

CHRIST'S CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Talmage Says It is Revolutionary.

The Exclusiveness of the Worshipers Must Come Down—Frids Must Give Way—Church Seats Must Be Free as Those in a Life Boat.

In the following sermon Dr. Talmage makes a plea for cheerful churches and urges revolutionary methods for good in families, religious assemblies and nations. The text is Acts 17: 6: "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also."

There is a wild, bellowing mob around the house of Jason, in Thessalonica. What has the man done so greatly to offend the people? He has been entertaining Paul and his comrades. The mob surround the house and cry: "Bring out those turbulent preachers! They are interfering with our business. They are ruining our religion! They are actually turning the world upside down!"

The charge was true; for there is nothing that so interferes with sin, there is nothing so ruinous to every form of established iniquity, there is nothing that has such tendency to turn the world upside down as our glorious Christianity. The fact is, that the world now is wrong side up, and it needs to be turned upside down in order that it may be right side up. The time was when men wrote books entitled them "apologies for Christianity." I hope that day has passed. We want no more apologies for Christianity. Let the apologies be on the part of those who do not believe in our religion. We do not mean to make any compromise in the matter. We do not wish to hide the fact that Christianity is revolutionary, and that its tendency is to turn the world upside down.

Our religion has often been misrepresented as a principal of tears, and mildness, and fastidiousness; afraid of crossing people's prejudices; afraid of making somebody mad; with silken gloves, lifting the people up from the church pew into glory, as though they were Bohemian glasses, so very delicate that with one touch it may be demolished forever. Men speak of religion as though it were a refined imbecility; as though it were a spiritual chloroform, that the people were to take until the sharp cutting of life were over. The Bible, so far from this, represents the religion of Christ as robust and brawny—ransacking and upsetting ten thousand things that now seem to be settled on firm foundations. I hear some man in the house say, "I thought religion was peace." That is the final result. A man's arm is out of place. Two men come, and with great effort put it back to the socket. It goes back with great pain. Then it gets well. Our world is horribly disordered and out of joint. It must come under an omnipotent surgery, beneath which there will be pain and anguish before there can come perfect health and quiet. I proclaim, therefore, in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ!—Revolution!

The religion of the Bible will make a revolution in the family. Those things that are wrong in the family circle will be overthrown by it, while justice and harmony will take the place. The husband will be the head of the household only when he is fit to be. I know a man who spends all the money he makes in drink, as well as all the money that his wife makes, and sometimes sells the children's clothes for rum. Do you tell me that he is to be the head of that household? If the wife have more nobility, more courage, more consistency, more of all that is right, she shall have the supremacy. You say that the Bible says that the wife is to be subject to the husband. I know it. But that is a husband, not a masculine caricature. There is no human or divine law that makes a woman subordinate to a man unworthy of her. When Christianity comes into a domestic circle, it will give the dominancy to that one who is the most worthy of it.

As religion comes in at the front door mirth and laughter will not go out of the back door. It will not hopple the children's feet. John will laugh just as loud; and George will jump higher than he ever did before. It will steal from the little ones neither ball nor bat, nor hoop, nor kite. It will establish a family altar. Angels will hover over it. Ladders of light will reach down to it. The glory of Heaven will stream upon it. The books of remembrance will record it, and tides of everlasting blessedness will pour from it. Not such a family altar as you may have seen, where the prayer is long, and a long chapter is read, with tedious explanation, and the exercise ceases on until the children's knees are sore, and their backs ache, and their patience is lost, and for the seventh time they have counted all the rungs in the chair; but I mean a family altar such as may have been seen in your father's house. You may have wandered far off in the paths of sin and darkness; but you have never forgotten that family altar where father and mother kneel, implored God for your soul. That is a memory that a man never gets over. There will be a hearty, joyful family altar in every domestic circle. You will not have to go far to find Hannah rearing her Samuel for the temple, or a grandmother Lois instructing her young Timothy in the knowledge of Christ, or a Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus gathered in fraternal and sisterly affection, or a table at which Jesus sits, as at that of Zaccheus, or a home in which Jesus dwells, as in the house of Simon the tanner. The religion of Jesus Christ, coming into the domestic circle, will overthrow all jealousies, all janglings; and peace, and order, and holiness will take possession of the home.

