

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

STRIIVING FOR PERFECTION

"A good tree can not bring forth evil fruit, neither can an evil tree bring forth good fruit." (Matt. VII. 18.)

Christ, in the Gospels, frequently compares man's life on earth to a tree that bears fruit, and it is to be noted that man must bring forth some sort of fruit. This follows from the fact that he is a free being, and acting rationally, his works will be good or bad from a moral standpoint. Were man merely possessed of an instinct, like the animals, he would not be accountable for his acts. But considering him as he is, every act, thought, and word is some sort of fruit. Christ gives us a means of judging of the fruits of our life. If we are good, the fruits borne by us will be good; if evil, men the fruits of our life also will be evil.

This consideration of the fruits we produce in our lives and the subsequent, if not immediate, revelation of their nature, should seriously occupy us. After all, our life on earth is only the beginning of a fuller life which is to come to us. This fuller life will be either one of eternal happiness or of eternal misery. Now, which will be depends upon the fruit we bear during the days of our mortal existence.

In the more or less ignorant state in which humanity has been since the fall of Adam and Eve, often we are liable to become blinded to the true nature of the works of our life. There is also the arch-deceiver of mankind, who can change himself into an angel of light and deceive us in our opinion of the fruits of our lives. So it is necessary for us to be certain of the true nature of the fruits we bear. Otherwise we may blindly pass along in life, performing works which we judge to be good, but which in reality are evil. Christ gives us the key to passing the right judgment on our works. He says that if we are virtuous, the fruits of our life will be good; but if we are wicked, then the fruits produced by us will be evil.

But how are we to find out whether we are good or bad? Ordinary means for doing so are at hand. Are we Christians in the full sense of the word? Are we honestly endeavoring to carry out the mandates of Christ? If we can truthfully answer before God that we are using our best efforts to lead a good Christian life, then we can have a moral certainty that we are producing good fruits; greater assurance than this we can not have in life.

But how do we become a good or bad tree, in the sense in which Christ speaks? Certainly we are not bad by nature, even though the effect of original injustice remain within us. Neither does God intend good and bad trees to exist together in the world. His will is that all men be saved; and in order to be saved, a man must produce, under the influence of grace, works worthy of eternal life. In other words, God wills all men to be good. The fact is, however, that the wicked continue in the world as well as the good. The reasons for the existence of these two classes are plain enough. The reason why some are wicked is neglect of God's grace and a yielding to passions; the reason why others are good is because they mortify their passions and come, by various means under the influence of divine grace.

It is well for us to ask ourselves what course we are now pursuing. No doubt we shall be inclined to think that we are leading a life of righteousness, or, at least, that we are doing our best to that end. It is human to think thus. But it will help us to form a true opinion of ourselves if we take a retrospective glance and compare our present moral condition with what it was a year or two ago, or even further back. Are we better now than we were then? Have we fewer evil habits, whether great or small, than we had at that time? The one who has really improved, who has conquered some of the habits that existed in his soul, is indeed a good tree and is bearing good fruit. But what must be said of the one who is no better, though no worse, and has eradicated none of his former habits? True, he may be good but, unless a change comes for the better—even though it be only in the smallest degree—he is in great danger of a gradual decay. God wants us to progress toward virtue. Nay, even nature is so formed that if it is not continually subdued, it will be the conqueror.

It is principally due to the absence of a true knowledge of one's moral condition that a fall from grace occurs. And this lack of knowledge of our real condition results, generally, from the absence of meditation in our lives. How much we can learn in this respect from the saints! Their life was one of continuous meditation. They never ceased to think on God, and on the dangers besetting them. Even in the midst of occupations

the most absorbing kind, they never allowed the foremost aim of their lives to be forgotten for a moment. There existed in them that intention called habitual, and by it their every act was sanctified. Their lives were good, they kept them to themselves, aided by God's grace. Even then, however, they were never certain of their eternal salvation. Knowing the weakness of human nature, and the prevalence of dangers everywhere, they realized that they must never cease in their holy endeavors, and must wage an even more bitter fight against nature. Perhaps we never can reach a state of perfection equal to theirs, but certainly we can be imitators of their endeavors.

How necessary it is for the Christian, even though he feels that he is as a good tree, to continue his progress. It is very easy to fall into a routine; to attend Mass on Sunday simply because it is the law of the Church; to say a few prayers in the morning and at night, because good people generally do it. If a man finds himself in this condition, let him consider it a foreboding of spiritual decay, and stir himself up to a life of fervor. Even the good can not remain virtuous unless nourished with new, good food.

Let us ask ourselves, are we as the good tree or as the evil? And if one or the other, which we certainly must be, what are the prospects for the harvest time, when the fruits of our lives will be gathered? If good now, will they be good then? If bad now, shall we allow them to remain so? In either case, it depends upon ourselves.

