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## DOWNFALL OF YOUNG WOMEN

DANCE HALLS WHERE LIQUOR IS SOLD STARTS MANY GIRLS ON THE DOWNWARD PATH.

(By Associated Press.) CHICAGO, Ill., April 12.—Dance halls where liquor is sold to girls and where friends are provided for those who want them are given as the cause of the downfall of many young women, by Mrs. Gertrude Britton, a social settlement worker who testified to day before the Illinois vice commission.

"Our investigation disclosed that there are 200 dance halls in Chicago where liquor is sold to girls under 16 years old, said Mrs. Britton, and in some other places the so-called soft drinks were found to contain alcohol. We learned that respectable dance halls were a good thing as they provided diversion for young people without endangering their morals.

About half of the dance halls are immoral. The selling of liquor to their girls is often the first step toward their ruin."

"Myrtle S.," aged 17, told the Commission how a scolding by her father the chance meeting of a jolly fellow and his giving her drugged beer led to her downfall. "When my parents separated, I came to Chicago from Cleveland, and finding it lonesome in my room at night, I sought company, she said. A girl introduced me to a friend. At first we took soft drinks but later I was induced to drink beer. One night the beer affected me strangely and after that I was a lost girl. We often visited hotels, sometimes without any baggage, going to those in the down town districts which are considered respectable.

## REASONING ON SCARLET SINS

Most Religious Teachings Are Unreasonable, Says Pastor.

### THE HINDRANCE OF CREEDS

Turning From the Creeds to the Bible Means a Return to Reasoning—A Refusal of Human Ipsi Dixits—Greater and Lesser Sins—Punishments Proportionate—The Sins Which God Styles Scarlet, Men Often Consider Merely White Lies—The Scarlet Sins Theology Condemns Often Less Important With God.



PASTOR RUSSELL

Richmond, Va., April 6.—Bible students of all denominations were deeply interested in Pastor Russell's visit today. A series of special Bible lectures has been in progress for some months; and Pastor Russell has been brought here, evidently for climactic results. His two topics were, "BEYOND THE GRAVE," and "SCARLET SINS." We report the latter from the text, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow."—Isa. 1:18.

Although thoroughly loyal to the Bible and very reverential, the Pastor has evidently got loose from the creeds of all the churches. He admitted that they all contain kernels of Truth, but declared that the truths are buried in a mass of chaff, and worse, are hidden in God-dishonoring theologies so violently unreasonable that their best friends and supporters are ashamed of them and prefer never to think of them.

The Pastor claimed that the repulsiveness of the creeds rubbish heaps hinders people from looking for the grains of Truth which they contain. And this is well, he said. Why should we trouble and disgust ourselves to search for the grains which the various creeds contain, while we have in the Bible a whole garner full of Truth, clean and pure? He urged all Christian people to abandon their creeds and to come together as Bible students, intent only on knowing the testimony of God's Word and obtaining the guidance of His Holy Spirit in the understanding of it. So doing, he declared, all true Christians would soon be so united in heart and spirit that outward forms of federation would be useless and as absolutely ignored as in the days of Jesus and the Apostles.

Jesus held up to ridicule and scorn the inconsistencies of His day. If He were here today, He would similarly show us many inconsistencies in our estimation of sin and righteousness, the Pastor believed. Jesus ridiculed the religious leaders of His time when He pointed out their carelessness to give a tithe of their increase, even to the smallest of seeds, and their showy religious performances to be seen of men.

Our Lord declared that while so doing, they practised the greatest outrages against the very spirit of God's Law of righteousness; that in many ways they took the bread from the poor, the orphan, the widow, and to divert attention from their course, they hypocritically lengthened their prayers. It was not that praying was wrong, or that (tithing was objectionable, but that their recognition of these showed them to be all the more responsible in their gross violations, in "devoing widows' houses," and other sharp practices whereby they took advantage of those within their power through adversity or otherwise.

This principle still operates, said Pastor Russell. The same sin lies at the door of many professing godliness and holding church membership. Today, as in our Master's time, there is a way of keeping within the limits of the law, a way of keeping out of the penitentiary, while at the same time the spirit of the law is outraged and trampled in the dust of avaricious money-getting. And now, as then, these money-lovers often pose as philanthropists, and hold high places of honor and churchmanship. The Pastor spurned not this class. He declared religious hypocrites the worst of sinners in the sight of Heaven. Of all sins theirs were the most scarlet in God's sight, he believed.

