

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER—A STEWARD

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A SERMON
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 AT BLOOMSBURY CHAPEL,
 ON BEHALF OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

“Give an account of your stewardship.”
Luke 16:2.

WE have heard many times in our lives that we are all stewards to Almighty God. We hold it as a solemn truth of our religion that the rich man is responsible for the use which he makes of his wealth; that the talented man must give an account to God of the interest which he gets upon his talents. Every one of us, in proportion to our time and opportunities, must give an account for himself before Almighty God. But, my dear brothers and sisters, our responsibility is even deeper and greater than that of other men! We have the ordinary responsibility which falls upon all professors of religion to give an account of all we have to God. But besides this, you and I have the extraordinary responsibilities of our official standing—you, as teachers for Christ in your classes—and others of us as preachers for Him before the great congregation. The first responsibility is too heavy for any man to fulfill. Apart from divine grace, it is not possible that any man should so use all that God has given him as to be accepted at last with a, “Well done, you good and faithful servant.” Yet even if that *were* possible, it would still remain an utter impossibility for us to fully sustain the fearful weight of responsibility which rests upon us as teachers of the Word of God to our fellow immortals. Upon our necks there are two yokes—sovereign grace can make them light and easy—but apart from that, they will gall our shoulders for they are, of themselves, too heavy for us to bear. Common responsibility is as Solomon’s whip. But extraordinary responsibility derived from official standing, when not regarded, will be as the scorpion of Rehoboam—its little finger shall be thicker than its father’s loins. Woe unto the watchman who warns them not! Woe unto the minister who fails to teach the truth! Woe unto the Sunday school teacher who is unfaithful to his trust! Now, let us try to stir one another up upon this seriously important matter. You will pray for me while I preach, that I may utter some things that may do good to all now present and I will labor that God may, in answer to your prayers, give me words and thoughts which shall be blessed to you.

Now first, let me show *the meaning of our being stewards*. Then, let us consider *what kind of account we shall have to give*. And lastly, let us notice *the days of reckoning when we OUGHT to cast up our account, and the days of reckoning when we MUST give in our account*.

I. First, then, THE STEWARD—WHAT IS HE?

In the first place, the steward is a *servant*. He is one of the greatest of servants. But he is only a servant. Perhaps he is the bailiff of a farm and looks, to all intents and purposes, like a country farmer—he rides over his master’s estate and has many men under him. Still he is only a servant—he is under authority—he is only a steward. Perhaps he is steward in the house of some gentleman who employs him to see after the whole of his establishment in order that he may be free from cares in that capacity. He is himself a master, but still he is a servant, for he has one over him. Let him be as proud as he pleases, he has little to be proud of—for the rank he holds in life is the rank of a servant. Now, the minister and the Sunday school teacher especially stand in the rank of servants. We are none of us our own masters. We are not independent gentlemen who may do as we please! Our classes are not our own farms which we may till in our own manner and neglect if we please. They are not such that we may produce any harvest, or none at all, at our own discretion. No, we are nothing better than stewards and we are to labor for our Master in heaven! What a strange thing it is to see a minister or a teacher giving himself fine airs, as if he were somebody in the world and might do as he pleased. Is it not an anomaly? How is he to talk

about the sacrifices that he makes when he is spending only his Master's property? How is he to boast about the time which he expends when his time is not his own? It is all his Master's! He is a servant, and therefore, do what he may, he only discharges the duty for which he is well rewarded. He has no reason to be proud or to lord it over others, for whatever his power among them may be, he is himself neither more nor less than a servant! Let each of us try to remember that. "I am only a servant." If a superintendent puts a teacher in a class which she does not like, she will remember that she is a *servant*. She does not allow her servants at home to stand up and say they are not going to do the dishes but will only wait on tables. They are servants and must do as they are told! And if we felt that we were servants, we should not object to do what we are told for Christ's sake—though we would not do it at the dictation of men—yet for Christ's sake we do it as unto the Lord! We do not suppose that our servants will come to us at night and expect us to say to them, "You have done your work very well today." We do not imagine that they will look for constant commendation—they are servants, and when they get their wages, that is their praise for their work. They may judge they are worth their money, or else we should not keep them. When you do your work for Jesus, remember you are only a servant. Do not expect to always have that encouragement which some people are constantly crying after! If you get encouragement from your pastor or from other teachers, or from your friends, be thankful. But if you do not, go on with your work notwithstanding! You are a servant, and when you receive your reward, that is of grace and not of debt. Then you will have the highest praises that can be passed upon you—the plaudits of your Lord, and *eternity* with Him whose you are and whom you desire to serve!

