightness rising in the east and disappearing below the western horizon, and said, "My God lighted that lamp, and it has never ceased to light up this old world." It was our God that spake and a world moved into existence, and I reckon, did He see the need, He could speak into existence a fish large enough to swallow this whole crowd.

Oh, sir, I don't know about your god, but we have a great God, and this old Book is His Word, and I believe it from cover to cover, and if you will throw away your doubts and unbelief and follow its teachings, all your thorns and briars will disappear and joy and gladness will take their place.

Now, there are a few things to which I want to call your attention concerning the fall of our first parents.

Firstly: I want you to see what Adam lost in the fall, and the relation it bears to the human family today. Adam and Eve were placed in the garden, told they might eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, save one, and that in the day they ate of that one, they would die; they ate, sinned, and died. Now, what was there about them that died? Going back to the first chapter of Genesis we read that God, speaking to the other members of the Trinity, said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, ... so God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him."

Now, sir, I have never been able to conceive the idea that God meant the body of man when He said man. I don't understand that God has a body like I have: my Bible tells me that God is a spirit. In the second chapter of Genesis we are told that God rolled some dust together and breathed into that pile of clay, and man became a living soul; that is, that God breathed something into the dust He had brought together, put something on the inside of it. You look up here to the speaker and you see the house, or tabernacle, or body, the man dwells in, but you only see the man as it crops out in his character.

If, in passing down the street, I should point across to a high steepled building and ask you what it was, and you replied it was the Methodist or Baptist Church, I would contradict you. The church is not composed of building material, such as is used in erecting buildings. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands." Acts xvii. 24. The church is composed of souls who have been born from above, redeemed by the blood. That building is only a place where the church may gather together to worship. The church is on the inside. So with man, the body is only the temple, or house, that the man dwells in, and, as he is made in the image of God, he is a spirit, but God prepared him a body to dwell in. Made in the image of God was Adam; he came fresh from the hands of his Creator, pure, free from sin, holy, and like God to that extent that he bore the image of God. In other words, the very image of God was stamped upon man's nature; clothed with the Divine nature of his Creator, he was like Him.

We have not time tonight to explain why or how sin was present, any more than we have time to explain how or why the devil is here, but he is here just the same. There were not fifty people present before the devil walked in. He is the best church-goer you have in town. unless it be to some dead, dried-up affair, where they are in the cold storage business, with an icicle six feet long in the pulpit. I don't think he pays much attention to those places, for he has them safe enough already; but in a place where full salvation from sin is being proclaimed, you may be sure he is always on hand. Well, the devil spoke to Mother Eve about the fruit that they had been forbidden to eat. Listen to her reply, "God hath said ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it lest ye die." She knew what God had said about it and about disobeying Him, and so do you; and with such knowledge in the heart and such words on the lips, whose is the responsibility of doing wrong? God hath said, Ye shall not, lest ye die, but she ate, gave to Adam, he ate and they died. How? Well, it was not their bodies that died, though decay set in from that hour. Had it been their bodies they would have become a corpse; neither was it their minds, or they would have become idiots. Then what was it? They were clothed in the Divine image or nature of God, and the moment they sinned they died. Webster says "dead" means void. The mom moment they sinned they lost their Divine nature or image, which took its flight and went back to the hands of the Giver; it left them dead, void of the Divine image or nature of God. When the devil tempted Eve, he said, "Thou shalt not surely die," or, in plain English, sin and live: and right there he set up his abominable religion, which, I am sorry to say, has become the popular religion of today, namely, a sinning religion.

The devil said, sin and live, and he has many advocates today of his damnable lie, both in pulpit and pew. Many deny that we can live without committing sin, and then wrest the Scriptures in their teaching, and

sneer at those who stand up for God's truth and His plain commands. I heard of a preacher lately who said there was not a day but what he broke the ten commandments. I wonder which of the ten he broke. If he broke the first one, he is not a child of God at all, but an idolater. If he broke the second, he is a blasphemer. He could not be a child of God and not keep the third, the fourth, nor the last. The breaking of the next three would put him in the penitentiary. Poor deluded soul, like many, on his way to the pit, never having been born again.

