

BACCALAUREATE SERMON TO CLASS '18

DELIVERED LAST EVE AT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BY REV. H. G. MCCLUSKEY.

SPOKE ON WISDOM'S REWARD

Gave the Graduates Some Good and Wholesome Advice as a Guide to Them in Later Life

From Monday's Daily. Last evening to a house overflowing with the Plattsmouth people who gathered to do honor to the young people who have by their application graduated from the Plattsmouth High School with honors, and are at this time going out into the world to do battle for success in the lines which their choosing. The address of the evening was delivered by the Rev. H. G. McCluskey, pastor of the Presbyterian church at which the gathering was held. Rev. McCluskey held his vast audience in wrap interest, during the entire time.

The Class of 1918, were all seated where they could get the full force and effect of the excellent discourse, with the exception of two, Carl Wolforth and James Persinger, who are with the service for the government. The class of 1918 concludes: Gretal Fern Hackenberg, Eleanor Gray Burnie, Agnes Holly, Henry Robert Herold, Florence J. Kalacek, Elizabeth Beeson, Mary K. Eckenberger, Vern B. Hutchinson, Elizabeth A. Sjogek, Leroy W. Winset, Freda Sattler, Margaret M. Buttery, Pauline Long, Carl Wolforth, Helen Ruth Clark, Eva L. Hartford, Blanche L. Clark, Leona E. Becker, Gertrude L. Rosselet, J. Ludwig Hallas, Mary Jane Rosenerans, Gladys Pearl Hill, Ellen K. Netting, Edith Kelly, Eva M. Binstner, James Persinger, Edith M. Rebal, Eva Rauen, Raymond C. Cook, Opal B. Cole, Albert Olson.

WISDOM'S REWARD

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Matt. 5:6

According to fable, a shepherd had daily searched the fields for the magic flower that would reveal untold riches, and when at last rewarded, he found the flower. Directly there opened before him a cavern in the hill. Entering, he beheld golden money of unlimited quantity. By a diminutive king on a throne, he was told to take all he wished. He appropriated all he could carry, after repeated warnings not to forget the best. But he could carry no more and left with the warning still ringing in his ears not to forget the best. And as he emerged from the cavern, his gold turned to leaves, and he went penniless. He had left the magic flower behind; that key to his success was forgotten in the delight of the riches. In life's search for wealth, wisdom is that magic key which will unlock untold resources, revealing rich stores of power, pleasure and peace.

But what is wisdom? We need to know the true brand of wisdom, or we fail. Solomon's wisdom was a failure. He was self-conscious in it. He paid more attention to the embellishment of his court than he did of his heart. He dispensed justice very well in the state but was imprudent in his home. He was as scripture describes Ephraim, "Ephraim in a cake not turned." He was only half-baked. He did not apply wisdom far enough. Henry Van Dyke nicely describes the true school of wisdom in the following words:

I put my heart to school, In the world where men grov wist. "Go out," I said, "And learn the rule; "Come back when you win the prize." My heart came back again. "And where is the prize?" I cried. The rule was false, and the prize was pain. And the teacher's name was Pride, I put my heart to school. In the woods where wild birds sing, In the fields where flowers spring, Where the brooks run cold and clear, And the blue of heaven blends near. "Go out," I said, "You are only a fool."

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But perhaps they can teach you here." And why do you stay so long? My heart, and where do you roam? The answer came with a laugh and a song. "I find this school is home." Plato's words come closer to true wisdom than did the deeds of Solomon, for he says, "Through love, all the intercourse and speech of God with man, whether awake or asleep, is carried on." The wisdom which understands this is spiritual; all other wisdom, such as that of arts and handicrafts, is mean and vulgar. "True wisdom and righteousness, then, are in a way synonymous terms. Paul uses them as such in 1 Cor. 1:30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness." Paul also speaks of Christ as "the Wisdom of God." Such being the case, Christ is the righteous One. All righteousness comes from Him. To hunger and thirst after Christ is the same as for righteousness. We have found true wisdom—it is Christ.

Christ and righteousness go hand in hand. The man who is desirous of doing the right thing is the Christian. To know what the right thing is in order to do it, he must know Christ. There is a right and a wrong way to do everything, and every thought that enters the mind of man is either right or wrong and man's character is seen according to the choices he makes. The one or the other to be associated with his soul. Wisdom teaches us how to act aright, and how to choose our thoughts correctly. It ought to be the eager desire of every person to seek to know how to act rightly on every occasion in this life. "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes," says the Proverb. The golden rule of righteousness is in Christianity, and he that acts in any other way is short weighing his fellow men, and deceiving his own soul.