Greater and Lesser Sins. Today wealth covers a multitude of sins. To be financially unsuccessful is a crime, on account of which many will consider that a wife is justified in breaking the obligation of her marriage vow and seeking a divorce—a crime on account of which some churches would feel justified in rejecting the culprit as undesirable and striking his name from the list of members. What matters it that Jesus addressed some of His most comforting words to the weary and heavy-laden and unsuccessful? (Matthew 11:28-30.) What matters it that the Scriptures declare that not many rich, who, great or learned, has God called to the Heavenly inheritance—but chiefly the poor of this world rich in faith?—1 Cor. 1:26-29.

It is the same amongst Catholics as amongst Protestants. So long as the sinner remains a member of the church, almost every crime can be ab-

solved. But be the person ever so just, ever so reverential, he would be a sin of scarlet hue and unforgivable, were he to attend Protestant services or in any way seek fellowship with God outside of the Roman communion.

#### Sins Scarlet and Crimson.

The Prophet Isaiah discriminates between scarlet, a bright red, and crimson, a deeper red, as indicating shades of guilt in the same kind of sin. For instance, murder would be a scarlet sin, if committed by a worldly person; but hatred would be a crimson stain—a sin of deeper dye—if cherished by the child of God. As love would be the fulfilling of the Divine Law, so hatred, which is the most violent form of selfishness, implies its flagrant violation. The Ten Commandments mention covetousness of our neighbor's possessions and happiness, *thell* of his property or good name or influence, and murder, the taking of his life, as the culmination of selfish disregard for his rights. In older times, when chemistry was less appreciated, less understood, scarlet and crimson dyes were estimated the most durable, the most difficult to remove; hence in our text these are used to symbolize sins of greater selfishness and depravity.

All mankind have inherited tainted blood from Father Adam. Selfishness of varying hues is found in every member of our race. One difficulty with us is that they do not have the proper focus upon the Divine Law. They know that any transgression of God's Law is sin. Taking the letter of that Law they try to avoid the cruder forms of theft, adultery, murder. This is the same mistake that the Jews made.

It was Jesus, the great Teacher, who gave the clearer conception of the spirit of the Law. According to His interpretation, theft could be committed in the heart, by coveting in a most desperate way, by stealing the good name or the business or the reputation or the trade-mark of another. Similarly, according to Jesus, the crime of adultery might in God's sight be committed without the overt act. Jesus declared, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already, in his heart"—if he lacked merely the opportunity.—Matthew 5:28.

Whoever accepts these definitions intelligently realizes that the world's increase of knowledge has brought increase of responsibilities; and that if open crimes today were much less frequent than formerly, the responsibility of today would still be greater than formerly. But this is not so. Everything indicates to us that human selfishness has kept pace with the increase of knowledge. The thievish spirit abounds everywhere, not only amongst the poor, but also amongst the wealthy. Not all of the vast fortunes of our day were honestly obtained, so far as we may be able to judge. And although there are noble rich men, it is, alas! too evident that the love of money, a root of all evil, has made thieves and robbers of some in high stations.

The civilized world needs to awaken its conscience to the high ideals of the Master—the Golden Rule, which does to a neighbor as it would that the neighbor would do to him if the conditions were reversed. It seems not possible for human law to reach such cases. Those who cannot be influenced by the Scriptures must wait for their lessons and chastisements till the New Age of Messiah's Kingdom.

The vice crusaders have recently been telling us that millions of dollars are spent in New York City alone every year in the white slave traffic. What an awful picture of entrenched sin! When we read such reports and remember our Master's definition of adultery, we stand appalled! That the great Western Metropolis, nevertheless, presents a fair outward appearance which belies such a condition of heart is a matter for congratulation! All pure-minded people should be glad that, if sin cannot be fully stamped out, it can at least be kept to some extent under cover! The stench of the public reports is something terrible!

"The murders of the past year are terribly significant. But if we take the viewpoint of the great Teacher and consider that all 'who entertain murderous thoughts are really murderers in God's sight—we feel constrained to ask, "How does God regard the conditions now prevailing in the world? They are not only worse than at any previous time, but still more evil because of our increased light, our increased realization of the principles of justice. It would not seem to be putting the matter too strongly to say that from the Divine standpoint the world is practically full of thieves, illicentious persons and murderers.

#### Sins Made White as Snow.

What magic power is this that could transform a sinful heart and course of life into a pure one? "Education will do it," says the Professor. But no! Many college-bred men are as sinful as others. "Joining the military or the priesthood will do it," says another. But no! Proofs are abundant that sin may be found in the monastery and the pulpit, as well as in the pew and in the ordinary walks of life.

