

IN THE BARBER SHOP

President Wilson told this story:

"I was in a very plebian place. I was in a barber shop, sitting in a chair, when I became aware that a personality had entered the room. A man had come quietly in upon the same errand as myself, and sat in the chair next to me. Every word that he uttered, though it was not in the least didactic, showed a personal interest in the man who was serving him; and before I got through with what was being done for me I was aware that I had attended an evangelistic service, because Mr. Moody was in the next chair. I purposely lingered in the room after he left and noted the singular effect his visit had upon the barbers in that shop. They talked in undertones. They did not know his name, but they knew that something had elevated their thoughts. And I felt that I left that place as I should have left a place of worship."

"Ministers are abreast of the time," said Mr. Moody, "if they preach the old gospel faithfully * * * The gospel has stood the test nineteen centuries, and it has never failed once. I know what the gospel will do for sin-sick souls, for I have seen its power for forty years. Why should I try a new remedy of whose value I know nothing? Why should I spend years in studying up a possible cure for sin when I have a sure remedy * * *? I have only one message for men of every class. The gospel is fitted for all people. So long as men sin, there will need to be sermons on repentance and faith. All alike need to be born again * * *"

Let us hope and pray that the centennial celebrations of his birth will invigorate those influences toward conversion to God, full surrender to Him, intelligent belief in the Bible as the revelation of God, and obedience to its teachings, aggressive soul-winning effort, and every element of Christlike character that flowed from His life and ministry! And he would have all praise and thanksgiving be to God!

Toward the close of his life he uttered this prophetic statement:

"Some day you will read in the papers that D. L. Moody is dead. Don't you believe a word of it! * * *"

I do not, Mr. Moody.

"I shall be more alive than ever * * *"

I believe it, Mr. Moody.

—Sunday School Times.

AS BABSON SEES IT

Roger Babson, as moderator, has thrown a bomb into the Congregationalist ministry, relative to the Sabbath and their preaching. He says, "We need more preaching in the sermon: not three parroted platitudes: more 'Thus saith the Lord,' not more lounging space in the sanctuary; more conviction in the pulpit and contrition in the pews, not provision for the foursome or the country jaunt before dinner; more sense of God, that would render utterly trivial the itch for golf and filling stations. * * * Our pastors may make their sermons as inoffensive as theosophy and our churches as luxurious for the lazy as a liner's smoking room; and yet save nobody from going straight to such a hell as Jonathan Edwards himself would not have dared to describe in public."—Selected.

There is nothing on earth so lowly, but duty giveth it importance.—Martin Tupper.

But noble souls through dust and heat
Rise from disaster and defeat

The stronger.

—Longfellow

WAYS IN WHICH BACKSLIDING MAKE MEN BETTER

By Rev. F. A. Dunlop

First: It makes them better critics.

When did you ever meet a real critic who did not introduce his subject by the statement: "Of course I don't profess to have an experience now." This is the "Battle-cry" of this species of critic. Anyone who is accustomed to meeting this type knows that such a remark is an introduction to something "classical" in the way of criticism. Their backsliding must have qualified them for this "high-class stuff" seeing they seem always to be ready to take on the very best class in the church. Their policy is "Leave it to the 'man of the street.'" to criticize those who are as bad as I am, but let me get at the man who is generally accepted as genuine. The man who prays, pays and gets blessed doing so. To put this man "over the poles" is their meat and drink. Of course their grounds for attack, generally, are on the basis of "what they have heard." They simply state "a certain person told me." "They know how to keep secrets so they are not mentioning any names." Especially if their informant happened to be "a good news gatherer."

This type of critic always has a very high standard of "ethics." Much higher than anyone but an angel could live up to.

The "Sermon on the Mount" is tame in comparison to their yard-stick. The thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians has no grounds for even a comparison. They stand in the same relation to the sermon on the Mount and the New Testament in general that Christ did to the Law.

The Sermon on the Mount says, "Love thine enemies."

The Critic: "But I say unto you, is not the fact that you have enemies an awful proof of your hypocrisy?"

The Sermon on the Mount says: "Bless them that curse you."

The Critic: But I say unto you, is not the fact that some curse you a real contradiction to your profession?

It hath been said by Christ, "Do good to them that hate you." But I say unto you, "What must a professed Christian be living like when so and so is made to feel the way he or she does towards him?"

Oh! Let not even Christ come under the hammer of this critic. He would be held by them necessarily in open disgust because of the many strange stories current concerning Him.

In this respect the Backslidden critic outstrips all others.

Secondly: Backsliding makes men better homebodies, especially on Sundays and prayer-meeting nights.

Regardless of where their programs lead them at other times, "they feel they just must let wife have a little liberty on Sundays and prayer-meeting nights since she is cooped up with the children so much."

Of course they attend every political meeting or any other public meeting that is not likely to call for either prayer or testimony.

If you happen to be an agent don't call on them any night except prayer-meeting night and expect to find them home—that is unless you can arrange to call real late.

Thirdly: Backsliding makes men better . . . what shall I say?—Pre—Prevar—Prevaricat—Well, it means, "One who strays from the truth." (Webster). It makes them better

"Strayers from the truth."

If you doubt this, just inform yourself sometime to the real facts in the case then go to them and ask them the cause of their backsliding. They will trail you up and down, over and back, in and out and never once come within gun-shot of the real truth. They will tell you everything from "A Call to Africa" to having their spirit crushed by the inconsistency of some professor and all the time they know there isn't one atom of truth in what they have been saying. All they needed to say was, One time I was unfair with Christ and my own convictions of right and wrong, and my present state is the result.

Yes, backsliding makes men better liars.

Fourthly: Backsliding makes men better candidates for damnation.

There could be many reasons given why this is so. I shall mention but a few.

First, he must spend so much time excusing himself. He must continually keep the wrongs of others before his mind as a means of defending himself that he soon becomes thoroughly soured on religion.

Secondly, his thoughts are ever haunting him over the destroyed confidences his backsliding has resulted in. Confidences of others as well as his own.

This becomes a very great barrier to his starting again, hence, Satan has a double hold upon him.

Thirdly: Any fall has the possibility of grave danger in it. How much more a fall from grace.

The better experience of grace a man falls from the more tragic will be the results of the fall to his own soul.

I quote a statement made to me by one who had fallen from a high state of grace. "In the natural, if a man falls a short distance it will hurt him some. If he falls a greater distance it will hurt him more. But if he falls far enough it will kill him."

I think we can all see the truth of this metaphor.

Then, if nothing I have said as yet could be accepted as proof that backsliding makes a man a better candidate for damnation my fourth proof must carry startling evidence that it is a fact.

II. Peter, Chapter 2, verses 20-22: "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. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened to them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

THE GOSPEL IS NOT A FAILURE.

"How is it," asked a man of a minister, "that your religion has been going for nearly two thousand years and has not influenced more people than it has done?" For reply, the minister asked another question: "How is it that water has been flowing for more than twenty thousand years and many people are still dirty?" It is not the fault of Christianity that people go without the remedy for human ill, but the loss is theirs all the same. Christianity is not a failure. The gospel is not a failure. Wherever it is preached in fidelity it wins. But there are some who "put it from them."—Selected.