It is the duty and the need of every one to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, which, if he does, all the other essential things of life will be added to him. That is, in every act, the first thing to be considered is what is the right way to do it. Not what is best for me only, but what is best for all concerned. Aim to hit righteousness in every dealing. It will require practice. The boys on the rifle range aim at the targets, but their first attempts may hit far from the mark. There are many who have no intention of solving a question other than to their own advantage, whether it will be to the disadvantage of the others or not. Be sure you are right and then go ahead, is a very good proverb. It is better to fail in the world's standard of success and be right, than to succeed in the world and act wrong or un-Christianlike. All that is of value in this life has been attained because people have acted rightly. Wrong and selfish action wherever found has spelled disaster every time. We have lived only 2,000 years since Christ, and have accomplished more in that time by 100 fold than the world succeeded in doing in the six or eight thousand years previous to His coming. It is because more people in the world have been acting according to the methods of Christ.

We are building for eternity a temple of righteousness. We, ourselves, are the material that goes into this temple. God is the architect and we have the power to determine whether we become a part of it. Righteousness is its construction. This life is the work shop in which this kingdom or temple is being perfected. In it we are co-laborers together with God. There are three characteristics essential in the building of an earthly temple. These are length, convenience, and beauty. This temple of righteousness requires special care in three phases of life, namely, intellectual, social and religious. One of the most beautiful cities in all the world was the Fair at San Francisco. But it was built only for beauty without strength and has since passed out of existence. For strength, the vaults of the First National Bank of Omaha are fine construction, but do not make convenient apartments for comfortable living. I once saw a house built with the main design of convenience, without respect for beauty. It was a blemish in the scenery of a beautiful village and a painful sensation on the nerves of every one who tasted it. Thus in this temple of righteousness there must be the well proportioned elements of its building, for it is to be perfect in every detail. It ought to be our care to see that every part is correct. It is time that this world learned its lesson, of giving heed to the details of life, to see that each is correct. So many flaws have entered into life that we see today the complete disintegration of law and order between nations as to plunge us into a war of all nations of the world.

In making the time uses of the shells, it requires the utmost skill of the trained eye to see that they vary not the breadth of a hair. To do so would cause a shell to explode over the heads of the men of friends instead of the enemies. It would spell defeat. If the stability of a material kingdom is essential in the detail, how necessary are life's details in the Eternal Kingdom of Righteousness? Righteousness requires intellectual development. God does not require an A. B. degree to enter His kingdom, but A. B. degrees will give a permanence and stability which is lacking with lesser trained minds. Ignorance is a foe to doing right, because one has to know what is right before he can do it. Any work toward Christianizing people is of no avail unless followed by education. That is why America stands high because of our public schools. Germany is well educated, too, and that is the reason why Germany is as powerful today as she is. But the trouble with the Germans is they have tried to build with an education minus the rule of right, and caught by Christ. They have omitted the religious. China would be the greatest nation in the world, but the Chinese are ignorant and do not know how to develop themselves. When it lightens they tremble before the fury of their Gods. But

the educated man has taken that power and rides in his Sedan Electric.

Education leads one to know the forces of nature, and to realize that man after all is superior to nature in his ability to solve the problems which they present. It leads him to at least speculate concerning the Author of power; to surmise the existence of God. It may not be the right kind of a God, but it at least calls from his desire for a search after Divinity.

Education will develop a sense of right in knowing how justice and injustice has been dealt through-out the world in its many historic stages. And in comparison of the one to the other will instinctively pick the best.

Education will teach the equality of man as well as his superiority over the world, and thus develop a conscience that will classify the "man's inhumanities to man" as brutal. Education teaches the right use of figures that business may be conducted with justice to all.

