

'Son, Remember' Preached in 1879 Reading of d.I. Moody by Robert Wurtz

by Robert Wurtz II

The sermon emphasizes the importance of making a decision for Christ and the dangers of procrastination, highlighting the consequences of delaying salvation.

Duration: 14:37

Scripture: Proverbs 27:1, Proverbs 29:1, Matthew 25:13, Luke 12:20, 2 Corinthians 6:2, Hebrews 3:15, James 4:14, 2 Peter 3:9, Revelation 3:20

Topics: "Moral Courage", "Salvation Urgency"

Description

This sermon recounts a powerful story from Dwight L. Moody about a man who struggled with moral courage to publicly confess Christ, leading to tragic consequences due to procrastination and a hardened heart. It emphasizes the urgency of making a decision for Christ without delay, highlighting the danger of putting off salvation and the devastating outcome of rejecting God's offer of grace and forgiveness.

Transcript

I would like to share with you an entry from an old sermon that was preached by the late Dwight L. Moody back in around 1879 at the Cleveland Tabernacle, I believe it was. Now this particular book that I'm reading from was printed in 1889 and it is titled The Great Redemption or also Gospel Light. It is an account of the workings of Moody and Sankey during a revival that was in and around 1879.

And this particular entry or sermon in this particular book has become very famous for a particular account of an individual's passing that has really struck a chord with a lot of ministers. Now you've probably heard it, those who have, mentioned in sermons and it's usually a truncated version of the original. I've shared this account myself as it has certainly been very moving to me.

And I think it is very important that this particular message continue to be conveyed. So I would like to share it with you directly from this particular book. Now this book is about ten years out from the original sermon that was dictated or apparently it had been recorded on some sort of stenograph and later it was transcribed and then placed into a compilation of sermons that eventually became this book.

It's still available in print today, I believe, probably Amazon or someone would have it. But page 238, Moody is recounting some events. He says, I remember a few years ago in one of our meetings in

Chicago, the Spirit of God was at work.

There was some inquiring the way of life and there was a man in the assembly that I had been anxious for for a great many months. And when I asked all those who would like to become Christians to arise, this man rose. My heart leaped in me for joy.

And when the meeting was over, I went to him and took him by the hand and said to him, well, now you are coming out for Christ. Thank you. Question.

Well, said he, Mr. Moody, I want to become a Christian, but there is one thing that stands in my way. What is that? Well, says he, I have not the moral courage. And I believe in my soul tonight.

That is the thing that is keeping men from coming to Christ more than any other one thing. They lack the moral courage to come out from their scoffing, sneering friends. Well, I said, if heaven is what it is represented to be, it is surely worth your coming out and confessing Christ and being laughed at for a while down a little while down here.

He dropped his head and said, I know it. I believe it. But naming a certain friend of his, if he had been here tonight, I should not have risen.

I looked around to see if he was here. And when I found he was not, I rose for prayers. I am afraid that if I meet him and he finds out I have risen, he will laugh at me and I will not have the courage to stand up for what is right.

And I know I cannot be a Christian unless I deny myself and take up my cross and come out. I said, you are quite right. The poor man was trembling from head to foot.

I thought surely he would come out on the Lord's side like Agrippa. He was almost persuaded. I thought surely that night he would settle the question, perhaps in his own home.

And the next night I would find him rejoicing in the Savior. But he came back the next night and I found he was in the same state of mind. The spirit was still striving with him.

He was almost persuaded, but not altogether. The next night he came again and I found him in the same state of mind. And the only thing the man gave as an excuse for not becoming a Christian was that he did not have the moral courage.

John Bunyan describes one coming up to the gate of heaven. And there was a side way down to the gate of the pit. And many of them took the side way.

It seems this man came to the gate of heaven and one step more would have taken him across the line. But this man feared, this man, this man fearing spirit rather, kept him from taking that step. Almost, yet not altogether.

Well, weeks rolled away and the impression seemed to pass away. You know, that is the thing they bring against these special meetings. They say it hardens some people.

That is quite right. The gospel proves a savor of life unto life or a savor of death unto death. Every time you hear the gospel of Jesus Christ preached and Christ is offered to you and you reject him, the hardening process is going on.

Every time you turn your back upon this offer, your heart is becoming hard. Many a man in this congregation would have been impressed ten years ago by a sermon which makes no impression on him now. The hardening process has been going on.

They have become not only neglectors of salvation, but they despise it. They not only refuse it, but they despise the God of salvation. Well, the hardening process went on with this man.

He used to come to church every Sunday morning, but now he dropped off and did not come at all. He would be at work Sunday and if I met him coming down the street, he would slip off down some other way, ashamed to meet me, afraid that I would talk to him. At last he was taken sick and sent for me.

