

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. F. FEFFERT SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind."—(Math. xxi. 37)

When God commands us to love Him, it is not because He derives any advantage, pleasure or additional honor from our doing so; it is inevitable that a creature must glorify God, but man, who possesses reason, has it in his power to glorify Him voluntarily or involuntarily. If a man turns to God in love and seeks Him in all that he does, thinks or speaks; if he makes God's glory his aim throughout life, rather than his own welfare; if he cares little about possessing other things, and desires chiefly to be intimately united with his Creator, he is glorifying God voluntarily, and this voluntary service is meritorious to himself. If, on the other hand, he is indifferent towards God, making himself and not God the object of all his exertions, if he even goes so far as to cherish feelings of hostility to God and His holy commandments; if he is lost in self-love or in love of created things so completely as to care nothing at all for God, and, having lost all faith, to idolize himself alone and worship material objects, he must still glorify God, though he does so involuntarily. He can not help glorifying God's wisdom and power that are manifested in man's inability, in spite of all his efforts, to alter the decrees of God. Thus Joseph's brethren glorified God's wisdom, for, when they despised the Lord and His commandments and sold their brother into slavery, they were actually assisting to carry out God's designs.

Goliath mocked the people of Israel and their God, but he was giving an opportunity to God's loving providence to reveal itself, and he was overcome and slain by the hand of the youngest and most insignificant of the chosen people. Nabuchodonosor commanded divine honors to be rendered to his statue, but his wisdom was only contributed to God's glory, for his great weakness and the weakness of all who rebel against God, became apparent when he went mad. Those who refuse to love God, can not help contributing to His glory, in spite of their bad will, for in their case His justice is revealed, and after vainly struggling against His will they are finally overtaken by eternal punishment. It depends, therefore, upon a man's will whether he loves God, and by loving Him glorifies Him and obtains his own salvation; or whether, turning away from God, he glorifies Him by his own weakness and suffering, and finally loses his own soul.

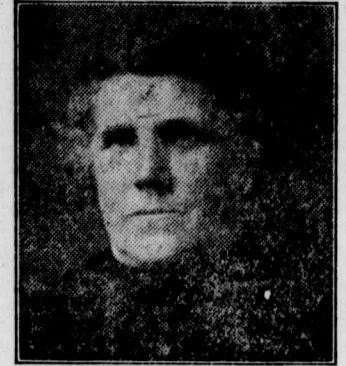
When our Saviour told us that the commandment requiring us to love God was the first and greatest of all the commandments, He was aiming at nothing but our good; and today's gospel is a loving admonition to be careful for our own salvation. Why are we often so lukewarm, doing right in a mechanical way, by force of habit, rather than zealously and with real interest in the welfare of our souls? We act in a most contradictory way, for we forget and neglect what is indispensable to our happiness, although there is innate in all our hearts a constant craving after it. The cause of our own salvation should be the most important business of our lives, for it affects something infinitely more desirable than all the advantages of this world. If we are really anxious to be saved, we shall seek the love of God, in destructible, unshaking peace of heart and eternal bliss. Our salvation means our being united with the great, wise, loving God, our knowing Him as He is, in all His infinite grace and mercy, our recognizing in all His works the unfathomable greatness of His power, our loving Him, as children love their father, though with a far closer and more heartfelt love, having no wishes or cravings apart from this love, but being filled with peace and joy, such as our feeble, perishable hearts now can not contain.

If we think of this glory in God, this intense, ineffable love of Him, it is impossible for us not to wish most earnestly to attain to it? Must not every other longing, every dream of earth vanish before it? Are we not drawn irresistibly towards Him who is our All? Can any desire for earthly things make us deaf to the call of this holy love and of eternal happiness?

Man exerts himself to win prosperity in this world, although it is often a mere phantom, so fleeting as to deserve rather to be described as misery. Our only true happiness, our only true joy, truth, clearness of vision and bliss are in heaven. Let this be our aim, let us not cast away our treasure in heaven for the sake of the dith of earth. Yet this simile is most inadequate; for we are speaking of something absolutely indescribable, the possession of God Himself. Can we throw this aside for some fleeting advantage here? No; it is indispensable for us to labor earnestly for our own salvation, in order to secure it. You all know the parable of the five foolish virgins, who, having no oil, went too late to purchase some, and consequently came to the bridegroom's door only to find it closed, and to hear Him say: "I know you not." If now, in the days of our health, whilst we have strength and vigor, we do not trouble to know Jesus and His love, if we have in our hearts no fire of love, no ardent longing to serve God and please Christ, if our good works do not shine with light,

