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## TALMAGE'S SERMON.

### HE SPEAKS OF THE MEN WHO REJECT RELIGION.

#### He Likens Them to the Men in the Parable Who Were Compelled to Attend the Feast—A Fable for Religious Hypocrisy and Sincerity.

Privileged Excuse.  
Rev. Dr. Talmage, who is still absent on his round-the-world tour, lectured on the subject of his sermon through the press for last Sunday, "Holy Compulsion," the text being Luke xiv, 23, "And compel them to come in."

The plainest people in our day have luxuries which the kings and queens of olden times never imagined. I walked up and down the stairs of Holywood palace—a palace that was considered one of the wonders of the world—and I said, "Can it be possible that this hall there was of this reputed wonderful place?" And this is the case in many other instances. There are fruits in Westchester County and on Long Island farms far better than the grapes, granates and apricots of Bible lands. Through all the ages there have been scenes of festivity, and the wealthy man of my text plans a great entertainment and invites his friends. If one builds a beautiful home, he wants his acquaintances to come and enjoy it. If one buys an exquisite picture, he wants his friends to come and ap-



REV. DR. WITT TALMAGE, D. D.

preciate it, and it was a laudable thing when the wealthy man of my text made himself happy, wanted to make other people happy. And so the invitation went out, "Come, my friends, to the feast." But something went wrong. The embarrassment of any one who has provided a grand feast when he finds out that the guests invited do not intend to come. There is nothing that so provokes the master of the feast as that.

Privileged Excuse.  
Well, I tell you, these invited to this great feast made frivolous excuses. The fact was, I suppose, that some of them were offended that this man had succeeded so much better in the world than they had. There are people in all occupations and professions who consider it a wrong to them that anybody else is advanced. I suppose these people invited to the feast said among themselves, "We are not going to administer to that man's vanity. He is proud enough now. We won't go. Besides that we could all give parties if we made our money the way that man makes his."

So, when the messengers went out with the invitations, there was a unanimous refusal. One man said, "Oh, I have bought a farm and I must go and look at it." He was a land speculator and had no business to buy land until he knew about it. A frivolous excuse. Another man said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen." The probability is he was a speculator in live stock. He ought to have known about the oxen before he bought them. Besides that if he had been very anxious to get to the feast, he could have hooked them and driven them on the road there. Another frivolous excuse. Another man said, "Oh, I have married a few and can't come," when if he had had to his wife, "I have an invitation to a splendid dinner. It is highly complimentary to me. I should very much like to go. Will you go along with me?" she would have said, "To be sure I will go." Another frivolous excuse. The fact was they did not want to go.

Now, said the great man of the feast, "I will not be defeated in this matter. I have with an honest purpose provided a banquet, and there are scores of people who would like to come if they were only invited. Here, my man, here you go, and when you find a blind man give him your arm and fetch him in, and when you find a lame man give him a crutch and fetch him in, and when you find a poor man tell him that there is a plate for him in my mansion, and when you find some one who is so ragged and wretched that he has never been invited anywhere then, by the kindest tenderness and the most loving invitation any one ever had, compel him to come in."

Moral of the Parable.  
Oh, my friends, it requires no acuteness on my part or on your part to see in all this affair that religion is a banquet. The table was set in Palestine a good many years ago, and the disciples gathered around it, and they thought they would have a good time all by themselves, but while they sat by this table the leaves began to grow and spread, and one leaf went to the east, and another leaf went to the west, until the whole earth was covered up with them, and the clusters from the heavenly vineyards were piled upon the board, and the trumpets and harps of eternity, made up the orchestra, and as this wine of God is pressed to the lips of a sinning, bleeding, suffering, dying, groaning world, a voice breaks from the heavens, saying: "Drink, O

friends! Yes, drink, O beloved!" O blessed Lord Jesus, the best friend I ever had, was there ever such a table? Was there ever such a banquet?

From the cross uplifted high,  
Where the Savior deigns to die,  
What multitudes around I hear  
Exclaim on the ravisher's ear!  
Heaven's redeeming work is done,  
Come, and welcome, sinner, come,  
Days of Religion.