God said, sin and die; and so it is declared all through His Word. "The soul that sinneth shall die," "He that committeth sin is of the devil." Brother, those are not my words, but the words of the Almighty God, in whose hands your breath is. Adam knowingly sinned, and then and there lost his Divine nature! In other words, the devil succeeded in cheating him out of his pure, holy, Divine nature, and left him his own fallen, sinful, sensual, rebellious, devilish nature. You will please excuse me for telling you so, but every unregenerated individual in this congregation tonight has nothing but that devilish, sensual nature. Every child born into this world from that sad day until now has been born into existence with that sinful, sensual, rebellious, devilish nature, and that nature only.

First Corinthians xv. 22 tells us that the whole human family died (became void of the Divine image) through Adam's fall. The sinner is an unregenerated being, having but that one nature, and it is sinful in the extreme. It is that sinful nature that makes you swear, brother, that makes you get angry, fight, steal, lie, and cheat. It is that sensual nature that makes men and women commit adultery and fornication, and gives rise to that sensual, unclean desire. It is that devilish nature that causes men to hate and murder. It is that devilish nature that causes Women to desire to kill their unborn offspring so that they may not be bothered with them, but continue on in society. Men look upon sin as an act only, but let me tell you that it is a million leagues beyond any act that you could commit: it is a warp in your very being, a crooked, devilish twist in your very existence. It is the devil's own nature implanted in your very being, and it takes something far deeper than the brightest pardon God could give you to reach it. If you doubt my statement concerning it, go there and pick up that little six months' old infant and undertake to do something with it that it don't want done, and you will get your proof of it quickly; you will have a kicking, squalling, struggling, fighting youngster on your hands, kicking, struggling and screaming in his rebellion against you, until you can see a picture of a demon in his actions and on his face.

Yes, sir, it is there, down deep in your very nature. Had it not been for that devilish nature in you, the first time you heard of Jesus' love for your poor lost soul it would have broken your heart and you would have yielded then and there to God; but that thing in you made you stubborn and defiant, and you put up your will against the will of the Almighty God, and began your fight against His blessed Spirit, who has been trying to woo you from a path of sin and save you from a devil's Hell.

Secondly: I want you to take note of Adam's sense of his loss, or, the reason why men are afraid to meet God. The Book says that after they had sinned they heard the Lord God in the garden and they hid themselves, and the Lord called unto them, "Where art thou?" and Adam replied, "I was afraid." Why was he afraid? For just exactly the same reason men are afraid to meet God today, namely: they know they are wrong, are not obeying Him, have been disobedient. Adam knew the moment he had done wrong; he had a conscience. While conscience was no doubt greatly impaired in the fall, yet it was there, and the moment Adam heard the Lord, after he had done wrong, he was smitten with fear; he knew it, felt it. He had had other visits and conversations with the Lord, prior to this one. In the preceding chapter we read of God bringing the animals and birds He had formed to Adam to see what he would call them. He had had many talks and walks with the Lord no doubt, but now he had knowingly disobeyed, and how changed is

everything! Before, it was a delight to talk with his Creator, but now the sound of His voice smites him with fear and he hides. I repeat, he had done wrong, knew it, and the knowledge of his wrong doing brought fear to his heart. That is the very reason why many in this large audience would be afraid to go this minute into the presence of God; they are wrong and they know it; and if Jesus should come walking up the center aisle and proclaim that He had come to take us to the judgment bar, the majority of this congregation would fall on their knees and beg for mercy, or try to hide from His presence, for the simple fact that they know they are wrong in the sight of God.

Some one says. "Why, Mr. Williams, is not everybody afraid to meet God ?" No, sir, ten thousand times, no! Every soul here tonight who is right with God knows it, and they would not be afraid to step into His presence in the next ten seconds. They are prayed up, and paid up, and living right in His sight; and if He came now, they would welcome Him with a shout. And, in fact, so far as their personal experiences are concerned, they are praying like John the beloved closed his last prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Hallelujah! Perfect love casteth out fear. Glory be to Jesus, who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. There is no fear in the hearts of those who are right in God's sight, because they know they are right with Him, and are living to please Him, and not living to please the world or their friends.