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how shall we fare at the hour of death, when through our whole being rings the cry "The Bridegroom cometh!" Black darkness will prevail within us, for the joys of this world will no longer charm us as in our time of health; the consolations of the world will leave us cold, and even if we try to persuade ourselves that our illness is not dangerous, we shall still hear the cry: "The Bridegroom cometh." Then we shall look for the lamp that has perhaps long been extinguished; and it may be that with sorrow we shall have to confess: "It burned brightly in my childhood, but gradually I forgot this lamp of Divine love, and now it has gone out and lies neglected in some obscure corner." In our urgent need we may look for it and try to set light to it, but we shall have no oil; the good works that we have failed to do can not then be accomplished. It is possible for the foolish virgins to find mercy at the last hour, but the merit that they failed to secure is gone for ever. Let us be eager now to make our salvation sure. Let us set to work quietly, but with determination, and labor at our task by fervent prayer, by faithful fulfillment of our duties, by obedience and by conquering the enemy, who, like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Do not put off matters until to-morrow, for your enemy who desires your ruin will not postpone his assaults; he is always awake, and will miss no opportunity of destroying you when he finds you off your guard. To-morrow may never come, so do your best to day to secure your salvation, for perhaps the night is already close at hand, when no man can work. Amen.

TEMPERANCE THE HISTORY OF THE DRUNKARD

No man ever became a drunkard in a day. No man ever set out with the avowed purpose of becoming a drunkard. We point the fingers of scorn at the victim of drink and say, "Why doesn't he quit his drinking?" "If I were him, I would take the pledge." You know the most disgusting sort that ever filled a drunkard's grave said and thought the self same thing. He could boast of being able to take a drink or leave it alone. But the time came when the boast was in vain, for he was helpless in the grasp of that vice. The panther never stole with half the stealth, to make the final leap upon his victim, as does intemperance creep upon its prey.

The human being for whom I have the greatest sympathy is the drunkard. Not that I admire the driveling, idiotic counterfeit of man. Not that I condone his crimes. Not that I can overlook the suffering and grief and hunger and want he has caused; but in his helpless, pitiable condition he needs sympathy and assistance. Strange, it is how, very often, the sunniest, best natured of men fall victims and that demon drink transforms their nature so that we can call them by no other name than devil. Yet they once felt secure perhaps as you do now; never dreamed that they would lose control, and here they are now, slaves bound hand and foot, ready to be cast into hell.—Rev. William P. Curtin.

NO LIQUOR DRINKERS NEED APPLY A special dispatch to the Boston Herald from Topska, Kan., June 29,

reads as follows: A man who takes a drink cannot work for the State of Kansas. That's the new order of things in the State that has had prohibition thirty-five years and now has fewer liquor users than most States. Governor Capper laid down the rule in a letter to the new civil service commission, which goes to work in July, and applicants for jobs and those now holding places on the State payroll must be without the liquor "boquet." The Governor, in discussing the proposed rule, said Kansas should have applied it many years ago. There are about three thousand men and women on the payroll of the State. It is a big employer of labor of all kinds, from the high priced scientist in its schools and its heads of great institutions, down to the lowest-paid laborer to be found anywhere.

Kansas is the first State to prohibit the use of liquor by its employees. As the rule is proposed to the commission, two members of which are named by the Governor, the use of liquor will be sufficient cause for dismissal from the public service.

DECADENT DRINKERS Our drinking population has become fearfully decadent. Men used to be willing to battle for the drinking privilege. Once the distillers could count on an unbreakable phalanx of booze fighters at the polls, shouting "Personal liberty forever!" and fall of the thing for which they voted. Those good days are over. The bartender in these degenerate times listens unprotestingly to prohibition conversation from strident ranks of lips moist with the aromatic cocktail and the cool highball. More horrible still, the bartender often drops a remark showing that he is himself a "prohib" in sympathy. The average drinking man either does not care a continental whether prohibition carries, or plumps his vote for it. Anti saloon sentiment has broadened tremendously. Nobody can be counted on to respond to the old wet slogan, simply because the number of Americans who feel any deep interest in their grog has diminished until it is practically confined to the most recently arrived foreign element and to certain groups with whom drinking is a cult.—Collier's Weekly.