But still, while the steward is a servant, he is an *honorable one*. It does not do for the other servants in the house to tell him that he is a servant. He will not endure that—he knows it and feels it. He desires to act and work as such, but at the same time he is an honored servant. Now, those who serve Christ in the office of teaching are honorable men and women. I remember to have heard a very unseemly discussion between two persons as to whether the minister was not superior to the Sunday school teacher—it reminded me of that talk of the disciples—as to who among them was the greatest! Why, we are all of us, "the least," if we feel aright, and though we must, each of us, exalt our office as God has given it to us, yet I see not anywhere in the Bible anything that should lead me to believe that the office of the preacher is more honorable than that of the teacher! It seems to me that every Sunday school teacher has a right to put, "Reverend," before his name as much as I have! Or if not, if he discharges his trust, he certainly is a "Right Honorable." He teaches his congregation and preaches to his class. I may preach to more, and he to less, but still he is doing the same work, though in a smaller sphere. I am sure I can sympathize with Mr. Carey, when he said of his son, Felix, who left the missionary work to become an ambassador, "Felix has driveled into an ambassador"—meaning to say, that he was once a great person as a missionary, but that he had afterwards accepted a comparatively insignificant office! So I think we may say of the Sunday school teacher if he gives up his work because he cannot attend to it on account of his enlarged business—he drivels into a rich merchant! If he forsakes his teaching because he finds there is so much else to do, he drivels into something less than he was before! There is one exception—if he is obliged to give up to attend to his own family, and makes that family his Sunday school class, there is no driveling there! He stands in the same position as he did before. I say they who teach; they who seek to pluck souls as brands from the burning, are to be considered as honored persons—second only to Him from whom they received their commission! But still, in some sweet sense they are lifted up to become fellows with Him, for He calls them His brethren and His friends. "The servant knows not what his Lord does, but I have called you friends, for all things I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you."

Only one more thought here. The steward is also a servant *who has very great responsibility attached to his position*. A sense of responsibility seems to a right man always a weighty thing. To do a thing where there is no responsibility involved at all is a very slight matter and hence we find in ordinary affairs that the labor which involves no trust is but poorly paid. But where there is a large amount of trust reposed, the labor is paid in proportion. Now the work of the Sunday school teacher is one of the most responsible in the world! It has sometimes staggered me to think how greatly God trusts you and me. You remember the story of the prodigal. It finds a counterpart in each of us, who after long wander-

ing in sin have come home to Jesus. I sometimes think that a prudent father, when the prodigal was restored to his house, would receive him to his heart, would press him to his bosom and give him a share of all his wealth. But he would be very slow to trust him in any matter of responsibility. The next market-day the old gentlemen would say, “Now John, I love you with all my heart, but you know you ran away once and spent your living riotously. I must send your elder brother to market. I cannot trust you with my purse—I love you. I have totally forgiven you, but at the same time I cannot yet rely upon you.” Why does not God say so to us? Instead of that, when He takes poor prodigals to His heart, He trusts us with His most precious jewels—He trusts us with immortal souls! He permits us to be the means of seeking His lost sheep and then allows us to feed the lambs after they are gathered! He puts the prodigal into the most important station and has confidence in him. Then, my brothers and sisters, seeing He has been gracious enough to repose confidence in such unworthy persons, shall we deceive Him? Oh no—let us earnestly labor as stewards that every part of the estate committed to us shall be found in good order when our Master comes! Let us be sure that every jot and tittle of our account shall be found correct when He sums it up in the great day of the audit before His throne. Our office is a very, very solemn one. Some think little of it. Some take it upon themselves very lightly. Giddy youths are enticed into the school and not rendered more sober by their connection with it. Let such depart from us! We want none but those who are sober, none but those who solemnly weigh what they are doing! We want those who enter upon the work as a matter involving life or death—not as a trivial affair which concerns the interests of time—but an awfully solemn thing which even an angel would be incapable of performing unless he had the abundant assistance of God the Holy Spirit! I have thus endeavored very simply to set forth the idea couched in the word, “stewardship.” We are servants highly honored, very responsible, and much trusted.