Let me explain: There is your little brown-eyed son at home. You say to him, "Now, Tommy, be a good boy, and when I return home tonight I will bring you something nice." Just watch that boy. He goes on his best behavior; no doubt he keeps mamma busy looking at the clock to see if it is train time; at last the whistle is heard, and there you come up the street; out he goes, with the front door in danger of losing its hinges and the gate flying open with a bang, and down the street he comes with curls and apron-strings flying in the air. As he nears you he calls out, "Papa, did you get it? What did you bring me?" He fairly leaps into your arms, while his little eyes sparkle with anticipation of your promised word. Is he afraid of his father? No, sir! But why? Because he has obeyed father's orders and wishes, and now with the utmost confidence expects father to keep his word. Not a ray of fear, because he knows he has kept his father's commands. Exactly thus is it with the children of God; they keep His commandments in perfect confidence, expect Him to keep His promise, and God never breaks His promise. Heaven and earth might pass away, but the word of God is sure. Glory to God! They know they are right with Him, consequently there is absolutely no fear.

Now suppose Tommy had been good nearly all day, even up to a short time before you returned, and then disobeyed. Would he have come rushing to you? I think not. You might come in and talk with mamma, but you would have to inquire for the boy, and then go to the backyard, the barn, or upstairs to find him hiding away somewhere. What is the reason he does not come for his present? The child has a conscience, and he absolutely knows that he has done wrong, and not only forfeited his present, but incurred your displeasure by his disobedience, and is liable to receive punishment. He has done wrong and knows it, and so does every individual in this room tonight. You know where you stand; whether you are right or wrong in the sight of God. You have a conscience, unless you have trampled on it so many times that it refuses to perform its functions. If this is your case, you are indeed in a pitiful condition; but there are many in such a condition. Once conscience was alive, alert, and tender, quick to reprove you of your misdeeds; but it is not so now. Conscience reproved you many times about certain sins you were committing, but you throttled and stifled those convictions and reprovings so often that conscience no longer bothers you; there are many things very wrong in your life, but you scarcely note them, or think of your wickedness and coming judgment.

Let me explain. There is a little boy taught to pray at mother's knee. One day out among his playmates he hears them use a bad word, and soon he gets to swinging that word off his lips as easily as they. Night comes on, playmates return home, and the little fellow turns towards the house. Conscience begins to tell him about that awful word he said out there. Bedtime comes. "Hurry, Johnnie, come say your prayers at mother's knee." But no shoe-strings ever got into so many knots as his that night. Mother's time is all gone, and now she will listen to his prayer in bed. He begins, "Now I lay me ---," but there is a lump gets up in his throat, and he starts over again, skips some and stumbles along. What is the matter? Why can't the child pray? Why, conscience is thumping him, urging him to confess his wrong-doing to mother; but mother turns away. No wonder that child has an awful dream in the night and awakes screaming. Mother has to go in and turn on the light to make him understand that no wild beast was after him, but that it was only a dream. Oh, when morning comes he'll tell mother! But with the light comes boldness, and men are not so afraid in the daytime. The next night conscience does not warn him so hard. By and by he uses that word again, and while conscience condemns him, yet not so hard, and again he fights it off, until -- well, perhaps he sits here listening to me preach; he has grown to be a man, but he cannot get in a crowd of men and talk five minutes concerning the questions of the day without using that same awful word over and over, and he scarcely notices it now. Why? Because conscience does not bother him any more concerning it. Once it did, but he throttled it and stifled it down, and now on the least provocation he will call on God to damn this, that, or the other, with no qualms of conscience whatever, sinning on his way to a devil's Hell, and hardly stopping to realize it.

Do you remember the first lie you told? How conscience bothered you! It might have been on something about your home or your business; do you remember it now? Well, did you stop then? Did conscience bother you as much on the last lie you told? That young girl lying to her mother, that young boy lying to his father, husband to wife, and neighbor to neighbor, are on their way straight to a devil's Hell and they do not realize it. We think it awful when we read of that heathen woman over there in dark heathenism, who takes her nursing babe from her breast and throws it to the open-mouthed crocodiles in the river, believing in her heathen condition that she is appeasing the wrath of her god by so doing. It seems terrible to us in this country. But I wonder how it will appear at the bar of Almighty God, alongside of the thousands of women in this enlightened land of ours who kill their offspring some months before they would be born. How will that poor heathen mother stand, or appear alongside of the women in this land who, instead of becoming mothers, calmly set themselves to destroy the young lives or even that which brings life, and cheat God and God-given nature from accomplishing that which God arranged for it to accomplish. The first time conscience may have thundered against the act, but it has been repeated until there are no convictions on the subject any more, the wholesale murdering is kept up steadily, and that by folks who even profess to be God's children. Conscience is now dead, but what a resurrection there will be at the judgment of Almighty God! Hear Him speak: "For God will bring every work unto judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil." Eccl. xii. 14. What will the conscience have to say then?