NEED OF RELIGION IN EDUCATION

NON-CATHOLIC WRITERS AWARE OF THE NEED OF RELIGIOUS TRAINING IN SCHOOL Boston University, a Methodist institution, proposes to open a department for the training of religious teachers. The need of this department is thus stated by the university: "The future welfare of our country depends upon the religious education of the coming generation. If our boys and girls are to grow up into trustworthy, unselfish and morally efficient citizens they must learn how to take God into account. The teaching of religion has been removed from the public schools. The average home does not provide for it. Hence upon the Sunday school falls practically the entire responsibility for the religious training of the young. The Protestant Church is now losing over fifty per cent. of her young people, because it has not yet developed an adequate system of religious education."

Nearer and nearer are our separated brethren approaching the Catholic idea of religious education. From time to time during the past year we have noted protests made by Baptists, Lutheran and Episcopal clergymen against the lack of religion in education. Jewish rabbis in many parts of the country are earnestly striving to establish schools of religious instruction. At Gary, Indiana, such schools have been founded by several Protestant churches, and by arrangement with the Superintendent of Instruction, the time-schedule of the Public school has been changed to allow the children who wish, to attend them. The Ave Maria reprints from the Protestant Sunday School Times, the following words of the Rev. William MacKenzie, D. D.:

"In the matter of education, the secularist school holds the field. It is the task of the Church to set beside it the school of religion. This requires nothing less than a vast army of trained teachers who have been prepared by special study of the Bible and of Christian truth and the relations of the Christian spirit to modern civilization to become the convinced and inspiring teachers of the children of America. They must have intellectual force equal to that of the Public school teachers, but they must have in addition the definite religious aim, the conscious evangelical spirit."

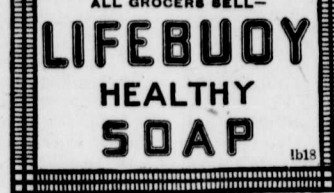
It is true that this movement aims to add religious to secular instruction, rather than to put religion in the schools. In time, however, non-Catholic educators will recognize that this system makes religion a burden to the children, inasmuch as it requires more class after the regular school hours. After all, religion is not something to be added on like a patch to a garment, or an appendix to a book. "Religion's all or nothing," as Browning says, "stuff of the very stuff of life." But better a little religious instruction on Sundays or after class, than no religious instruction at all.—St. Paul Bulletin.

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SCATTERING THE BIBLE

Thirty years ago we stood at the corner of Santa Isabel and Mariscal Streets in the City of Mexico and watched the active exertions of a Bible propagandist as he distributed copies of the Protestant Scriptures to the crowd standing around him. An ordinary rickshaw, drawn by one ancient ribbed horse, which in turn was controlled by a small Indian boy seated in front, was filled with several large uncovered cases of Bibles, while a man dressed in the clerical garb of an Episcopal clergyman (for such he was) stood upright among the boxes and handed the books to the curious spectators.

Occasionally a few copies would be passed out to the dealer in payment of the Bible or Testament handed out, but the distribution was mainly gratuitous, and it is hardly necessary to say that customers on those terms were numerous. A groceryman who stood near, and whose place of business was within a few feet of the wagon, secured a number of copies, and he informed us a short while after when we were making a purchase from his counter, that "Bishop K. came in his wagon to that corner nearly every day" and made a generous distribution of Bibles. Thousands of copies must have been disposed of every week, the most of them to people who could not read a word, and who certainly had no respect nor reverence for the volume placed in their hands.

To scatter tens of Bibles among people who are as yet utterly unacquainted with Christianity, and who can feel no reverence and scarcely any interest in the writings of prophet or evangelist, is surely not the way to promote either the true interests of religion, or respect for the sacred writings. It may be all very well for Mr. Tomlin, an Anglican clergyman, to write to his employers:

"We are taking to Siam twenty two good-sized chests well filled with the 'read of life' but, unfortunately, it is bread so badly kneaded and baked that scarcely any one in Siam is to be found who can digest it. Speaking of the Chinese, a Protestant missionary openly declares: "We have had no proofs that the thousands of books thrown among this people have excited one mind to inquire concerning them, have induced one soul to find a teacher among the foreigners in China, or have seen the means of converting one individual." As to Malay Scriptures, "no less than seven versions have been printed. The Rev. Howard Macaulay, who was specially deputed to investigate and report on their subsequent fate, did so in these candid words: Many thousands have been distributed, but, so far as I can learn, with scarcely any perceptible benefit. I did not hear of a single Malay convert on the whole Peninsula." In fact, this singular form of propagandism, so entirely contrary to the whole spirit and commission of Christ, is most lamentable and disreputing to any one who is at all concerned or interested in securing respect for the Word of God. Secretaries often represent the poor heathen as being extremely desirous to obtain copies of the Holy Book, and no one denies this. Only it must be remembered that the cause of this eagerness, as Archbishop Grant says, "cannot be traced to a thirst for the Word of Life, but to the secular purposes and to the unhallowed uses to which it has been turned, and which are absolutely shocking to any Christian feeling."