I went to see him and he said to me, is there any hope for a man to be saved at the eleventh hour? I told him there was hope for any man who really wanted to become a Christian. I preached Christ to him, explained to him the way of life, told him how he could be saved. I went down to see him day after day.

Contrary to all expectations, the man began to recover. When he got up from the sickbed, I went down one day and found him convalescent, sitting in front of his house. I took my seat beside him and said, well, now you will be well enough to come up to church in a few days, and when you are well enough, you are coming out to confess Christ and take your stand for Christ.

Well, says he, I have made up my mind to become a Christian, but I am not going to become one just now. Next spring I am going over to Lake Michigan and I am going to buy me a farm and settle down, and then I am going to become a Christian. But there is no use of me talking of becoming a Christian here in Chicago.

I can't do it. I have so many bad associates, I can't live a Christian life in Chicago. Well, I said, my friend, if God hasn't got enough grace to keep you in Chicago, he hasn't got enough to keep you in Michigan.

What you want is not a change of associates, but a new heart, and the grace of God to keep you. He is able to keep you. I pled with him not to postpone the great question any longer.

I tried to arouse him up, but at last he got a little worried and a little cross at me and says, Mr. Moody, you can just attend to your own business, and I will attend to mine. I don't want you to trouble yourself anymore about my soul. I will attend to that.

I said, you can't afford to put this thing off. Well, he says, if I am lost, it will not be your fault. You have done everything you can.

I don't want you to trouble yourself anymore. When I hear people say in these meetings, I don't want you to trouble me, it sends a pain into my heart. When we try to do you good and bring you a blessing, to have you turn your back and say, I don't want Christ, I have no desire for him, this man said, I will take the risk.

I was telling him he could not afford to take the risk. He said, I will take it. I would like to ask if there is a man in this house tonight that will take the risk of his soul's salvation for 24 hours.

Dare you say I will take it? It was a number of months he was going to take it. When he got over to Michigan on his farm and got settled down, he was going to become a Christian. I tried to arouse him, he got angry, and I left him.

If ever I left a man with a sad heart, it was when I left that man. I remember the day of the week. It was Friday.

It was almost noon when I left him. Just a week from that day, I got a message from his wife. She wanted to have me to come in great haste.

I went to the house, and I met her at the door, weeping. I said, what is the trouble? My husband has been taken down with the same disease. We have just had a council of physicians, and they have all given him up to die.

I said, does he want to see me? Knowing how angry he was just the week before, she said, no. I asked him if I should send for you, but he said no. He did not want to see you.

Well, why did you send? Well, I can't bear to see him die in this terrible state of mind. What is a state of mind? He said his damnation is sealed, and that he will be laid, he will be in hell, rather, in a little while. I went into the room where he was, and the moment he heard the door open, he looked and saw who it was.

He turned his face to the wall. I went to the bed and spoke to him, and he did not answer. I said, won't you speak to me? I went around to the foot of the bed where I could look at him and said again, won't you speak to me? He turned and looked at me, and what a look it was.

He said, you need not talk to me anymore, sir. My damnation is sealed. There is no hope for me.

I tried to tell him that there was, but he ridiculed the idea that there was any hope for him. Memory had begun to do its work. His whole life came up before him, and he said, I have done nothing but sin against God all my life.

And a week ago, when you were here, and I thought I was going to get well, I turned away from God. He came knocking at the door of my heart. I told him, if he would spare my life, I would let him in, and he took me at my word.

There is no hope for me. You need not talk to me. You need not pray for me.

You cannot save me, sir. There is no hope for me. I have got to die in my sins.

There is no chance for my soul. I tried to tell him that there was. He pointed his finger at the stove and said, my heart is as hard as this iron stove.

There is no hope for me. I went to get down on my knees, and he saw me kneel and said, Mr. Moody, you need not pray for me. You can pray for my wife and children.

They need your prayers and sympathies. You need not spend your time praying for me. There is no hope for me.

I tried to pray for him, but it seemed as if my prayers did not go higher than my head. I got up and took his hand, and it seemed as if I was bidding farewell to a friend that I never would see again in time or eternity. The cold, clammy sweat of night was gathering on that hand.

I bade him a final farewell. I left his house about noon. He lingered until the sun went down behind those western prairies, and his wife told me that from that time I left until he died, all she heard was, the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved.

You could hear his cries all over the house just as the sun was going down. He was sinking away into the arms of death, and his wife noticed his lips quivering. He was trying to say something.

She bent over, and all she could hear was the awful lamentation of the prophet, the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved. And he passed away. He lived a Christless life.

He died a Christless death. We wrapped him in a Christless shroud and laid him in a Christless coffin. How dark.

How sad. The sin of procrastination. O my friends, this night be wise.

Ask God this night and this hour to forgive you. Make up your minds that you will this night settle this question for time and eternity.

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