Again: Christianity will produce a revolution in commercial circles. Find me 50 merchants, and you will find that they have 50 standards of what is right and wrong. You say to some one about a merchant, "Is he honest?"

"Oh, yes," the man says, "he is honest; but he grinds the faces of his clerks. He is honest, but he exaggerates the value of his goods. He is honest, but he loans money on bond and mortgage, with the understanding that the mortgage can lie quiet for 10 years, but as soon as he gets the mortgage, he records it and begins a foreclosure suit, and the sheriff's writ comes down, and the day of sale arrives, and away goes the homestead, and the creditor buys it at half price." Honest? when he loaned the money he knew that he would get the homestead at half price. Honest? but he goes to the insurance office to get a policy on his life, and tells the doctor that he is well, when he knows that for 10 years he has had but one lung.

You build a house and you put into it a rotten beam. A mechanic standing by says, "It will never do to put that beam in; it will ruin your whole building." But you put it in. The house is completed. Soon it begins to rock. You call in the mechanic and ask, "What is the matter with this door? What is the matter with this wall? Everything seems to be giving out." Says the mechanic, "you put a rotten beam into that structure, and the whole thing has got to come down." Here is an estate that seems to be all right now. It has been building a great many years. But fifteen years ago there was a dishonest transaction in that commercial house. That one dishonest transaction will keep on working ruin in the whole structure, until down the estate will come in wreck and ruin about the possessor's ears—one dishonest dollar in the estate demolishing all his possessions. I have seen it again and again, and so have you.

Here is your money-safe. The manufacturer and yourself only know how it can be opened. You have the key. You touch the lock and the ponderous door swings back. But let me tell you that, however firmly barred and bolted your money-safe may be, you can not keep God out. He will come some day, into your counting-room, and he will demand, "Where did that note of hand come from? How do you account for this security? Where did you get that mortgage from? What does this mean?" If it is all right God will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Be prosperous in this world. Be happy in the world to come." If it is all wrong he will say, "Depart, ye cursed. Be miserable for your iniquities in this life; and then go down and spend your eternity with thieves, and horse jockeys, and pickpockets."

You have an old photograph of the signs nearly all changed within the last twenty years? Does the passing away of a generation account for it? Oh, no. Does the fact that there are hundreds of honest men who go down every year account for it? Oh, no. This is the secret. The Lord God has been walking through the commercial streets of our great cities; and He has been adjusting things according to the principles of eternal rectitude.

The time will come when, through the revolutionary power of this gospel, a falsehood, instead of being called exaggeration, equivocation, or evasion, will be branded a lie. And stealing, that now sometimes go under the head of percentages and commissions, and bonuses, will be put into the catalogue of state prison offenses. Society will be turned inside out and upside down, and ransacked of God's truth, until business dishonesties shall come to an end, and all double-dealing; and God will overturn, and overturn, and overturn; and commercial men in all cities will throw up their hands, crying out, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither."

The religion of Jesus Christ will produce a revolution in our churches. The non-committal, do nothing policy of the church of God will give way to a spirit of bravest conquest. Piety in this day seems to me to be salted down just as to keep. It seems as if the church were chiefly anxious to take care of itself; and if we hear of war, and squall, and heathenism outside, we say: "What a pity!" and we put our hands in our pockets, and we feel around for a two-cent piece, and with a great flourish we put it upon the plate, and are amazed that the world is not converted in six weeks. Suppose there were three hundred thousand soldiers, but all of those three hundred thousand soldiers, excepting ten men, were in their tents, or securing their markets, or cooking rations. You would say: "Of course, defeat must come in that case." It is worse than that in the church. Millions of the professed soldiers of Jesus Christ are cooking rations, or asleep in their tents, while only one man here and there goes out to do battle for the Lord.