II. And now, THE ACCOUNT—“Give an account of your stewardship.” Let us briefly think of this giving an account of our stewardship.

Let us first notice that when we shall come to give an account of our stewardship before God, that account must be given *personally*, by each of us. While we are here, we talk in the mass. But when we come before God, we shall have to speak as individuals. You hear persons boasting about “*our* Sunday school.” Many persons are wicked enough to call the Sunday school “*their* school,” when they never see it in a year’s time! They say, “I hope *our* school is flourishing,” when they never subscribe a half-penny, when they never give the teachers a word of encouragement or even a smile—and do not even know how many children the school enrolls! Yet they call it theirs. They are thieves—taking to them that which does not belong to them! But we, in our measure, make the same mistake! As a ministry, we often talk of the doings of the “body,” and what wonders have been done by the “denomination.” Now, let us remember, when we come before God, there will be no judging us in denominations, no dealing with us in schools and in churches—the account must be given for each one by himself! So, then, you who have the infant class, you will have to give your own account. It was but the other day you were finding fault with the conduct of the senior class and you were told, then, to look at home. Conscience told you so! But at last, when you shall have to stand before God, you will have no account to give of the senior class, but of that infant class committed to you! And you, my sister, you have been seven or eight years a teacher—you must give an account for yourself, not for that other teacher of another class of whom you have often boasted because she has lately been the means of bringing six or seven children to Christ! Remember, her six won’t be put with your none at all, in order to make the total at the year’s end look respectable! But there will stand your great blank at the end of your labors, and there will remain the dark mark for your negligence, for your unpunctuality, your carelessness in your class—without the relief of the bright side of the diligent teacher’s success. You must be judged each of you for *yourself*, not in parties, but one by one! This makes it terrible work—for a man to be looked at all alone. I have known people who could not bear to stand up in a pulpit. The very fact of so many eyes looking upon them seemed so horrible! But how will it be when we must stand up and hear our hearts read by the all-searching eyes of God? When the whole of our career in the offices which we now hold will be published before the sun and that—I repeat it—without the applause of the success of others, without any addition to our labors derived from the diligence of other teachers?

Come, Mr. Steward, what is your account? Not that one, sir, not that one—*your* account. “Lord, I have brought in the account of the Sunday school books.” “No, not that—the account of *your own* class.” “Well, my Master, I have brought in the account of the class for the last 25 years, showing how many were converted.” “No, not that! The account of *your own class while you were its teacher.*” “Well, I have brought in the account of the class during the time I was teacher with So-and-So.” “No, not that; the account of the class while you *alone* were the teacher of it—the account of how you taught, what you taught, how you prayed, how earnestly you labored, how diligently you studied, and what you sought to do for Christ.” Not the accomplishments of the other teacher who helped you in another part of the duty, but your own *personal* account, alone, must be brought in before God. “Give an account of *your* stewardship.” Putting it in this light, what account will some of you give at the last and great day? Just let me stop a minute to charge your memories. What kind of account will it be? I trust a very large number here can humbly in their hearts say, “I have done but little, but I did *that* sincerely and prayerfully. May God accept it through Jesus Christ!” But I fear there are some others, who, if they are true to their consciences, will say, “I have done but little. I did that little carelessly; I did it without prayer; I did it without the help of the Holy Spirit.” Then, my brother and sister, I hope you will add after that, “Oh, my God, forgive me and help me from this good hour to be diligent in this divine business, fervent in my spirit, serving the Lord.” And may God bless you in that prayer! Make no resolution, but offer a *prayer* which is far better! And may you be heard in heaven, the dwelling place of God!