Religion is a joyous thing. I do not want to hear anybody talk about religion as though it were a funeral. I do not want anybody to whine in the way of making about the kingdom of God. I do not want any man to roll up his eyes, giving in that way evidence of his sanctity. The men and women of God whom I happen to know for the most part find religion a great joy. It is exhilaration to the body. It is invigoration to the mind. It is rapture to the soul. It is balm for all wounds. It is light for all darkness. It is harbor from all storms, and though God knows that some of them have trouble enough now they rejoice because they are on the way to the congratulations eternal.

Oh, the Lord God has many fair and beautiful daughters, but the fairest of them all is she whose ways are pleasant and whose paths are peace! Now, my brothers and sisters—for I have a right to call you all so—I know some people look back on their ancestral line, and they see they are descended from the Puritans or Huguenots, and they rejoice in that, but I look back on my ancestral line, and I see therein such a mingling and mixture of the blood of all nationalities that I feel akin to all the world, and by the blood of the Son of God, who died for all people, I address you in the bonds of universal brotherhood. I come out as only a servant, bringing an invitation to a party, and I put into your hands, saying, "Come, for all things are now ready," and I urge it upon you and continue to urge it, and before I get through, I hope, by the blessing of God, to compel you to come in.

We must take care how we give the invitation. My Christian friends, I think sometimes we have just gone opposite to Christ's command, and we have compelled people to stay out. Sometimes our elaborated instructions have been the hindrance. We graduate from our theological seminaries on stilts, and it takes five or six years before we can come down and stand right beside the great masses of the people, learning their joys, sorrows, victories, defeats.

Practical Theology.  
We get our heads so brimful of theological wisdom that we have to stand very straight lest they spill over. Now, what do the great masses of the people care about the technicalities of religion? What do they care about the

subtleties of the doctrine between subaltern and supralternarian? What do they care for your profound explanations, clear as a London fog? When a man is drowning, he does not want you to stand by the dock and describe the nature of the water into which he has fallen, and tell him there are ten or twelve hydrogen gas and one of oxygen gas, with a common density of 32 F., turning to steam under a common atmospheric pressure of 212. He does not want a chemical lecture on water. He wants a rope.

Oh, my friends, the curse of God on the church, it seems to me, in this day is metaphysics. We speak in an unknown tongue in our Sabbath schools, and in our religious assemblages, and in our pulpits, and how can people be saved unless they can understand us? We put on our official gowns, and we think the two silk balloons flapping at the elbows of a preacher give him great sanctity. The river of God's truth flows down before us pure and clear as crystal, but we take our theological stick and stir it up and stir it up until you cannot see bottom. Oh, for the simplicity of Christ in all our instructions—the simplicity He practiced when, standing among the people, He took a lily and said: "There is a lesson of the manner I will clothe you, and, pointing to a raven, said: 'There is a lesson of the way I will feed you. Consider the lilies—behold the fowls.'"

I think often in our religious instructions we compel the people to stay out by our church architecture. People come in and they find things angular and cold and stiff, and they go away never again to come, when the church ought to be a great home circle, everybody having a hymnbook, giving half of it to the one next him, every one who has a hand to shake hands shaking hands, the church architecture and the church surroundings saying to the people: "Come in and be at home." Instead of that, I think all these surroundings often compel the people to stay out.

Living Compulsion.  
Now, let us all repent of our sins and beg on the other track, and by our heartiness of affection and warmth of manner and imploration of the spirit of God compel the people to come in. How shall we lead sinners to accept the Lord's invitation? I think we must certainly begin by a holy life. We must be better men, better women, before we can compel the people to come into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. There are fine essays being written in this day about science and religion. I tell you the best argument in behalf of our holy Christianity—it is a good man, a good woman, a life all consecrated to Christ. No infidel can answer it. Oh, let us by a holy example compel the people to come in!

I read of a minister of the gospel who was very fond of climbing among the Swiss mountains. One day he was climbing among very dangerous places and thought himself all alone when he heard a voice beneath him say, "Father, look out for the safe path. I am following," and he looked back, and he saw he was climbing not only for himself, but climbing for his boy. Oh, let us be sure and take the safe path: Our children are following; our partners in business are following; our neighbors are following, a great multitude stepping right on in our steps. Oh, be sure and take the right path!

