

He Made It Again

By Dr. F. B. Meyer

God's servant had been down to the potter's house. In describing the potter's work, he says, "He made it again" (Jeremiah 18:4). What did he make again?

Jeremiah was a disappointed man. He thought that there was nothing more that he could do to stay the people from destruction. His heart was breaking. At that point God told him to go down to the potter's house, and there he saw the potter take a piece of clay and place it on a wheel. As he stood there to watch, the potter shaped it; it rose beneath his hand into a fair and lovely shape. But just as it was complete, and it seemed as though nothing more was needed, it crumbled beneath his hand. Some part of it fell upon the wheel, some part upon the ground.

The prophet thought that the potter would take another piece of clay and make that new clay fulfil his plan. Instead, he stooped and gathered the broken clay with his hand. Picking it up from the ground and kneading it with his hand, he placed it once more upon the wheel and began to form the clay again. Presently a vessel as fair as possible stood complete, ready to be taken to the kiln to be baked and made permanent.

Far back in your life God took you and placed you upon the wheel, and for these many years God has sought to make you fair. But I know not why, I cannot tell—God knows—you know—there has come a flaw and a break, and you are a piece of broken pottery. Your life is a marred life, your ideal a broken ideal, and all around there lie the pieces of the man or the woman that you might have been.

Why have you failed? Because your life is a failure. You hide it by going to church, by observing the outward routine, by a hearty laugh, by a light, gay air. You live your life amongst your brethren or sisters, but no one knows that deep down in your soul you are certain that you are a failure, that you are spoiled, that you want things you do not obtain, that you long for a goodness you never realize, that you reach out for a sweetness and a purity and a strength that never come. You know that your life has fallen beneath God's plan. You are ready to confess it. Why is it so? Is it because God has failed? No, He wants to do His best for each one of us.

Sixteen years ago I was a minister in a Midland town in England, not at all happy, doing my work for the pay I got, but holding a good position amongst my fellows. Hudson Taylor and two young students came into my life. I watched them. They had something I had not. Those young men stood there in all their strength and joy. I said to Charles Studd (one of the two students), "What is the difference between you and me? You seem so happy, and I somehow am in the trough of the wave."

"There is nothing that I have which you may not have, Mr. Meyer."

"How am I to get it?"

"Well, have you given yourself right up to God?"

I winced. I knew that if it came to that, there was a point where I had been fighting my deepest convictions for months. I had lived away from it, but when I came to the Lord's table and handed out the bread and wine, then it met me; or when I came to a convention or meeting of holy people, something stopped me as I remembered this. It was the point where my will was entrenched.

I thought I would do something with Christ that night which would settle it one way or the other, and I met Christ. You will forgive a man who owes everything to one night in his life if to help other men he opens his heart for a moment. I knelt in my room and gave Christ the

ring of my will with the keys on it, but kept one little key back, the key of a closet in one back story in my heart. He said to me, "Are they all there?"

"All but one."

"What is that?"

"It is the key of a little cupboard, in which I have something which Thou needest not interfere with, but it is mine."

Then, as He put the keys back into my hand, and seemed to be gliding to the door, He said, "My child, if you cannot trust Me with all, you do not trust Me at all."

I cried, "Stop," and He seemed to come back. Holding the little key in my hand, in thought I said, "I cannot give it, but if Thou wilt take it Thou shalt have it."

He took it, and within a month from that time He had cleared out that little cupboard of things which had been there for months. I knew He would.

May I add one word more? Three years ago I met the thing I gave up that night, and as I met it I could not imagine myself being such a fool as nearly to have sold my birthright for that mess of pottage. But that night I looked up into the face of Christ and said, "Now I am Thine."

It seemed as if that was the beginning of a new ministry. The Lord got me on His wheel again, and He made me again, and He has been making me again ever since. I learned that night to say "Yes," and I have tried to say "Yes, ever since."

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A Virtue Gone Wrong

By Dr. Paul S. Rees

Holliness. We don't understand the word very well, do we? What is much worse, there are too many of us who don't care whether we understand it or not. But to those who do care let this much be made clear in our minds: holiness is a two-sided word. On one side is written "Love", on the other side, "Hate." We shall never begin to know the meaning of holiness as the Bible uses the word unless we see that we must love the holy God with a burning devotion and hate everything unholy and ungodly with a flaming aversion. The same Bible which tells us to love God with "all the heart" tells us that we are to "abhor that which is evil."

The sin of hatred, like so many other sins, is a virtue gone wrong. In our selfishness and blindness we have taken this God-given capacity to hate and we have turned it in the wrong direction.

We have turned hate upon people when what we should do is to turn it upon principles and practices that are unrighteous and unworthy. If you hate people, you are sure to become the worst sort of Pharisee—blind to your own unlovely ways. But if you hate selfishness, and lying, and impurity, and conceit, and if the fire of your hatred is kindled at the altar of the Holy Bible, then you will hate these evil things in yourself as well as in others.

What a lot of us need right now is a healthy dose of the right kind of hatred. It is the sort of uncompromising moral indignation that Moses was seeking to generate in the hearts of the people of Israel when he cried, "Thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire." You shall not so much as desire the silver and the gold that are on them. You shall know that, while God loves beauty, He hates sin, and no amount of ornamentation can make sin tolerable to Him.