

A CALL TO JUDGMENT

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life, that both them and thy seed may live." Deuteronomy 30:19.

Moses was a wonderful man. Whether you view him as a poet or as a leader of men, he is alike great. This text was delivered by him to the people of Israel at the close of his career. And one thing is certainly true about him, namely, that he did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God.

Every person is making a record, either good or bad. Two records are being kept. One of them is kept by the recording angel in heaven. The other is kept on earth and can be seen in the faces and characters of people.

There are just two ways in this world along which men may walk, and these ways are not parallel. In one direction is life and in the opposite direction is death. By all means, each of us should choose life.

The two great pillars of Christianity are Christ's cross and His resurrection. The day that changed the world was the day of Christ's cross. On that cross Christ accomplished something of infinite moment for every human being. The call today and ever is the call of life. Moses stated the call of life and the call to judgment in vivid and vital words in his majestic farewell address. Therein he sets out the grand significance of worthy obedience to God's call of life. The text certainly has solemn and weighty words.

The last words of men and women are often their most impressive and revealing ones. The martyred President McKinley said, "Nearer my God to Thee, nearer to Thee. It is God's way. God's will be done. Lead kindly light 'mid the encircling gloom, lead Thou me on." On the last day of his life, President Wilson asked his faithful physician, "Is there nothing more that you can do, Doctor?" The doctor sorrowfully replied, "No, Mr. President. All has been done for you that can be done. You are in the closing moments now of the earthly journey." Then the president smiled very graciously and said, "Very well, I am ready for this hour."

It was a great word that Moody said, propped upon his pillow there in Northfield, unable to lie down because of his heart, waiting for the summons, and presently it came, and he said to those who were about him: "Earth is receding, Heaven is opening, God is beckoning me and I must be away." That was a great word that Wesley spoke: "The world is our barracks, and best of all, God is with us." After he had bidden goodbye to his loved ones, Spurgeon whispered over and over "Jesus died for me."

When Moses approached death, he spoke some great words. Read his majestic farewell address. Note how he reviewed before the people the many blessings God had showered upon them. He reminded them of the high mission of life. He told them that if they would put God's will first in their lives that blessings untold would follow in the wake of such obedience. He also told them that if they chose to ignore the Lord and His Word and will consequences unspeakably grievous would follow. Moses spoke great words to a great people. They are words that will do for any people. He begged the people to put God's will first. The will that would guard life, understand life, and save life is one that is priceless in the sight of God. He urged them to live with the highest and best standards all the while.

Look at this call. It is a call to make a choice of the Lord, whether or not we will have Him as our Saviour, Guide and Master. This choice is inevitable. It concerns us every one. The Master offers Himself to be both Saviour and Lord. He died for us and we must make a choice of whether or not we will yield to Him, accept Him as our

Saviour and bow to Him as our rightful Master. The issue is inescapable.

"What shall I do then with Jesus, who is called Christ?" Do something I must. Do one of two things — be for Him or be against Him, say "yes" to Him or say "no" to Him, accept Him or reject Him. A neutral course is absolutely impossible. "He that is not with Me is against Me," said the Master.

The highest prerogative of life is that of choice. Man is king in the realm of choice and woman is queen in the realm of choice. We are moral beings because we are free. We are free to say "yes" or "no" and we will say one or the other.

Christ says, "If you will yield to Me, I will do for you and with you that which needs to be done in order that you may have inward peace and eternal salvation. Oh, how this invests life with gravity, dignity and solemnity!

In one great hour Esau lost all by a wrong decision; but in one great hour beautiful Esther gained all by a right decision.

If you miss that upper and better way, the responsibility therefor will never be brought against God but will come back upon you.

What does this call involve? It is a choice between two masters and they are Christ and Satan. Every rational person takes one or the other for his master in life. It is a choice between the two. Which shall it be? Satan means nothing but hurt and evil toward the children of men everywhere and forever. If he should have his way he would destroy the souls and lives of all. He means nothing but injury to all humanity. Over against that picture is the Master of life, the Saviour of life, the Sustainer of life, the One who offers to be our companion and comrade, our inspiring helper through the earthly journey, and our comrade forevermore in the yonderland. Surely there ought not to be any difficulty in deciding which of these two we should bow before and ascribe devotion to as the master of our lives.

What else? It is a choice between two lives here in this world. Moses was talking about life here in this world. What kind of a life do we want to live? What kind of a life are we doing our best to live? Christ says to us, "I will help you in the earthly journey with its burdens and battles, its work and warfare, its duties and difficulties. I will help you through it all if you will link your life to Me. I will liberate the powers of your life for you. I will help you triumph over sin. I will comfort you in the hour of sorrow, if you will link your life with Mine and travel the earthly life with Me." Which life will you live? You cannot live like you should if you ignore the guidance and strength which Christ offers to all of us. Choose life and avoid the way of death.

A fond parent says, "I would die for my child." I am not asking you to die for him, but I am asking you to live for him and let him have the right sort of a Christian parent; one who is definitely on the side of Christ. Live for your child. There is tremendous power in your influence and example, far louder than any words that may escape your lips.

Still further, it is the choice between two exits, when you shall leave this life and go out to the great beyond, out there beyond the sunset and the night. It is a choice as to where you will go when that great summons for your departure comes to you. How will you make the exit, the transition? Wesley said, "Our people die well." I have seen Christians go away triumphantly because of Christ.

Yet again, it is a choice between one of two residences out yonder in the world beyond. Where will you spend eternity? You shall spend it somewhere, but where?

Are you willing for Christ to be your Saviour and the Master of your life today and forevermore? Are you willing to make that great choice, that prompt, decisive and destiny-determining choice?

During the first World War Doctor George Truett and Mr. Harry Lauder were the guests of three hundred officers. Harry Lauder had just lost his son in the war in France. The officers were very fond of the comedian for he always entertained them. They asked him to sing their various favorites. He said, "I cannot sing for you, boys. My son, John, is dead out yonder in the field. I cannot sing today but if you will let me, I will preach a little to you." He added: "Men, when I found John dead, the idol of my heart; John, on whom I had built all my hopes, I had the choice of three roads. I could take the road of grief. Or I could take the road of despair and commit suicide. Or I could take the road to Jesus and give up to Him, and that is what I have done." As he went on speaking to those officers, he said, "My hope is Christ; the way of life is for a man to choose Christ, yield to Christ, and follow Christ."

Why do you delay accepting Him? Why not yield to Christ right now? In Him you can find and have eternal life, peace and joy. Say, "Where He leads me I will follow. Lead Thou me on." Register now your decision for Christ which means more than any other decision can mean in this world. Surely you have already waited long enough; yea, too long. Link your life to Christ and His church. Come confessing Him as now we sing.