

# THE JUDGMENT RULE

## "Let Him that is Without Sin Cast the First Stone."

### THE SIN OF MODERN SOCIETY

#### Rev. Dr. Talmage Discusses the Tendency to Unsparingly Condemn in One Sex What is Tolerated in the Other -- Universal Habit of Condemning Others for Sins Similar to Those we Conceal.

Based according to Act of Parliament of Canada in the year 1904, by William Hall, of Toronto, at the Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Los Angeles, Cal., Oct. 16.—In this sermon the preacher discusses the tendency of society to unsparingly condemn in one sex what is tolerated in the other, and the almost universal habit of denouncing in others sins which we conceal and excuse in ourselves. The better way of the divine law is illustrated from the text, John viii., 5, "What sayest thou?"

Have you studied constitutional law? Without doubt it offers one of the most appetizing feasts ever spread in the banquet hall of the mental epicurean. It follows with unerring eye the ramifications of a government's internal organism, even as a medical student searches out the entangled pathways of the nerves and muscles and arteries of the human frame. It tells us where the brain is, where the heart is and why the arm is sinewy and strong. It tells from whence comes the source which creates the law and whence the power which executes the law.

Constitutional law is above all other kinds of law. The National Congress and the Legislatures of the States deal with conditions as they arise, and sometimes, in their haste to remedy an evil or to provide means for an urgent purpose, they enact a statute which proves to be unconstitutional. What do we mean by that? We mean that there are certain fundamental principles of government embodied in our constitution which must not be transgressed. If a law is passed which violates one of these principles there is no need to repeal it, because when it is found to be unconstitutional it at once becomes void and inoperative. Thus lack of legislation stands the constitution as the supreme test by which the acts of President and lawmakers are judged. It defines the rights of rulers and legislators and its limits to their power and is the safeguard of national liberty.

In the kingdom of God we have always a supreme authority. The councils of the churches may formulate doctrines, make decrees and construct creeds and catechisms, but high over all there is the will of the great King of kings, Christ is the supreme ruler of his kingdom, and his word is the test by which every dogma and practice must be judged. Let us consider some of the characteristics of this government.

First it is an absolute monarchy. We have governments on earth that mean to be absolute monarchies, but they have no constitution. We speak about the Russian Government as an absolute monarchy, but it is not. There are thousands of things which the Russian Czar would like to do which he cannot do. With his pistol or sword Nicholas might slay his own children as Ivan the terrible in maniacal rage killed his first-born son, and no power on earth could bring him to justice. But there are limits to the Czar's power. His own subjects recognize the fact. The old Russian proverb tell us there are things the Czar cannot do. Among those proverbs are the following: "Even the Czar gets his shoes bespattered if he puts his foot in a puddle." "The Czar's crown cannot protect him from a headache." "The Czar can have only two horns." "Even the Czar's vinegar will not sweeten." "Put the Czar in the desert and he is a man and nothing more." "The Czar's edicts are good for nothing unless God's Amen is written on them." By these quaint aphorisms, current in Russia, do the people show that they realize that, powerful as the Russian autocrat is, he is subject to human limitations, like the most obscure peasant in his Empire. It is well known, too, by statesmen that even as a ruler he is not so supreme as is thought. The nobles who surround him exercise a constraint upon him, and his agents often thwart his will.

In an infinitely higher sense is Christ the absolute ruler in his kingdom. In his wisdom and power he governs without check, and his word is the law and life of his people. "I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is and was and which is to come the Almighty." "That means," says Dr. Key, "Christ is all in all of creation, of history, of Scripture, of salvation. He is all in all in the life of the believer and in the life of the Christian church and in the life of everything." He is in truth more than a president, more than a Duke of Venice, more than a King, more than a Czar. He is an absolute monarch in the Christian world. He shares in the throne with no one. He is the King of kings. His word is the law and the only true law. Christ again and again emphatically stated that by him and through him must all things be judged as right or wrong.

A significant illustration of Christ's originality and his freedom from current principles and prejudices is given in the gospels, and it may help us to understand his attitude if we study the story. One day while Jesus was teaching in the temple and Pharisees tried to entrap him. Right into the temple where Jesus was they dragged a trembling, frightened, sobbing woman who had been taken in adultery. Right

the law and the interpreters of the Scripture. These other men are the Pharisees. They were so particular to keep themselves outwardly unspotted from heathen customs that they carried extracts from the Hebrew law about with them in little boxes or phylacteries. They had these boxes strapped to their foreheads that all men might see them. But when these men, these leaders of Jerusalem, were standing there condemning a poor outcast woman for her sins Christ in silence was making figures upon the ground with his fingers in which they might read their own condemnation.

What Jesus Christ was writing upon the ground is not recorded; whether Christ was writing history of those accusers on the ground or no we care not, for one fact we do know—by his silence as well as later by his spoken words Christ was teaching the sweeping lesson that a rich man's sins, a prominent lawyer's or physician's or statesman's sins or a minister's sins are just as severely condemned in the sight of God as the poor man's sins. The divine law discriminates not between the sins of the upper and lower social classes.