"But," says some one, "we are establishing a great many missions, and I think they will save the masses." No; they will not. Five hundred thousand of them will not do it. They are doing a magnificent work; but every mission chapel is a confession of the disease and weakness of the church. It is making a dividing line between the classes. It is saying to the rich and to the well conditioned, "If you can pay your pew rents, come to the main audience room." It is saying to the poor man, "Your coat is too bad, and your shoes are not good enough. If you want to get to Heaven, you will have to go by the way of the mission chapel." The mission chapel has become the kitchen, where the church does its sloppy work. There are hundreds and thousands of churches in this country—gorgeously built and supported—that, even on bright and sunny days are not half full of worshippers; and yet they are building mission chapels, because, by some expressed or implied regulation, the great masses of the people are kept out of the main audience room.

Now I say that any place of worship which is appropriate for one class is appropriate for all classes. Let the rich and the poor meet together, the Lord the Maker of them all. Mind you that I say that mission chapels are a necessity, but the way churches are now conducted; but may God speed the time

when they shall cease to be a necessity. God will rise up and break down the gates of the church that have kept back the masses; and woe be to those who stand in the way! They will be trampled under foot by the vast population making a stampede for Heaven.

I saw in some paper an account of a church in Boston in which, it is said, there were a great many plain people. The next week the trustees of that church came out in the paper, and said it was not so at all; "they were elegant people, and highly-conditioned people that went there." Then I laughed outright; and when I laugh, I laugh very loudly. "Those people," I said, "are afraid of the sickly sentimentality of the churches." Now, my ambition is not to preach to you so much. It seems to me that you must be faring sumptuously every day, and the marks of comfort are all about you. You do not need the gospel half as much as do some who never come here. Rather than be priding myself on a church in front of which there shall halt fifty splendid equipages on the Sabbath day, I would have a church up whose gates there should come a long procession of the suffering, and the stricken, and the dying, begging for admittance. You do not need the gospel so much as they. You have good things in this life. Whatever may be your future destiny you have had a pleasant time here. But those dying populations of which I speak, by reason of their want and suffering, whatever may be their future destiny, are in perdition now; and if there be any comfort in Christ's gospel, for God's sake give it to them.

Revolution! The pride of the church must come down. The exclusiveness of the church must come down! The financial boastings of the church must come down! If monetary success were the chief idea in the church, then I say that the present mode of conducting finances is the best. If it is to see how many dollars you can gain, then the present mode is the best. But if it is the saving of souls from sin and death, and bringing the mighty populations of our cities to the knowledge of God, then I cry, Revolution! It is coming fast. I feel it in the air. I hear the rumbling of an earthquake that shall shake down, in one terrific crash, the arrogance of our modern Christianity. The sea is covered with wrecks, and multitudes are drowning. We come out with the church lifeboat, and the people begin to clamor in, and we shout "Stop! stop! You must think it costs nothing to keep a lifeboat. Those seats at the prow are one dollar apiece, these in the middle fifty cents, and those seats in the stern two shillings. Please to pay up, or else founder on a little longer till the mission boat, whose work it is to save you penniless wretches, shall come along and pick you up. We save only first-class sinners in this boat."

Revolution! It may be that, before the church learns its duty to the masses, God will scourge it, and come with the whip of omnipotent indignation, and drive out the money changers. It may be that there is to be a great day of upsetting before that time shall come. If it must come, O Lord God, let it come now!