Adam had a conscience, and it pricked him to the quick, and the knowledge of his act brought fear; he tried to hide from God, and that brings us to the third part of our text.

Thirdly: "Adam hiding, or the miserable subterfuge men give today for not serving God. What a fool Adam was to undertake to hide from God! He ought to have known that He who could speak a world into existence, settle each star in its place, and call all wherein was the breath of life into being, could look through a piece of shrubbery; and yet we find men as foolish today. "I would be a Christian, but there are so many hypocrites." True, there are; but there can be no counterfeit until we have the reality; and

because there are counterfeit Christians, thank God there are some who are real. But who is worse, the hypocrite, or the one making such excuses and hiding behind them? They are both bound for the same pit, on the same road. The only difference is that the real out-and-out hypocrite is a little ahead of the one behind him.

In a meeting in Vermont some time ago, we noticed a large man seated to our left, whose head dropped lower and lower under the searchlight of God's truth. He put his hands on the back of the pew in front of him and buried his face in his hands. We went and asked him to give himself to God, and he replied, "I would were it in any other church than this one." Some one connected with that church had done him an injury and he would not come; knew he ought to, but that man was in his way. "Is that your only excuse for not going to the altar tonight and giving yourself to God?" we asked. "Yes," he replied, "that is my only excuse; I would, only for that hypocrite." We urged him not to mind, but he finally said, "Excuse me, Mr. Williams, I cannot go with that man in here." I said, "All right, I'll excuse you. If you want to go to Hell with that hypocrite, you may go. I'll excuse you. Now bow your head and tell God what you have told me; that you are unsaved, that you know it, that you know He is calling you, that you realize it, but because there is a man in the house living a hypocritical life and he has wronged you, because of that you turn your back on the Christ who died for you, you'll go to Hell with the hypocrite; then ask God to excuse you." In a few moments he dropped like a bag of sand at the altar and begged God to forgive and save. The rottenness of his flimsy excuse had dawned upon him. And just so rotten are all the excuses men make for not giving up sin. They know they are wrong, but grasp at anything to get away from God; but He sees them just the same.

Fourthly: I want you to hear God calling, "Where art thou?" There are several classes I would like to mention as quickly as I can. First, I would like to ask the sinner here tonight, in the light of this plain truth, "Where art thou?" Out on the great stormy sea, masts broken, sails in shreds, compass lost and steering apparatus disarranged, tossed here and there in the dark night of sin, lost on the sea of time and without hope, "Where art thou?" The sinner absolutely has no hope. His only hope is Christ, and Christ he has rejected; consequently he has no hope. I do not believe there are many in this Bible land of ours but who know they are wrong, and have heard that Jesus came to save from sin. But if they have heard and not accepted it, they have deliberately rejected the only hope and are going straight down to a devil's Hell, swept on by the awful bent to sin that lies in their very nature. They have cursed, lied, and stolen, gotten angry and given vent to that inbred damnable thing in them, taken the name of God in vain, sinned and sinned, and are sweeping on to an awful doom. Many a boy is wading knee-deep through a mother's tears; many a girl strumming on her father's heart-strings; unsaved husbands crushing out the lives of pleading wives; while groans from thousands upon thousands of the blighted and blasted ones are coming up before God, who sends me here with this message, "Sinner, Where art thou?"

A second class I would mention is the professor; he who professes to be God's child, but who has never quit his sins, consequently has never been "born again." In our lesson tonight we read, "He that is born of God doth not commit sin." "Where art thou?" You profess to be God's child, but you know you never have been "born again." You cannot point back to the place nor time when you threw up your hands and abandoned sin of all kinds, and stopped all your worldliness. This you never have done, and yet you have been passing yourself off to be a child of God. You go in worldly society, play cards, or go to the dance, the theater, or perhaps to Sunday baseball, smoke or chew, and still try to palm yourself off on this poor old world as a Christian; but since you never gave up your sin, your life has been a living falsehood before God and holy men and women. Poor lost humanity has looked upon your life and known of your

profession and could see no difference between your life and other people's. Sir, I want to ask you, What will you say at the judgment, when you are called before the bar of God for basely misrepresenting Christ on earth. No doubt, honest souls have been turned away from seeking God; when sick of sin they have turned to find peace, and, knowing of your profession, have looked at you, and seeing no difference between your life and theirs, they turned away from religion in disgust, and tonight they may be in Hell awaiting your coming. Long ere this they know the truth concerning your profession. You have dared to mingle with God's people and put your name with theirs, and make your empty profession. What will you say to God at the judgment for so basely misrepresenting the cause for which His Son gave His heart's blood? I call to you before it is too late, "Where art thou?"