But between sin and righteousness. The sin of the broad-cloth is the same black sin which sometimes nests under the rough woollens of the laborer and the mechanic. Sin is sin wherever found, and sin by the Christ law is to be everywhere condemned. But I find in the next place another trenchant lesson. The divine law does not accept zeal in bringing others to justice as a ground for absolving the prosecutor of his own wrongdoing. The scribes and Pharisees cannot atone for their sins by denouncing and condemning others. Though a man might prove every other man a living example of total depravity and devote his life to the exposure and arraignment of criminals, he must take his own place at the bar and answer the indictment of his own iniquities. Instances have been known of a criminal under human Government securing for himself immunity from punishment for his own crimes by betraying his leader to the officers of the law or even by himself executing sentence on that leader, but such men are despised by their people, even by the community that profits by the treachery. A similar principle is applied in our courts of justice when a man is allowed to turn state's evidence. It sometimes happens that there is no way of convicting a notorious criminal but by the testimony of a confederate. That confederate's evidence has to be purchased, and the price paid is a pardon for him of his own share in the crime. It is a heavy price to pay, a miscarriage of justice, but it is a result of the inadequacy of human administration, and it has no place under divine law.

But what did Christ do? Did he say, "Pharisee, thou art a libertine. Scribe, thou art morally corrupt." Oh, no! He turned and simply held up before their countenances the mirror of their own consciences in which they could see their own sinful selves. Christ said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Then one by one they slunk away. Oh, my friends, when you and I to-day, going forth into a sinful world, are trying to prove this woman is bad and that man is bad and that young boy is bad and that young girl is bad we are not deceiving God as to our own characters. We do not improve our standing at his bar by denouncing others. Rather by our harsh and uncharitable judgment we are proving ourselves deserving of condemnation. Let us refrain from casting stones at the sinner. We must all answer for our own deeds at his bar, who said, "He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her." And without one exception we must all either slink away before the flashing eye of Christ, or, like the poor publican in the temple, moan, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!"

The divine law is omniscient. Evil deeds that the world does not know are known to God, and at his judgment bar the evidence of them will confront the wrongdoer if they have not been pardoned through Christ. Even in this world crimes long ago committed and successfully hidden have been unexpectedly disclosed and brought home to the perpetrator. Oh, my friends, be not among the scribes and Pharisees who have no mercy, no charity for sinners! Have our lives been immaculate? Is there any evidence against us that may confront us when we stand before Christ? It will be a shameful, a humiliating, position to stand convicted before Christ of those sins. Do you not feel that Jesus is speaking to us, as he spake to the prosecutors of old, "He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her?"

But, though the divine law is as hard upon the unrepentant sinner, how gentle, how loving, how pardoning, how forgiving it was and is to the repentant sinner who comes asking for mercy at the feet of Jesus Christ. Sweeter than even the peering of a little child to be caressed and forgiven by a loving mother is this picture in my text of a poor convicted outcast, trembling at the feet of Christ and finding pardon and peace and life. I can see her now as she is pushed her up. Her face is scratched and bleeding; she fights them step by step. I see her as they fling her at the Master's feet. There at first she shrinks under his pure gaze, expecting that one so sinless will indorse the condemnation of her accusers and in horror at her crime hand her over to the executioner. But, though he loathes her sin, he has compassion for the repentant sinner. I see her now, when all fear leaves her and the bad men turn their backs upon her. Now she looks up into Christ's face with grateful love. Oh, my friends, though you may be scarred with the sins of an evil past, though you may be cast out by the world as one who ought to die, mercy and pardon in Christ you will find. Will you not as a repentant sinner throw yourself at his feet, where you will find peace and life and hope?

And where did this broken-hearted Magdalene find her peace? Ah, yes, it was in the temple. There the

"divine law of mercy" was revealed to her. While Christ was teaching the people the great lesson of God's forgiveness of sin they brought her to him. In the temple Jesus turned and said to her: "Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more." In the temple, in this building, this church dedicated for the worship of Jesus Christ, oh, sinful man, you may hear the voice of the Master offering you pardon of sin! You can hear him if, like the broken-hearted woman at the feet of Christ, you are a repentant sinner. You can if you will say, "Lord, save me and spare me now." That pardon through Christ is the promise of the divine law. Will you take it? Will you receive it now?

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"Youth is the time to learn."  
"It shouldn't be. It's the time you know it all."

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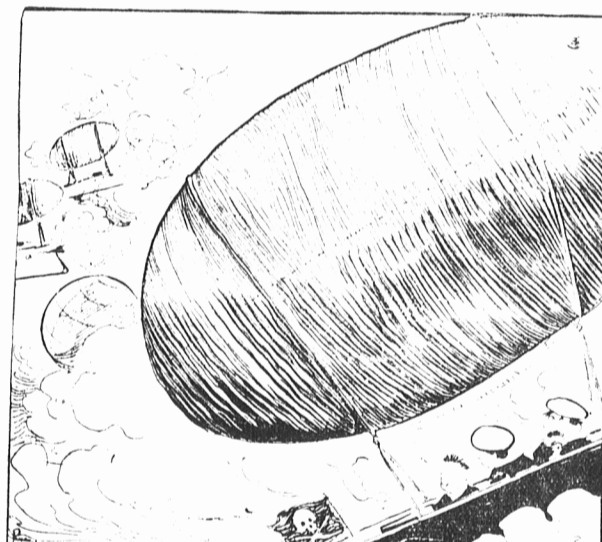
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Second Burglar—Why, that was a trust magnate, and I never bother any of our profession.



Johnny (ten minutes later) I always believed in a faller minding his own business—put up my kite w'd de kid, tied on it.



OUT IN KANSAS.

Eastern Student—It is now tempus, amicus, with minus consensus that I go to your donus and woo Morphus.  
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