These Protestant "Bibles have been seen," says Dr. Wells Williams, a Protestant agent, "on the counters of shops in Macao, out in two for wrapping up medicines and also fruit, a purpose for which the shop man would not use the worst of his own books." Sometimes these Protestant Bibles were turned to more profitable, though equally profane purposes. They were not unfortunately unseen and the pages used as wall paper.

"At Singapore," writes Bishop Courvez, "I saw the walls of two houses entirely covered with leaves of the Bible; this profanation, how-

ever, is not greater than when they are employed to roll round bacon and tobacco." Eye-witnesses tell us that in the frontier towns of China whole cases of Bibles, for which simple old ladies and foolish old gentlemen have disbursed their precious gold, were constantly sold by auction, and purchased at the price of old paper especially by shoemakers, grocers and druggists. M. Boucho writes from Pulo Pinang: "I have myself interrogated many intelligent heathens as to the use which they make of the Bibles distributed to them. They have invariably replied that they employed them for ignoble purposes." The Abbe Albrand was a great Catholic missionary, and drew so many souls into the Church, not by Bible scattering, but by preaching and teaching, that Mr. W. Earl (himself a Protestant) eulogized him for his "great success in converting the Chinese." One day, hearing an American missionary boast that he had distributed "twelve large chests full of Bibles in a few months," the said Abbe Albrand remarked: "He must have a great reputation among his countrymen, who count the number of conversions by the number who have accepted Bibles; but I, who am on the spot, know the uses to which they are destined. There is not a day but some object passes through my hands enveloped in the leaves of some Protestant publication. How many houses are there, in Singapore alone, of which ceilings and walls are covered with the leaves of some hundreds of Bibles in the form of tapestry."—The Missionary.

FROM MASTER MINDS

The first rule of Christian charity is to believe no evil if we have not seen it, and to be silent if we have seen it.—Pope Clement XIV. "Die when I may, I want it said of me by those who know me best that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow."—Abraham Lincoln. It would make us all good if when we go to the altar we were to say, "This may be my last Communion."—Cardinal Manning.

TRUE COURSHIP

Preaching in St. Leo's Church, St. Louis, Mo., on "True Courship," the Rev. James T. Coffey gave the following pointed and candid advice: "Know the person you are going to marry. Know the family you are going to marry into. You can't tie yourself for life to the

drunkard, or courtesan, or the gambler, or the blasphemer of God, or the associate of thieves, or the hater of your religion, or the person to whom morality is a joke. You might just as well hitch up with the devil. Things will be made as hot, if not hotter, if you pick out a life partner from the above list of misfits. "Don't try to love the man who doesn't love his own mother and sister; if he hasn't practiced this virtue at home, you may be sure he will not have much of it to spare abroad. Don't waste your time in loving good looks, divine forms, heavenly tresses, nice manners, generous purses. These are all external and superficial. They change and perish with time. Go deeper and you will fare better. Don't fall into love. Go at it slowly. Those who fall into love find often a will-o'-the-wisp and marish ground instead of the real thing and solid footing. Violent love is like a violent, tempestuous temper—it will engulf you in all kinds of misery. If you crawl down the precipice slowly, you will be able to come up again; if you roll down headlong, you may break your neck and have to be buried there. It isn't love that makes young people marry on the spur of the moment; it's delusion, delirium. Don't be lured. Don't let lunatics fool you by telling you they love you and must have you now, instantly. Call the police in these cases."

The Battle of Gettysburg

In this, the most terrible engagement of the Civil War, out of each 1,000 engaged 65 were killed. And this is exactly the number of those now in good health aged 49 who will die before reaching 63. In the battle of Shiloh, of each 1,000 combatants 42 were killed, which is the number of those now in good health aged 30 who will die before they reach 32.

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