

**SATURDAY NIGHT TALKS**

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Ralland, Vt.

**LAWS OF THE KINGDOM.**



Government is founded upon law. Every earthly kingdom has its written constitution and its statute law for the orderly administration of its affairs. We naturally look, therefore, for the King of the spiritual kingdom to organize his people by laying down the principles of the new dispensation in a magna charta of faith, and He does this at the very outset of His mission in the Sermon on the Mount. This marvellous discourse is no mere sermon; it stands alone as the grand charter of the kingdom of heaven. It is not to be considered as a mere series of lessons on different subjects. It is the answer to such questions as these: "What is this Kingdom, what advantage does it offer, and who are its subjects? What is required of those that belong to it? What are its laws and obligations? How may we become citizens of this commonwealth of kings?"

These are questions that were asked then, and have been propounded in every age and nation since. Hence the value of the Sermon on the Mount. In these words of Christ are found a clear, complete and systematic statement of the principles of Christianity and the righteousness of the kingdom that He had come to establish. It was addressed to the disciples, but was for the benefit of the listening multitudes, to whom possibly, it was, by them repeated. Matthew records it in extenso, while the other gospel writers quote it more or less at length, in its application to special cases.

**Improvement on Moses.**

Every soul of man bears testimony to the marvelous scope of these words. Its wonderful summary of moral and spiritual truth is acknowledged to be high above all the ethics of ancient philosophy, and the world's purest teaching. And it was also immeasurably in advance, even of the teachings of Moses and the prophets, and all the old dispensation. While it, in some sense embodied the Mosaic law, it selected only what was permanent in that original code, and enlarged and improved it, so that it could truthfully be called "these sayings of mine." And it was made the supreme and abiding standard of life and obedience for all the disciples of the king through all ages.

**Old Law and New.**

The ancient law was robed in terror and sanctified by tremendous curses, almost the last word of the Old Testament, was the word "curse." But the new law of Jesus, begins with the word "blessed" and repeats it in the seven-fold chain of the beatitudes. The old law of Moses was a law that referred to conduct; the new law refers to character. If a man did not bow down to idols, did not break the Sabbath, did not kill, did not blaspheme, did not commit adultery, did not steal, etc., the law had nothing against him. But in the new law, as laid down by Christ mental idolatry was recognized, to covet was to steal, to hate was to kill, to lust was to be unclean, the thought of the heart and the desires of the souls were to be reckoned with in estimating a person's loyalty to the king. The man who is all right within has no fear of the law. If there was no law at all against doing wrong, he could not do wrong. He is not all the time watching for chances of evil. His heart is right and hence his conduct.

God's law is a tree of many branches, full of bloom and fruit. Man had allowed it to be filled with parasitic growths, and these had dropped poison. Men had piled up rubbish underneath it, so that the weary found no place to rest among its shadows. Birds of the night and birds of prey had builded their nests in its branches, and all the fragrance of its flowers and the usefulness of its fruitage had been lost.

Christ came, not to cut down the tree which God had planted, nor to remove one twig that belonged to the tree, but to remove the excrescences, to clear away the rubbish, to tear down the nests of unclean birds, and to put into the tree new life, new beauty, new fruit, and ampler expanse of shade, and to cause the tree to spread and grow till it filled the earth and turned the deserts into a garden of the Lord.

The secret of the new dispensation is found in one word—LOVE. By love all the law is fulfilled. Love produces righteousness which far exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees. Love sheathes the sword of murder. Love stills the tongue of abuse. Love stifles the first pulsations of anger in the heart. Love seeks the offended brother for reconciliation before it asks to be reconciled to God. Love thus potent is by the Lord emphasized, and all the sanctions of the law are quoted to show men the majesty and dignity and indispensableness of the new law of LOVE.

**COLUMBIAN ETIQUETTE.**

**Demands That Persons Shake Hands and Ask Many Questions.**

It was the third or fourth day out from Santa Marta, Colombia, and early in the morning, when one of the South American passengers came on deck. Another South American arose from his deck chair, extended his hand and as the men shook hands inquired after the health of the newcomer, his wife and his children.