And note again, that while this account must be personal it must be *exact*. You will not, when you present your account before God, present the gross total, but every separate item! When you give your account of your stewardship, it will be thus. You had so many children. What did you say to this child and to this, and to this and to the other? How often did you pray for that child with his bitter temper; for that child with his unbending obstinacy; for that child with its quickness and its sweet affection; for that child, that sulky one; for that child, the headstrong, vicious one that had learned all the evils of the street, and seemed to taint others? What did you do for each one of these? How did you labor for the conversion of each one? And to make the account still more particular it will run thus—what did you do for each child on each Sabbath? You heard one child utter an ill word—did you reprove it? You saw another child oppress a little one—did you deliver the less out of his hand, and reprove him and teach both children to love each other? Did you notice the follies of each, and strive to understand the temperament of each so that you should fit your discourse or your prayer to each? Did you travail as in birth for the conversion of each one? Did you agonize in prayer with God, and then did you agonize in exhortation with them, beseeching them to be reconciled to Christ? I believe the account will be far more precise than this, when God shall come to try our hearts and reins, as well as our works and ways! My poor way of putting it does but cloud the truth of God which I seek to bring forth, but nevertheless so shall it be—a special and exact account shall be given! And then there shall be an account given for every opportunity—not only for every child, but for every opportunity of doing good to the child. Did you avail yourself of that afternoon when the child was in a peculiarly solemn frame because his little brother lay at home dead? Did you seek to send the arrows home when providence had made a wound in his little heart because he had lost his dear mother? Did you seek to turn every event which occurred in the school to account, whether it was joyous or the reverse? God gave you the opportunity, and He will at last ask you what you did with it. We shall, many of us, make but a sorry account, for we have neglected much that we ought to have done. And the general confession must be ours as teachers, “We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done.”

And then remember again, the account will be exact as to everything that we did. We shall not only be examined as to how we addressed the school—we may have had peculiar gifts for that and we may have done well—but it will be, “How did you address your own class?” And not that alone, but, “How did you study the lessons?” If you had no time, it will not be required of you to do what you could not do, but if you had much leisure how did you spend it? Was it for your children, for your Master’s good that you might find polished shafts to shoot forth from your bow—that God might bless you—by giving you strength to send them home into the heart? And then, what did you do in your closet? Were you cold

and careless there? Were your children forgotten, or did you bring them on your heart and in your arms and with tears and cries commend them to Christ? Ah, Sunday school teachers, your closet shall be turned into the open air one day and the contents of your secret chambers will be published before the sun! Oh, you whose cob-webbed closets witness against you! Oh, you against whom the beam out of the wall exclaims because your voice has not been heard there, against whom the very floor might bear witness because it has never felt the weight of your knees—how will you stand this searching test? How will you endure this day of burning when God shall try you for everything you did and everything you did not do which you ought to have done in connection with the work of teaching your children? The account must be exact and precise, as well as personal. I shall not stop to enlarge upon that. Your own conscience and judgment can enlarge upon it at home.