Exhibit a Christian example, and so by your godly walk compel the people to come in.

I think there is work also in the way of kindly admonition. I do not believe there is a person in this house who, if sp roached in a kindly and brotherly manner, would refuse to listen. If you are rebuffed, it is because you lack tact and common sense. But, oh, how much effective work there is in the way of kindly admonition! There are thousands of men all around about you who have never had one personal invitation to the cross. Give that one invitation, and you would be surprised at the sincerity with which they would accept it.

I have a friend, a Christian physician, who one day became very anxious about the salvation of a brother physician, and so he left his office, went down to this man's office and said, "Is the doctor in?" "No," replied the young man waiting; "the doctor is not in." "Well," said this physician, "when he comes in, tell him I called and give him my Christian love." This worldly doctor came home after awhile, and the message was given to him, and he said within himself, "What does he mean by leaving his Christian love for me?" And he became very much awakened and stirred in spirit, and he said after awhile, "Why, that man must mean my soul," and he went into his back office, knelt down and began to pray. Then he took his hat and went out to the office of this Christian physician and said, "What can I do to be saved?" and the two doctors knelt in the office and commended their souls to God. All the means used in that case was only the voice of one good man saying, "Give my Christian love to the doctor." The voice of kindly admonition. Have you uttered it to-day? Will you utter it to-morrow? Will you utter it now? Compel them to come in.

Faith and Prayer.  
I think there is a great work also to be done in the way of prayer. If we had but enough to-day, we could go before God and ask for the salvation of all the people in our churches, and they would all be saved, there and then, without a single exception. There might be professional men there, political men there, worldly men there, men who had not heard the gospel for twenty years, men who are pre-udiced against the preachers, men who are pre-udiced against the church men who are pre-udiced against God—I do not care if they might be brought in by fervent prayer, you would compel them to come in.

Oh, for such an earnest prayer People of God, lay hold of the horns of the altar now and supplicate the salvation of all those who sit in the same pew with you, the redemption of all who sit in your churches.

I tell you to-day, my friends, of a great salvation. Do you understand what it is to have a Saviour? He took your place. He bore your sins. He wept your sorrows. He is here now to save your soul. A soldier, worn out in his country's service, took to the violin as a mode of earning his living. He was found in the streets of Vienna playing his violin, but after awhile his hand became feeble and tremulous, and he could no more make music. One day, while he sat there weeping, a man passed along and said, "My friend, you are too old and too feeble. Give me your violin," and he took the man's violin and began to discourse most exquisite music, and the people gathered around in larger and larger multitudes, and the aged man held his hat, and the coin poured in and poured in until the hat was full. "Now," said the man who was playing the violin, "put that coin in your pockets." The coin was put in the old man's pockets. Then he held his hat again, and the violinist played more sweetly than ever and played until some of the people wept and some shouted. And again the hat was filled with coin. Then the violinist dropped the instrument and passed off, and the whispers went: "Who is it? Who is it?" and some one just entering the crowd, said: "Why, that is Bucher, the great violinist, known all through the realm. Yes, that is the great violinist."

Christ Bears Our Burdens.  
The fact was, he had just taken that man's place, and assumed his poverty, and borne his burden, and played his music and earned his livelihood, and made sacrifice for the poor old man. So the Lord Jesus Christ comes down, and he fits us in our spiritual enury, and across the strings of his own broken heart he strikes a strain of infinite music, which strikes the attention of earth and Heaven. He takes our poverty. He plays our music. He weeps our sorrows. He dies our death. A sacrifice for you. A sacrifice for me.

Oh, will you accept this sacrifice now? I do not single out this and that man and this and that woman. But I say all may come. The sacrifice is so great, all may be saved. Does it not seem to you as if Heaven was very near? I can feel its breath on my cheek. God is near. Christ is near. Ministering angels are near, your glorified kindred in Heaven near, your Christian father near, your glorified mother near, your departed children near. Your redemption is near.

Deaf persons, as a rule, hear better in the midst of a modern din than when it is quiet around them. The noise of the cars in travel or the whirr of machinery in mills helps to make up the volume of sound necessary to reach their impaired organs. An amusing illustration appears in the case of a very venerable deaf gentleman who lived quite alone. On the very rare occasions when he had a visitor he used to busy himself shaking down the ashes in his coal stove, so that by the dint of the supplementary clatter he might catch what his visitor had to say.

