

## "HE WAS SPEECHLESS"... THE TRAGEDY OF FINAL FAILURE

C. W. Butler, D. D.

In the total of our human living, we may meet with failures from which we may recover. To fail permanently in some of the ambitions and undertakings of life is not necessarily tragic, though it may be embarrassing, at least temporarily so. A man may fail in one business enterprise, yet he may rise to success in another. He may fail to realize his goal of desire in things temporal and perishable, and yet make a real success on the enduring and eternal level of life.

We have the record of one man whose failure on the world level found him, as he neared the eventful hour of the change of worlds, without either money or merely the ordinary comforts of shelter or food; yet, as he faced the time of his departure from this life, he was rich in eternal values. Angels attended the departing of his spirit from a body racked with pain and wreaking with horrible disease, lying helpless on the street. His failure in this world was not tragic, although it caused him pain. He endured as seeing Him who is invisible, and when dying, he left temporary failure; but he immediately entered into possession of enduring success!

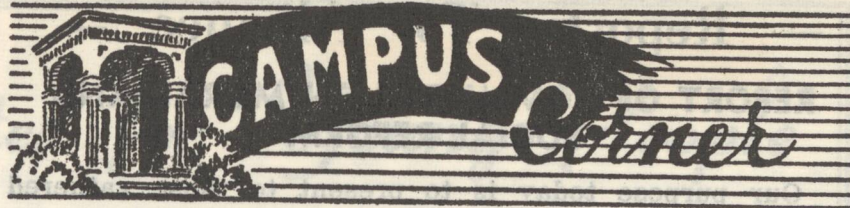
The man of whom it is written, "He was speechless," presents to us an entirely different picture. Whatever success he had attained in time, he faced the great realities of a timeless eternity unprepared. It held within its content the tragedy of destiny and doom. Please note, his failure was not due to lack of opportunity. The wedding garment was provided for him. We may justly infer that he considered his own preparation sufficient — he had placed his confidence in self-sufficiency. He was at least a sort of humanist. He did not do so much that was positively wrong, but he placed his confidence in the wrong source, and failed to make use of the way provided for him.

He was a "modernist" who boasted "an openmindedness." He was willing to take the new and untried way. He was no traditionalist. He proposed to think for himself; but, alas, alas, his mistake was fatal! He missed the way, to the point where, if he had taken the well-trodden path, he would have found it. How true that all of our human ways and wisdom come to a swift and tragic end! Happy the man who, in self-yieldedness and in self-renunciation, takes HIM who is "The Way." He avails himself of the values offered him in the way of "tradition," and refuses to risk an untried way.

He lacked something which was essential, and which was available to him on very easy terms. There was an hour when he could have taken the way of certainty and success. It would require of him the termination of self-reliance, of self-sufficiency and of self-will; but in turning from these highways, he would have found "The Way" which is "everlasting." He would have found the One who is eternally sufficient. His needs would have been fully met, and his destiny assured. Instead of the tragic failure of standing speechless, he might have heard the sentence of the great Judge, "Well done \* \* \* enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Another picture of a fatal and tragic failure is portrayed in the case of the "foolish virgins" (Matt. 25: 1-13). Their lack was a fundamental failure. They might have lacked money, or culture, or position, or prestige in this world, and yet have entered in; but they lacked the essential, in the provision of grace, for which there is no possible substitute. They missed the source of supply at the time the supply was available, "and while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came, and the door was shut." The day of privilege and opportunity was

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Nothing is more foolish than to make our plans without humble dependence upon God. We must take our purposes into His presence, and consider them in the light of His countenance. Every programme must be laid at His feet, to be taken up again, or cancelled at His good pleasure.

J. H. Jowett.

forever past. There is truly a time for us to make certain of our preparation for eternity.

The sentence for the man who was speechless was this: "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," (Matt. 22:13).

To the virgins who made insufficient preparation for the wedding, the same hopeless doom was pronounced in the fact that "The door was shut." O dear reader, let us make our calling and election sure! "Be ye also ready" is the exhortation of the Great Teacher. No time for delay, for "in such an hour as ye think not," He may appear. Again I say, listen to Him who says, "Be ye also ready!"

—The Pentecostal Herald.