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DOOM OF THE BACKSLIDER.

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse than the beginning" (2 Pet. 2:20).

In our first article we took up the matter of the characteristics of the backslider, and now we purpose to look into his destiny. I have met people who believe and teach that after a person has once been converted, he cannot be lost. But now we want to examine carefully into the Word of God on this subject. Those who believe once saved, always saved, cite us to this Scripture in John which reads "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." This however, does not apply to the backslider. It is God's promise to those who are saved and are present-tense Christians. It is a precious promise of the keeping power of God to those who continue to follow Him.

Statements such as the following are favorites with those who teach once saved, always saved, and misleading and false: "No gifts given by God are ever taken back," "God's seal cannot be broken," "The relationship of sonship can never be destroyed," "When a believer sins, he does not require to be regenerated the second time." Every gift of God is given and retained only on conditions. The pounds and talents parables are proof that the gifts of God can be withdrawn. God's seal cannot be broken in the life of the individual who walks with God; but it is broken in the lives of persons who grieve the Holy Spirit and cause Him to withdraw from them. The prophet gives us clear language on this subject: "But when the righteous turn away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his 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."

So there is clear proof from the Word of God that the backslider shall have part in the second death. Now as to sonship. We are born into the family of God by faith. We are become the sons of God by faith, and we detain this relationship by faith. When faith goes, sonship goes. Sonship to God is a spiritual relationship and cannot be likened to that between the earthly father and son in the sense that the child always remains a son regardless of how far he wanders in the world. We are born into the family of God by becoming partakers of His divine nature. "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This Paul illustrates by the process of grafting. By nature we are bad, but are grafted into the good olive tree by faith. Now Jesus explains how this relationship can be broken. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away." "He is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire." As truly as we can and are grafted into the good tree, so surely can we be cut off and lose this relationship

of sonship. And in returning to God, a backslider must be reinstated, regenerated. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord." David in his backslidden condition cried, "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation." It is salvation restored which brings back the joy. If it were possible for broken cisterns to still hold water, perhaps that doctrine would seem more plausible.

Our text speaks of those who have escaped the pollutions of this world through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. A mere hearsay knowledge of saving grace will not bring deliverance from the pollutions of the world. How could the latter end be worse than the beginning if eternal life was still retained? God declares that they who forget God shall be turned into hell, and we note that Ezekiel says that the backslider shall have part in the second death.

We find in Heb. 6:4-6, that it is impossible for one who has really been converted, to be renewed to repentance, so long as he continues to crucify the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame. His doom is sure unless he returns to God, and that is not forbidden in the Scripture as some men seem to think. You will notice the statement, "To renew them again to repentance," is qualified by the one following, "Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh." And it is true that as long as a backslider continues to trample under foot the mercies of God, there is no hope of salvation for him. Notice again in Heb. 10:28-29, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite under the spirit of grace?"

The idea of a backslider obtaining eternal life, but losing his reward must be comforting indeed to his soul. But it is not God's word to him. Can we imagine the Apostle Paul addressing Demas thus, "Demas, I will meet you in heaven, even though you have forsaken me and departed from God because you loved the world." Never. He would have said as he did to the backsliding Galatians, "Christ is become of no effect unto you." "Ye have believed in vain." It is possible for souls to be saved so as by fire and lose their reward, but this passage is not applied to the backslider. It could more properly be applied to death-bed repentance. Paul says, "The just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition." Jesus said, "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven."

Dear reader, if you are a backslider in heart, I want to warn you to return to God now. Do not delay for your doom is in outer darkness with the unprofitable servant where there is weeping, and wailing and gnashing of teeth. And you with the foolish virgins will hear the words, "I know you not." God's message to you is, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you."—I. E. Dayhoff.

OBITUARY.

Winnifred Sophia, wife of Samuel Carr, departed this life at her home in Geary, Sunbury Co., N. B., Thursday, July 2nd, 1925, aged 67 years. Sister Carr had been in failing health for over two years. She was a patient sufferer, and her confidence in Jesus was firm to the end. She had no fear of death, but welcomed the thought of being at rest with Jesus. She leaves to mourn besides her husband, five sons, Arthur, Jestey, Talbert, Samuel and Freddie, all of Geary; two daughters Doris Carr, Geary; Mellissie Harper, Lavinia, Vic. Co., N. B.; three brothers, five sisters and a large circle of other relatives and friends. The funeral was held from the home, on Saturday, July 4th, where a large number of people assembled to pay the last tribute of respect. The flowers were beautiful, the friends sang some appropriate hymns and Rev. P. J. Trafton spoke from 2 Tim. 4-6, 7, 8. Interment was in the cemetery at Geary. To the sorrowing ones we extend our heartfelt sympathy.—P. J. T.

Charles W. Dunham

The death of Charles W. Dunham occurred at the home of Daniel Schriver, Campbell Settlement, York Co., on Tuesday, July 21st. The deceased was in his eighty-first year and leaves to mourn five children—Jessie, of Washburn, Me.; Melvin, of British Columbia; Bert, of Campbell Settlement; Mrs. Eddie Woodman, of Alberta, and Mrs. Frank Hartt, of Wyoming; also a number of other near relatives and friends.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Rev. C. Gray and Rev. Wesley Fletcher. Interment was made in the Southampton cemetery. FRASER A. DUNLOP.

HOLINESS.

Holiness is an attribute of God, but is obtainable by man. God by the inspired word commends us to follow holiness, for without it no man shall see the Lord. Then it is a necessity and if a necessity, we should be concerned as to its attainment. It brings to the soul health, liberty, power, vision, purity, a fitness for the fellowship of the spirits of just men made perfect and Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant and an innumerable company of angels. The necessity then becomes the luxury. Why then be poor when we can be rich? Let Him come in to purify the heart as he did on the day of Pentecost for that is just what happened then and will happen now when men and women receive the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire, purity of heart or holiness, they shall see God.

SO NEAR HOME AND LOST

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young man said one time in the meeting: "I had to hold onto the seat to keep from going to the altar." He knew God was talking, knew the path of duty, but said "No" to God.

What need there is for the Church to pray, to fast, to weep between the porch and the altar, to travail in soul for a revival that shall sweep the land, as it did when Ireland and Wales and England were stirred in answer to prevailing prayer.—Revivalist.