In that future day of the reconstructed church of Christ, the church building will be the most cheerful of all buildings. Instead of the light of the sun strained through painted glass, until an intelligent auditor looks green, and blue, and yellow, and copper-colored, we will have no such things. The pure atmosphere of Heaven will sweep out the fetid atmosphere that has been kept in many of our churches boxed up from Sunday to Sunday. The day of which I speak will be a day of great revivals. There will be such a time as there was in the parish of Shotts, where five hundred souls were born to God in one day; such times as were seen in this country when Edwards gave the alarm. When Tennent preached, and Whitfield thundered, and Edward Payson prayed; such times as some of you remember in 1857, when the voice of prayer and praise was heard in theater, and warehouse, and blacksmith shop, and factory, and engine house, and the auctioneer's cry of "a half, and a half, and a half," was drowned out by the adjoining prayer meeting, in which the people cried out: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

O my God, let me live to see that day! Let there be no power in disease, or accident, or wave of the sea, to disappoint my expectations. Let all other sight fall my eyes rather than that I should miss that vision. Let all other sounds fall my ears, rather than I should fail to hear that sound. I want to stand on the mountain top, to catch the first ray of the dawn, and with flying feet bring the news. And, oh, when we hear the clattering hoofs that bring on the king's chariot, may we all be ready, with arches sprung, and with hand on the rope of the bell that is to sound the victory, and with wreaths all twisted for the way; and when Jesus dismounts, let it be amidst the huzzal of a world redeemed.

Where and when will that revolution begin? Here, and now. In your heart and mine. Sin must go down; our pride must go down; our worldliness must go down, that Christ may come up. Revolution! "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Why not now let the revolution begin? Not next Sabbath, but now! Not tomorrow, when you go out into commercial circles, but now!

Archias, the magistrate of Thebes, was sitting with many mighty men, drinking wine. A messenger came in, bringing a letter informing him of a conspiracy to end his life, and warning him to flee. Archias put it into his pocket, and said to the messenger who brought it: "Business-to-morrow!" The next day he died. Before he opened the letter, the government was captured. When he read the letter it was too late. To-day I put into the hand of every man and woman who hears or reads these words, a message of life. It says: "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart." Do not put away the message and say: "This business-to-morrow." This night thy soul may be required of thee!

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ORPHAN'S COURT SALE. By virtue of an order issued out of the Orphan's Court of Centre county, Pa., the undersigned, administrator of George F. Horvitz, late of Clearfield county, Pa., will expose to public sale at the Court House, in Bellefonte, Pa., on SATURDAY, JUNE 4th, 1898, at 10 o'clock a. m., the following valuable real estate in Curtin township, Pa., bounded and described as follows: Beginning at Marsh Creek, and on the line of John H. Horvitz, thence by same and land of Burdine Butler, Sr., south 65° west 33 rods to stones; thence by same south 86° west 115 rods to stones; thence by Edward Yeager, north 14° west 80 rods to stones; thence by same north 15° east 26 1/2 rods to a post; thence south 81° west 60 rods to a post on line of John Knarr; thence by same north 15° east 2 1/2 rods to stones; thence by land of William Lucas, south 85 1/2 degrees east 84 rods to a post, and north 25° east 89 rods to the aforesaid Marsh Creek; thence along said creek 148 rods to the place of beginning, containing 192 acres, net measure, be the same more or less. The above land is all covered with a young growth of timber. TERMS—One-half in hand when property is sold, and the balance in one year, with interest, to be secured by bond and mortgage on the premises. J. C. MEYER, ATT'Y. JAMES CONNOLLY, Administrator.

CAUTION NOTICE. Having purchased at constable's sale on February 25th, 1898, the following personal property of I. W. Shilling: to-wit: 2 horses, 2 cows, 2 calves, wagon, harrow, plow, cultivator, hay harness, lot of hay, corn, oats, 10 acres wheat in the ground, 2 acres rye in ground, all all household goods and personal property—All persons are hereby cautioned against meddling with same, as I have given same into his possession at my pleasure. SAMUEL FREDERICK, Farmers Mills, Pa.

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