Our text declares God's reasonableness, and indicates that He has made it possible for the sinner to escape from his sins. The Prophet does not tell the process by which Divine Justice will clear the guilty. But the New Testament gives the explanation. Christ has died, the Just for the unjust human sin, the penalty of which is death, the great Redeemer is prepared to cancel for all those who forsake sin, become pupils in His School and are taught of God.

At the present time God's mercy in the forgiveness of sin is exercised toward those only who hear of His redeeming Love, and are moved to faith, repentance and reformation. Nor is

this enough at the present time. God's call of this Gospel Age is for those who not only desire to resist sin and to escape from slavery to it, but who, being made free, will enlist with all their powers to oppose sin, under the leadership of Jesus—under the banner of the cross. To these comes the assurance of passing from sin to righteousness, from death to life, through the Redeemer.

For these, all the back charges of condemnation to death on account of sin are set aside. A new page of the ledger of God is opened for them. Thenceforth the record of their past is canceled through the blood of Christ. Their sins of scarlet are removed. Their hearts, figuratively speaking, are as white as snow. They are pure in heart, although they have the treasure of this new heart in an imperfect body. The imperfections of their flesh, ever present, will seek to assert themselves; but they as New Creatures and sons of God through Christ are to resist these steadfastly.

#### "Unspotted From the World."

Do you tell me that I am setting too high a standard, and that the millions who read my sermons weekly will be discouraged instead of being helped? I answer that one with God is a majority; and that the Scriptures call upon me to "Cry aloud and spare not; . . . show My people their sins." There are approximately four hundred millions of nominal Christians in the world; yet nowhere on earth are these sins to be found in so rank a development, of so deep a crimson, as amongst the professed followers of Christ.

God knows, the Bible declares, that none can do perfectly. But is this an excuse for any of us? Should we not do the best that we can to approximate the Divine standard in our actions, words and thoughts? What we can do is what God requires of us. All the remainder, as we have seen, has been fully provided for in the Savior, and the mercy and forgiveness which He can properly bestow upon the willing and obedient of heart, whose shortcomings are merely those of hereditary weakness and unfavorable environment. It is the purity of heart, of intention, of will, that constitutes saintship with the Divine standpoint and not actual perfection; for, as we read, "There is none righteous, no, not one."—Romans 3:10.

It is a part of my duty, dear hearers, as a minister of God, to speak His Word, to awaken the consciences of all those with whom I have any influence. It is my duty to lift high the Royal Standard of perfection, that all may see as in a mirror their own shortcomings, and that, seeing these, they may flee to the Master and lay hold upon the grace of God provided for all in Him. The Apostle speaks of the Church class as keeping themselves unspotted from the world. From what we have seen, dear friends, the term "world" includes nearly everybody claiming to be a Christian. The real Christians are few and far between.

But I hold that many more would be real Christians if the Truth were properly presented to their minds. Instead, millions come under the delusion that they are Christians, when they have not taken even the first step of repentance and reformation. And of those who have repented and reformed, comparatively few have taken the next step necessary to their induction into the family of God. The second step is the acceptance of the merit of Christ's sacrifice as that which atones for their sins. More than this, to attain the full blessed privileges of the "Body of Christ, which is the Church" of the "First-borns" (Ephesians 1:22, 23; Hebrews 12:23), it is necessary to make a full consecration of heart and life, time and talent, influence, everything, to the Lord—to be His footstep followers.

This is the only call of this Gospel Age. Only those who hear it and accept it enter into present opportunities and full privileges of sonship. Only these have opportunity of becoming members of the Royal Priesthood of glory, members of "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife." But others, as we have seen, have a measure of responsibility for their conduct, even if they do not come to Christ; and each will receive stripes in proportion as he has done wrong, or blessings in proportion as he has given even a cup of cold water to one of the Lord's faithful servants.

#### It Will Be Different By and By.

After the elect class of this Age shall have been perfected in the First Resurrection, Messiah's Kingdom will be set up. For this we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in Heaven." Then matters will be different. No longer will it be possible for men to profit by wrong-doing, and no longer will any suffer for right-doing. Then every doer of righteousness will have a blessing, an uplifting, a strengthening. And every one following sin, unrighteousness, we are assured, will have stripes, punishments, intended to correct his wrong course and point him to the right way.

The Lord figuratively points to that New Era and explains the change that will then come, saying in respect to all who desire to be in harmony with His will, "I will take away the stony heart [selfishness] out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh"—a kind, sympathetic, loving. (Ezekiel 36:25-27.) This work will progress amongst men during the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom. The grand result will be that all lovers of sin and unrighteousness will eventually be destroyed in the Second Death as natural brute beasts (2 Peter 2:12), and all the willing and obedient will be lifted up from the imperfections and blemishes of heredity, and again become images of God in the flesh.

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