## GEN. LEE'S CHARGER.

Description of His Famous Horse as First given by the General himself.

Few people in this broad land do not know that the late Gen. Robert E. Lee's war horse, Traveller, gained almost as much fame as did the celebrated Confederate commander himself, says the St. Louis Republic. After the war an artist wrote to Gen. Lee asking for a description of Traveller, which Gen. Lee wrote to him. A copy of this description was made by Miss Mildred Lee, daughter of the General, for a St. Louis friend, who gave it to the Gleaner. This is what the General wrote about his famous horse:

"If I was an artist like you I could draw a fine picture of Traveller, representing his fine proportions, muscular figure, deep chest, short back, strong haunches, flat legs, small head, broad forehead, delicate ears, quick eyes, small feet, and black mane and tail. Such a picture would inspire a poet whose genius could then depict his worth and describe the endurance of his hunger, thirst, heat and cold, the dangers and sufferings through which he has passed. He could dilate upon his sagacity and affection and his invariably able response to any wish of his rider. He might even imagine his thoughts through his long night marches and days of battle through which he has passed. But I am no artist and can therefore only say that he was a Confederate gray."

"I purchased him in the autumn of 1861 in the mountains of Virginia, and he has been my patient follower ever since—to Georgia, the Carolinas, and back to Virginia. He carried me through the seven days' battle around Richmond, the second Manassas, at Sharpsburg, Fredericksburg, the last day at Chancellorsville, to Pennsylvania, at Gettysburg, and back to the Rappahannock. From the commencement of the campaign in 1862, at Orange, till its close around Petersburg, the saddle was scarcely off his back as he passed through the fire of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor and across the James River. He was in almost daily requisition in the winter of 1862-3, on the long life of defense, from the Chickabombie north of Richmond, to Hatcher's Run south of the Appomattox. In the campaign of 1863 he bore me from Petersburg to the final day at Appomattox Court House. You know the end of his life is to me his glory."

He is well supplied with equipment. Two sets have been sent to him from England, and one from the city of Richmond, but I think his favorite is the American saddle from St. Louis.

"Of all his companions in toll—Richmond, Brown, Rowan, Ajax, and quiet Lucy—only he is the only one that retained his vigor to the last. The first two expired under their onerous burdens and the last two failed. You can, I am sure, from what I have said, paint his portrait."

This ends the description, signed with the name of the famous Gen. Robert E. Lee, Lexington, Va., the summer before he died.

## Swords of Damascus.

To the love of strange goods the bazars of Damascus are far more alluring than those of Cairo or Constantinople, the capacious chests of the merchants contain much that we would buy were our purses longer. Old embroideries of wonderful colors, delicate China silk of many hues, swords of cunning workmanship, all these lie piled beside us on the floor. It is but seldom that a really good specimen of the Damascus sword can be obtained, for the art of working and engraving steel is dead. The swords were made of alternate layers of iron and steel, so finely tempered that the blade would bend to the hilt without breaking, with an edge so keen that no coat of mail could resist it, and a surface so high polished that when a Moslem wished to rearrange his turban he used his sword for a looking glass.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

## The Pin Story Improved.

A prominent banker in Sydney was holding forth on his early life. "How did I get my first start in life?" he exclaimed. "Why, one day I picked up a pin." "What game's played out," was the cry. "I picked up a pin," the banker continued, "a diamond pin, which I pawned for 250, and after giving it to my charity to change my luck I began my career as a money-lender with the other 249 1/2. To-day, after thirty years' hard labor, I am a millionnaire, and to celebrate the event I have just given 50 more to charity."

## Keeping Silver Bright.

The jeweler's method of keeping silver bright is simple and effective. Smooth silver is never touched with a brush for fear of scratching it. Fine French writing is moistened with a little water, applied with a chamomile rag and a dry chamomile rag is used for polishing. There are brushes with chamomile tips almost as fine as camel's hair brushes to clean silver and cut silver, and rough or silver is cleaned by applying writing with a fine brush and rubbing with chamomile skin.