But education is nowhere a guarantee of justice and right conduct. It is in itself an unknown quantity. It is only one pillar of this temple, and as such is incapable of sustaining the structure. Education alone has done outrageous injustice and brutal deprivations upon peoples of other nationalities, as well as those of their own nationality. Never, in the world's history, has there been known such cold blooded, inhuman and deliberate robbery and murder upon the property and rights of other peoples as the German propagand in the last forty years, culminating in the present war. Such barbarism by a nation of educated people caused even the ignorant nations of heathen to blush for they had expected better things from civilization. Missionaries had hard times explaining that education did not mean Christianity, and the heathen mind soon was able to rise higher than that of the Militant Teuton, and in his Christian undeveloped mind, he was of superior moral manhood to the civilized, yet barbaric Teuton. Thus we see a failure in an educated people, because their system had run riot. Like a mighty engine, having lost its governor, permitting its full power to be used without regulation, bursts its fly wheel and wrecks the building, so this engine of Germanic civilization, having lost its stabilizing Christian influence, has thrown the power of its science and art into one great passion of mania and hate, and wrecked a world in distress and sorrow. If they have distressed after righteousness as they have after power, the present world sorrow of this war would have been changed now to a corresponding world joy, induced through their altruistic educated mind. Education without God comes a weapon in the hands of a savage, but used in love is unlimited in its scope of developing a strong moral health in the world.

A social righteousness is essential to our temple of justice. Righteousness becomes a myth unless it is applied to the social life. We have all heard and perhaps seen the religious being of faith so clearly manifested on Sunday, but relegated with the Sabbath day clothes to the dusky closet, while in business negotiations, social affiliations, the rights of others are always made subservient to those of himself. Such peoples' righteousness is a cloak to be worn only on stated occasions, and at last to be worn when they are to be transported through the golden portals of the everlasting kingdom, to be the saints. Service is to be the keynote of religion today. Because it comes very near to righteousness. It is the cap stone of Christ's teaching which has been so long neglected, and the arch of Christ's righteousness has been so long ignored, without it. He said, "He that would be the greatest among you, let him be your servant."

Social righteousness is seen in the struggle of labor against the aggression of the capitalist. Organized labor unions have done great good in bringing about a more just equality of wages. But when the Labor Union uses its whip to monopolize capital, it becomes as guilty as was capital in its greed for gain. Righteousness is an equinox of conduct that demands, its rights, but steps when it begins to invade the rights of any one else.

Social righteousness acknowledges the rights of every other individual in the world and demands that each has his right, just as eagerly as he himself has his. He has the justice coming to himself. Each desire for equality, social rights fought the war of freedom for the slaves of the South; drove the Spaniards out of Cuba and today is sending our boys to Europe to restore the rights of France and Belgium. It is the cause of all law, which is primarily made to defend the weak and the oppressed.

We are confronted with one of our greatest perils, known as the social evil. There is a law that is right, laid down in the world's beginning whereby one man shall have the right to one wife at a time. He has no rights and no claim on any other. The evasion and breaking of this law has caused more sorrow than any other degradation of man. German invasion of foreign territory has also invaded the rights of every woman in that territory and robbed them of their marital right and made it impossible for any one of them to ever establish a home with the rights that every home ought to have. Happiness can come only from loyalty to this righteous law, and every infraction of it by any one will cause unaid and eternal distress. In Thomas Hood's "Bridges of Sighs," he described one incident of the thousands happening daily of the wrecks of happiness from those who have betrayed the hearts of innocent maidens. "One more fortunate, weary of breath, rest importunate, gone to the death, like her up tenderly, lift her with care; fashioned to resist, dully; young and so fair. Look at her garments, clinging like cereants; whilst the wave constantly drips from her clothing. Take her to infinity; loving, not losing; Touch her not scornfully. Think of her mournfully, gently and humanly; not of the stains of her. All that remains of her now is pure womanly. Make no deep scrutiny into her

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Robert Mickel was a visitor in this city from Avoca last evening and this morning.



ministry, rash and undutiful. Past one in line for perfect action. In all dishonor, death laid out on the slums of London, in the work of the Salvation army, whenever one of the noted criminals of their realms became converted, it was announced that "he had got religion." There are multitudes of people who are trying to support the temple of their lives in righteousness by two pillars only, that of good moral people in society and education, while the other portion of their construction is unsupported, and the whole structure lacks stability and careens menacingly. They are among the number who have not "got religion." Religion ties a man to God. And when one is so tied, he is interested in the things that interest God. God's aim is to make this old world blossom as a rose. Unless a person is a world citizen, he is not a Christian citizen. Christ died for the world, and not only for the citizens of the United States or of Plattsmouth. It is not enough to patch the roof of your house just over where you sleep—your guest's chamber needs patching, too. Let's patch up the fight spirit in this old world of ours so that we will not be troubled in the future over its peace, and instill in the minds and hearts of other hell-raising people a spirit of love and brotherhood instead of hate and suspicion.

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