A third class of whom I desire to ask this question is the backslider. Not every one so called is a backslider. In the language of Amanda Smith many of them never front-slid. They never gave up their sins, consequently they were never converted, or "born again." But there are those who have been really and genuinely converted, who have backslidden and gone back to the world. I indeed feel sorry for the real backslider, for unless he gets back to God he can never have another day's happiness, nor a moment's peace. He has been completely spoiled for this world. Better for himself, even in this world, had he never started for the kingdom. He is a sad-hearted, discontented, never-to-be-satisfied being. Of all conditions in this life, his is the worst and most wretched. Added to all this, he is a stumbling-block to all about him, and a stench in the nostrils of God. I want to say to that father sitting there, who is a backslider, if your children ever knew of your profession, or heard you pray, you are now being used by the devil to damn your own offspring. I can say the same thing to that backslidden mother. However you may hate me for telling you the truth, yet I must be faithful to you, and to the Christ who has sent me to proclaim His truth. The backslider is a curse to the community he dwells in.

Allow me to explain. There are two friends, Jones and Brown. Jones gets saved and starts to live a clean life; gives up all his wrong doing, quits his dirty, vile habits, tobacco, cards, lodges, and everything vile and unclean he throws away. God plants the kiss of pardon on his cheek and the sunlight breaks in upon his soul; he is happy, shouts and sings, "Hallelujah, 'tis done," and goes on his way rejoicing in his new-found joy. His life puts Brown under conviction; he finally begins to leave off his bad habits, and becomes a secret seeker after a better life. He watches Jones, and says, "I want the same kind of religion Jones has." One day he sees something a little shady about Jones, and after awhile finds out that he has gone back to his tobacco, and some other things; and finally Jones comes out with many of his old habits -- backslidden. Brown loses confidence in Jones, in his religion, and finally in the Christ that Jones professes to serve, gives up all confidence in the question, loses all conviction, and may be tonight dead and in Hell, and all on account of Jones' backsliding. I call out to any backslider in the congregation tonight, "Where art thou?"

Just one more that class is made up of those who have been born again, converted people, Christians, God's children. I want to call your attention to two verses of Scripture, the first of which you will find to be the last verse of the first chapter of James, and which reads, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Do you do this? Are you separate and distinct from the world, or are you mixed up with it? Do you seek worldly people for your associates? Are you mixed up with some worldly secret society, largely composed of godless and unsaved men? Do you look to the world for your enjoyment? Do you go where worldly people go? Or, are you separate and distinct from the world? The Book says, that whosoever will be a friend of the world is an enemy of God. and the Revised Version gives it thus,

"Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world, maketh himself an enemy of God." "Where art thou" in the light of this truth? Are you friendly with the world; do you wish to be so? "Where art thou?" The other verse I want you to notice is the 23rd verse of the 5th chapter of First Thessalonians, Paul's prayer, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I only want one word out of that verse tonight, and that is the word blameless. I say, are you doing your best for God? If your neighbor, who may be unsaved, dies and goes to Hell while you are at this meeting, could God hold you blameless at the judgment bar? Have you done your best to save that neighbor? Does your life so speak that he can see God in it? Are you unspotted from the world? "Where art thou?"

Let me ask that Sunday school superintendent sitting there, or that Sunday school teacher, what about your pupils, what are you teaching them; a bit of history; a few biblical, historical facts, or The spiritual meaning of God's book? Suppose one of those scholars dies and goes to the home of lost souls while you are here in this meeting, could God hold you blameless at the judgment? Have you done your best to lead them to God? Come, answer this question, "Where art thou?" Let me ask this question of the preachers present, and press the question, for what tremendous responsibility rests upon the preacher of the Gospel! Do you preach the full truth regarding the awful consequences of their deeds to those who commit sin? Do you tell one and all that God can save them from it? Do you faithfully deal with the backslidden in heart? I ask you this question in the light of the approaching judgment, "Where art thou." Suppose some member of your congregation drops dead and sinks into a devil's hell while you are attending this meeting, could God hold you blameless? Have you done your best to faithfully warn him? Could he face you at the judgment and charge you with a neglect of duty? I press this question, "Where art thou?"