GIRLS ARE SOWING THEIR WILD OATS

The moral depravity of our day resulting from irreligion, materialism and an inordinate desire for pleasure and amusement seems to rival the immorality of ancient Rome. Men, women and girls are sinking into such iniquity that thoughtful students of our present social life are appalled at the prospects for the future. The debauchery has become so widespread that churchmen, educators and sociologists are exhorting the pleasure-mad world to return to the path of decency and virtue.

Licentiousness seems to have affected every social group. Only the other day Cardinal Beign found it imperative to issue a pastoral letter, warning the Catholics of the Province of Quebec against lascivious dances, immoral plays and indecent styles. His pastoral has set Canada thinking and even the secular press is aroused at the seriousness of the situation. Thus the Montreal Star, commenting on the letter, says:

"Cardinal Beign's pastoral letter will be read approvingly by all right-thinking people. Some of the fashions in dancing have grown more and more repugnant, more and more immoral; the only feature of rivalry is in unseemliness. The good old dances of thirty years ago gave all the pleasurable excitement that any normal person could desire. They were modest and graceful, and fulfilled all reasonable aims of sociability. The objectionable dances came before the War and the reckless war spirit licensed the excesses that have brought them into greater disrepute. When the Catholic Church speaks on such a subject it speaks with authority, with determination and with the power of enforcement. While the Protestant churches can do much by exhortation and pulpit denunciation, it is regrettable that they have not the power to enforce their views in such matters as those dealt with by Cardinal Beign. The sooner there is an authoritative condemnation of all sorts of such indecencies as are now anathematized the better for the health and morals of the people. The sooner there is a reversion to reasonable forms of amusement the better will it be for the well-being of the Commonwealth. The mind is subject to disease. The mind diseased is, to a large extent, neglected and generally speaking is ministered to by underpaid advisers, while the body diseased has myriads of well-paid physicians."

Great as the moral laxity may be in French-Canada, the immorality existing in this country is immeasurably worse. In an address delivered at the eleventh annual meeting of the National Lutheran Education Conference in New York, Dr. Charles J. Smith, President of Roanoke College, Roanoke, Va., declared that one of the things that caused the most concern in college life was impurity. This, he asserted, is not confined to any class or place. He had personal knowledge of its existence in the theological seminaries of the Lutheran Church.

"Some women in every age drank liquor," said Dr. Smith, "a few even enjoyed a smoke, many of them threw away their honor, but the world has never known the turning loose of such an army of hard-drinking, cigarette-puffing, licentious Amazons as walk our streets and invade our campuses today. There are three things in college social life that bother us most—drinking, dancing and social impurity. They exist in the home towns of our students, in the world everywhere, and I have personally known them to exist in our own theological seminaries. The modern dance is permitted by some of our

church colleges and ostracized by others. The modern dance, if not bad of itself, is usually conducted in a bad setting. It can be above reproach, but it usually is not.

"What can we do when the daughters of the so-called 'best people' come out attired scantily in clothing, but abundantly in paint; with a bottle of liquor, not on the hip, but in the handbag; dance as voluptuously as possible in order to be attractive enough to be spoken about every other step, so as to appear popular, call for frequent intermission to give them opportunity to quench their thirst from the bottle, and with the man of their choice engage in violent petting parties in the luxurious retreat of a big limousine."

That such conditions exist quite generally is almost inconceivable, yet there can be no doubt that they do. In his recent book, Reconstruction of Religion, Dr. Charles A. Ellwood, another Protestant authority, says that our social pleasures and amusements are on the pagan level.

"Many amusements in our present society," he points out, "cause the participants to lose the control which civilization has put upon the original animal impulses and passions of man. Our world offers the amazing spectacle of more lives offered on the altars of pleasure than upon those of war, famine, and pestilence combined. The lives utterly ruined, or their social usefulness at least destroyed, by the pursuit of foolish pleasure are so numerous that no attempt at keeping track of them is made. Here we must reckon, for the most part, the victims of drink, of sexual immorality, of gambling and other low forms of sport and amusement."

Obviously civilization cannot go forward with such a drag. A new social discipline must be provided which will safeguard the young and adult alike from the insidious, unsocializing influences of low forms of pleasure and amusement."

Modern civilization will soon be doomed if the wild orgy of immorality continues. Those whose virtue and chastity have always been their greatest charm and most priceless possession, is now living in most riotous abandon and "sowing her wild oats" even more freely than man. The warning voices of those who are appalled at the tragic conditions fall on deaf ears, and the mad dance to perdition goes merrily on—Buffalo Echo.

PRAYER AND NERVES

A report of a case handled by Dr. Foster Kennedy, associate professor of neurology at Cornell Medical College, attending physician at Bellevue Hospital and other hospitals of New York City tells of the value attached to prayer by an eminent man of science who describes his treatment of a man who recently came to him.