As they had parted company only about eight hours before in the smoking room, this seemed like unnecessary courtesy. The observer noticed that this happened in the case of all the Colombians on board, so he asked one man about it.

"It is a custom of the country," said he. "On the occasion of meeting a person for the first time each day it is etiquette to shake hands and to make inquiries about the health of the person so greeted and of his relatives. It would not be considered polite to do otherwise."

Continuing, this man told of taking a walk one day in Bogota with a merchant of the place. They were bent on business and were to cover a distance that might be made rather easily in ten minutes. Because of the necessary stops to make the customary inquiries and to shake hands with friends of the merchant, the trip took nearly an hour.

**A Moqui Repartee.**

A certain commissioner out West was given to treating the Indians with a scorn they did not deserve. One day, as he sat with a great chief in his tepee, smoking the pipe of peace, the chief entertained him with many quaint legends.

One of these dealt with a plague of locusts, and the grim orator described in flowery language how they had swarmed over the land, eating every herb and green leaf, and blotting out the light of day for every number. Then, he concluded by remarking that it was not until the medicine man made an offering of a silver locust to the Great Spirit that the creatures disappeared, and this they did, swiftly and suddenly.

Loudly the commissioner laughed the superstitious Indian to scorn.

"Do you mean to say you're such fools as to believe that rubbish?" he asked.

"Not much," replied the chief gravely. "or we would have offered the Great Spirit a silver paleface long ago!"

**Golf in High Altitudes.**

It is strange how many golfers there are who fail to appreciate the great effect the density of atmosphere has on the flight of a golf ball. On a still, misty day the ball flies about five yards to ten yards less than it does when the wind blows from the opposite and more acceptable quarter.

The writer was fortunate, or unfortunate, enough to play many rounds a few years ago on the Johannesburg links in South Africa. These links are situated some 6,000 feet above sea level and the air is wonderfully rarefied. The ball consequently flew the most surprising distance; as proof of this the winner of a driving competition sent a ball a carry of 228 yards, the second player returning the modest distance of 223 yards. Yet neither of these two players could approach the driving capabilities of good amateur golfers.

**A Good Suggestion.**

One of the speakers at the dinner given in Cleveland by the National Educational Association was Booker T. Washington, the distinguished negro leader of the South. In the course of his remarks he told the following story about a Southern minister, who was evidently rather long winded:

"One Sunday morning, while the minister was in the midst of his sermon and had reached the point where he was shouting, 'And fourthly, dear brethren, a man poked his head through the door, and said in a low voice:

"Don't get too much excited, parson, but your church is on fire!"

"All right, brother ones," said the parson. "I will hasten out. But possibly you'd better wake the congregation."—Judge.

**Sun Makes the Hair Curl.**

The holidays had been dry and bright, and from daylight till dark the links had been covered with bare-headed youths and maids.

"All this sunshine," said a girl, "has changed the nature of my hair. It is straight, oily, heavy hair, but the sun has made it dry and crisp and slightly curly. Strange!"

"I returned from Africa with crisp, curly hair," said an engineer. "I went bareheaded there all winter in the brilliant sunshine. And as I watched my lank, greasy locks dry and kink up I began to understand why the hatless natives working around me had such peculiar dry, tightly curled hair. The sun was the cause of course."

**The American Climate.**

On Shotchun, of the Chinese Embassy, on a sultry evening in Cape May condemned the American climate in the world. And yet you can joke about it.

"A physician joked to me about it the other day.

"Accustom yourself, Mr. Ou Shotchun," he said, "to our climate's ways. Our winters are arctic, our summers and subtropical. And often our climate gets mixed, and arctic days and subtropical ones alternate. Inure yourself, like me, to these changes. In summer and winter, sleep with four blankets."

"You do?" I gasped.  
"I do. In summer," he added, "I put them under me."

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