

### WARPED IDEAS OF PLEASURE

The train had stopped for passengers at a little town and two women boarded the same coach in which I was riding. Some of their friends were bidding them good-bye and wishing them a happy journey and a good time. One of them put it thus, "Be good and have a good time." To this, the one addressed replied, "Make up your mind; which am I to do, be good or have a good time?"

This careless remark shows the modern idea of a good time. Throw morality and decency to the wind and wallow in the filth of uncleanness. It is not hard to discover the source of such a standard and it is not difficult to trace its path as it winds its way across the pages of history.

The temptation which came to our first parents in the garden was: Throw your goodness aside, have a good time. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit" (Genesis 3:6).

There is in this Genesis narrative a threefold doubt of God. They doubted His goodness, His righteousness, and His holiness. The temptation is associated entirely with doubt of God's word. "God hath said," was the woman's reply to Satan's inquiry. Satan's answer in effect was, "God's words are not true. By His prohibitions He is keeping you from enjoying the best things." This is still Satan's supreme temptation.

There are many today whose conception of a good time is to wallow in the slime of self-indulgence.

There is a subtle philosophy abroad that if one is to see life he must leave the path of light and life and walk the path of darkness and death. This is a terrible travesty, a symptom of moral madness, a fatal delusion. The whole experience of the race is against it.

The trails across the continent in the early days could be traced by the broken abandoned wagons and bleached bones of the animals. These, like sentinels, lined the wheel tracks. Just so this trail of self-indulgence, of libertine living, can be traced in the world today by the human wreckage all about us—the broken lives, the ruined homes, the hopeless spirit of multitudes.

The plain statements of Scripture are against sin:

"He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul."

"The wages of sin is death."

"I will visit the sins of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation."

"The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God."

Self-indulgence is deceitful, defiling, degrading, disgraceful. It blights posterity and excludes the soul from heaven.

Sin fills our prisons, our insane hospitals, and our feeble-minded institutions. Sin destroys homes, stokes the fires of damnation, and blights with eternal death.

"Be good and have a good time" is the only way to have a good time. Be sinful and have a remorseful time. Be good and be blessed and be a blessing. Be sinful and have a life-time of regrets. Be good and gain the finer, nobler things of life. Be sinful and gain the heartaches of a broken body and a scared soul.

"Forget not my law; but let thine heart

keep my commandments:

For length of days and long life, and peace, shall they add unto thee" (Proverbs 3:1-2).—Oliver G. Wilson, in Wesleyan Methodist.

### FANATICISM AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

Fanaticism is religion caricatured.

"Fanaticism," says Finney, "is loveless light."

Fanaticism is a fire which heats without purifying. It stimulates the passions but does not direct them.

Fanaticism is the child of false zeal, the father of intolerance, and the companion and abettor of persecution.

Fanaticism is characterized by a hurried impetuous spirit. It is unteachable, unyielding, denunciatory, and scolding. It despised authority and is given to exaggeration; is intolerant and condemns all who do not agree with it.

Fanaticism affirms that nearly all the ministers are self-deceived, hirelings, ambitious, and stewards of the devil. The visible Church, it affirms, is filled with hypocrites and should be looked upon with contempt and abhorrence.

Of the evil of fanaticism, John Wesley wrote:

Against every sort of this it behooves us to guard with utmost diligence . . . Its immediate offspring is pride; it constantly increases this source from which it flows . . . It dries up the very springs of faith and love, of righteousness and true holiness . . . Together with pride there will naturally arise an unadvisable and unconvincible spirit . . . Reason will have little weight with him who imagines he is led by a higher power. No marvel then that he is daily more rooted and grounded in contempt of all mankind, in furious anger, in every unkind disposition, in every earthly and devilish temper.—Wesley's Sermons, Volume II.

Avoid every semblance of fanaticism. Never expect the end without the means. Do not lightly assume that dreams and impressions are from God. If you depart from the plain teaching of the Bible for one single hour you are in danger of fanaticism. Believe not every spirit, accept not all impressions, "try the spirits." Tarry before God, avoid hurried decision. Reject all spirits that are devisive and critical. Seek to be composed, walk sweetly the path God orders for you, and leave others to God. Use no constraint in matters of religion. Woo others to Christ only by reason, truth and love.—O. G. W.

### WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

When you have nothing left but God, then for the first time you become aware that God is enough.—Maude Royden.

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Give your life to God. He can do more with it than you can!—Dwight L. Moody.

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All the world is but an orphanage so long as its children know not God as their Father.—Martin Luther.

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To be seventy years young is sometimes far more cheerful and hopeful than to be forty years old.—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

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If I were to try to read—much less to answer all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business.—Abraham Lincoln.

### THE WISE OF THIS WORLD

J. B. Chapman

The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light (Luke 16:8).

The Master's observation of the wisdom of the "men of this age" was illustrated by the actions of the unjust steward who was careful to provide for his future when he would be outside of his present position of employment. The men of this world are commended for their foresightedness in business. They pay premiums to companies which propose to make good their losses in case of fire or accident, and to provide for their loved ones in case of the earner's decease. They vote for retirement pensions, and make plans for income on savings in the days of decreased personal earnings. They "save for the rainy day," and otherwise work to extend their tenure in office beyond the day that now is. Sometimes their methods may be doubtful and even crooked, as the methods of the unjust steward surely were, but their wisdom is vindicated in that they look ahead and plan for the future.

But there is no folly like that of the shortsighted Christian; for no one has a future like the Christian. Others see the horizon dip at life's sunset, but the Christian sees a day beyond that, a day that shall not end in night at all. It is therefore a heart-breaking spectacle to see a Christian living altogether for today, and making few if any investments in the glorious future which stretches out before him.

How long is eternity? Of how great value is a home in heaven? How much ahead is one who has lost the world, but saved his own soul? How rich is the man who owns nothing but God? How bright will be the stars in the soul winner's crown a million years from now? How much will a dollar given to God now be worth when all the gold of earth has perished and melted away? We answer these questions better by attitudes and actions, than by platitudes and praises.

The wise of this world seek to make their investments in holdings that are both safe and profitable. But here again the Christian has the advantage, for he can put his wealth into stocks and bonds issued by the bank of heaven, and which will return both principle and interest at a time and in a place where one can keep them longer and make better use of them.

O Lord, make us wise, like the people of this age, that we may apply their methods in matters relating to the "enduring investments" which Thou dost offer us. And may we make Thy bank our depository and may we thus become rich in the things that shall never perish.

### OUR OUTLOOK

There are two ways of looking at the Lord's coming. There is a looking for and there is a looking at it. It is possible to look at it with a keen intellect and profound interest, and yet have it mean nothing to us personally. It is possible to know but little of the theology of the subject, and yet have a deep and holy longing for our Lord to appear. When a wedding is about to occur, the public are looking at it, but the bride is looking for it. Oh, that this great theme may not only be our study but our personal hope; for "unto them that look for him shall he appear a second time without sin unto salvation."

—A. B. Simpson.