"This man was the head of a large shoe manufacturing company. When he came to me his eyes were staring out of his head. His heart was beating half again as fast as it should. He told me that in the course of the day when he was at his desk and thought of the many important tasks ahead of him, his forehead would become beaded with sweat. And so on."

"What was the remedy prescribed? There was very little to do for this man in a physical way. But the learned doctor advised reading of history and other interesting books, adding, 'No medicine in the world will do you as much good as merriment in your heart,' and then continues:

"Another thing I recommended to him may seem even more unusual—prayer. He promised me he would pray not only when he went to church, but at his office during the day, and I told him what I shall tell you presently about the truly medicinal value of prayer. Today the manufacturer is a well man."

It is another application of Christ's words: Pray always and fail not!—The Liguorian.

SEALED Tenders addressed to the undersigned, and enclosed in an envelope marked "Tender for Reconstruction of East Pier at Port Burwell, N.S." will be received at this office until 12 o'clock noon (daylight saving), Wednesday, August 6, 1924, for the reconstruction of 2 1/2 feet of East Pier at Port Burwell, Hants County, N.S.

Plans and forms of contract can be seen and specification and forms of tender obtained at this Department, at the office of the District Engineer, Royal Bank Building, London, Ont. Equity Building, Toronto, Ont., and at the Post Office, Port Burwell, N.S.

Tenders will not be considered unless made on printed forms supplied by the Department and in accordance with conditions contained therein.

By order, S. E. O'BRIEN, Secretary.

Department of Public Works, Ottawa, July 14, 1924.

When Remitting, Send a DOMINION EXPRESS MONEY ORDER. On Sale at C.P.R. STATIONS and DOMINION EXPRESS AGENCIES.

A Nervous Wreck

Victim of Gas—After Endless Suffering—Turns To His Old Friend and Is Well

The Fruit Treatment "Fruit-a-lives"



One of the most astonishing recoveries that seems almost like a miracle, is that of Mr. James Dobson of Bronte, Ont., a prominent merchant, a mine owner and one of the charter members of the Dominion Stock Exchange, Toronto.

In 1912, Mr. Dobson was completely relieved of Rheumatism by taking the Fruit Treatment, after suffering for more than five years. In January of last year, Mr. Dobson was almost suffocated by gas from a furnace in his house. He says, "I had blood tests, analysis of the stomach, X-ray of teeth, had eight teeth extracted and became a nervous wreck. Finally, my wife suggested trying our old medicine 'Fruit-a-lives', which I did. Today, I weigh 180 pounds instead of 140 and am completely restored to health. In my estimation, there is no other medicine that will give as good results as 'Fruit-a-lives' for all troubles arising from a disordered condition of the stomach, liver, kidneys or skin."

"Fruit-a-lives" are the intensified juices of apples, oranges, figs and prunes, combined with tonics and form a complete treatment in themselves. If you are not well, try the Fruit Treatment. Your dealer has 'Fruit-a-lives'—25c and 50c, a box—or sent postpaid by Fruit-a-lives Limited, Ottawa, Ont.



Argentina

Sherlock-Manning Pianos are to be found even as far afield as the great South America republic Argentina, where they are living up to their customary reputation for quality of workmanship and beauty of tone.

Sherlock-Manning Piano Company advertisement featuring an image of a piano and text: "Sherlock-Manning 20th Century Piano... is the piano for you, and even through years of hard service it will remain true to tone." Includes address: LONDON CANADA.

Pease Economy Furnace advertisement with text: "A Wonderful Heater for Economy on Fuel" and "ECONOMY" FURNACE. Includes image of the furnace and contact information for Pease Foundry Company.

The Ault & Wiborg Company advertisement for Paints and Varnishes, Enamels and Floor Waxes. Includes text: "BUY YOUR SUPPLIES IN THIS LINE DIRECT FROM THE MANUFACTURERS" and list of agents: Montreal, Winnipeg, TORONTO, Vancouver.

ASBESTOSLATE advertisement for roof protection. Includes image of a house with a roof and text: "Double Roof Protection! ABESTOSLATE—Rigid Asbestos Shingles—not only protects your home against wind, rain and snow..."

TEA - COFFEE advertisement for Kearney Brothers, Limited. Text: "Finest Importations always in stock at lowest market prices. Special attention given to requirements of institutions." Includes address: 33 St. Peter Street, Montreal, Que.

Interlocking Tile advertisement. Text: "Large Hollow Brick of patented design equivalent in size to six common Bricks. Laid like a Brick on horizontal Beds of mortar..." Includes address: 32 Toronto St., Toronto.

WEBER advertisement for Pianos and Player Pianos. Includes image of a piano and text: "Established 1862" and "The Weber Piano Company, Limited KINGSTON, ONT."