Finally, I would ask that father there about his boy. What about your life before him, if he dies while you are in this meeting and comes up before God, can God hold you blameless? Have you done your duty to that boy? If he followed in your footsteps would they lead him to Holiness and to Heaven?

And that mother there, what about your experience? That daughter of yours, if she died before you ever saw her face again, could you meet her unflinchingly before the throne? If her name was not found written in the book of life, could God hold you blameless? Come on, answer this call, "Where art thou?"

One illustration and I am done. Some years ago I was assisting a pastor in one of the largest churches in northern New York. I was upstairs in the pastor's study, lying on a sofa, when the pastor came in and tossed me a paper and went out again. I began reading and read the following from the pen of a noted minister. He said, "In a small mountain village of some four or five hundred inhabitants there lived a young girl of some eighteen years of age; her given name was May. She was a bright, cheerful girl, whom everybody loved. One day she was taken quite ill and in four or five days died. The funeral was such a sad one. At the cottage home a number of her friends tried to sing, but broke down in tears; the minister of the church of which she was a member, could scarcely read a lesson from the Scripture. At the close a number of young gentlemen friends bore the casket across the road to the village cemetery and the services were there concluded. Everything seemed so sad. As the sexton had about finished his duty, and the grave was being rounded up, a lady stepped out and knelt down by the newly made mound and began weeping bitterly. The pastor knelt down by her side and said, 'Now, Sister, come away, and do not weep. Four years she was a member of your Sunday school class and you did your best to lead her to God, but the woman only wept the more bitterly, and finally between her sobs said, 'Oh! if I could only feel that I had done my duty, but I have not. For some months past I feared May was backsliding. She did not care for her lessons and seemed so light and trifling that I feared for her; and as her Sunday school teacher I felt it

was my duty to deal with her; but I kept putting it off until now she is gone, and I fear she is in a backslider's grave, and because I have not done my duty.' The pastor, too, began to sob and when able to control his emotions said, 'I have a confession to make. For over a year I have noticed May and realized that she was losing out spiritually, and as her pastor I felt it to be my duty to deal with her about her soul; but she always seemed so light and gay that I kept putting it off, until, oh, God! it is too late.' And he bowed his head and sobbed bitterly, but finally said, 'Let us ask God to forgive us, and go from this grave determined to do our full duty hereafter.'

A few days later, thinking he might receive some balm for his aching heart, he went down to her home, but on his entrance the mother had to leave the room to weep. He finally asked the father what was the spiritual condition of May when taken ill, and the father replied: 'For nearly two years May has been a backslider; mother and I thought we would deal with her on her last birthday, but she had the house full of company, and we put the matter off again and again, until we said, 'If she does not change, we will deal with her on her next birthday, but oh, God! we buried her on her birthday, and she is now fill a backslider's grave!'"

Friends, when I read that article, I rolled off from that sofa to my knees and began pleading with God to help me always to do my duty, and while in that position, on my knees, I seemed to be at the judgment; there were multitudes of people, and in the center and above was the great white Throne. The name of May was called; a young lady stepped out before the Throne, and the angelic recorder opened a book and began searching its pages. Just then there were four people who seemed compelled by some unseen power, to be forced out from the great throng and to stand at one side near the girl; they did not want to come out, and seemed to struggle against doing so; but some unseen power forced them out. Finally the recorder looked up and said, "Her name is not found in the Book of Life." He that sat upon the Throne said, "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still," and then with a scream the young girl turned and, facing the four, charged a preacher, a Sunday school teacher, and a father and a mother with her damnation. I can never forget that hour, there on my knees in that pastor's study. I pledged God I would speak the full truth as I understood it, at any cost. I have endeavored to do that tonight. May God help you tonight if you are not right, or have not been doing right, no matter who you are, either on or off this platform, to fall at the altar and ask God to put you right with himself, and to promise him that at any loss, at any cross, and at any cost, you will give up sin of all kinds, either of omission or commission, and walk in every ray of light He gives you. Brother, friend, this is the only way to Heaven. I pray God you will settle this matter and settle it now.

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