Now, remember once again, that the account must be *complete*. You will not be allowed to leave out anything—nor will you be allowed to add anything. Perhaps some of you would like to begin with tomorrow; or next Sabbath, and strike out the past. No, Sunday school teacher, when God says, “Give an account of your stewardship,” you will have to begin with the day when you first were a teacher! Ah, my God, how many there are who profess to preach the Word who might well beg that You would let many a year of their ministry be buried in forgetfulness! Ah, might not some of us fall upon our knees and say, “Lord, let me give account of my *diligent* years, not of my idle years!” But we must begin with our ordination—we must end with our death, and you, Sunday school teacher, must begin with the first hour when you sat down in your class! And you must end when life ends, and not till then! Does not this put a very solemn aspect upon your account, some of you? You are always saying, “I will be better tomorrow.” Will that blot out yesterday? “I must be more diligent in the future.” Will that redeem the lost opportunities which have departed in the years gone by? No—if you have loitered long and lingered much—you will find the hardest running of today will not make up for the loitering of yesterday! There have been some men who, after spending many years in sin, have been doubly diligent for Christ afterwards, but they have always felt that they have only done the day’s work in the day and they mourned over those years which the locusts had eaten, as gone beyond recall. Oh, catch the moments as they fly, Sunday school teachers! Use the days as they come! Do not be talking about making up for the badness of the first part of the account by the brilliant character of the conclusion. You cannot do it! You must give an account for each day separately, for each year by itself! And do what you may to retrieve your losses, the losses still stand upon the book and the Master will say, at last, “How came these here?” And though, if you believe in Christ Jesus, they are all covered up in sovereign grace, yet you would not wish to have any the more stains for that. Because Christ has washed you, you do not desire to make yourself filthy! Because He has atoned, you do not desire to commit sin! No, live, my brothers and sisters, as Sunday school teachers should live! Live as if your own salvation depended upon the strictness of your fulfilling your duty! And yet remember your salvation does not depend upon that, but on your personal interest in the everlasting covenant and in the all-prevailing blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Israel’s strength and Redeemer!

III. And now, though there are many other things I might say, I fear lest I might weary you. Therefore, let me notice some occasions when it will be WELL for you all to give an account of your stewardship. And then notice when you MUST give an account of it.

You know there is a proverb, that “short reckonings make long friends,” and a very true proverb it is. A man will always be at friendship with his conscience as long as he makes short reckonings with it. It was a good rule of the old Puritans, that of making frank and full confession of sin every night. They did not leave a week’s sin to be confessed on Saturday night, or Sabbath morning. They recalled the failures, imperfections and mistakes of each day in order that they might learn from one day of failure how to achieve the victory on the morrow. They washed themselves daily from their sins knowing they might preserve the purity and whiteness of their garments. Brothers and sisters, do the same—make short reckonings! And it will be well for you every Sabbath evening, or at any other time, if so it pleases you, to make a reckoning of what you do on the Sabbath. I do not say this in order that you may be encouraged in any self-righteous congratulation that you have done well. If you make your reckoning correct, you will never have much cause to congratulate yourself, but always cause to mourn that you did your

duty so ill compared with what you ought to have done! When the Sabbath is over, and you have been twice to the house of God to teach your class, just sit down, and try to remember what were the points in which you failed; perhaps you exhibited a hasty temper. You spoke to a boy too sharply when he was a little rebellious. Perhaps you were too complacent. You saw sin committed and ought to have reproved it and you did not do so. If you find out your own failing, that is half the way to a cure! Next Sabbath you can try and set it right.

Then there are times which providence puts in your way which will be excellent seasons for reckoning. For instance, every time a boy or girl leaves the school, there is an opportunity afforded you of thinking to yourselves, “Well, how did I deal with Betsy? How did I treat John? Did I give William such teaching as will help him in his future life to maintain integrity in the midst of temptation and preserve righteousness when he shall be subjected to imminent perils? How did I teach the girl? Did I so teach her that she will know her duty when she goes into the world? Did I strive with all my might to lead her to the foot of the cross?” There are many solemn questions which you may put concerning the child. And when you meet with any of them grown up in later years, you will find that a very proper season for giving an account of your stewardship to your conscience, by seeing whether you really did with that person, when a child, as you should have desired.

Then there is a peculiar time for casting up accounts when a child dies. Ah, what a host of thoughts cluster around the bed of a dying child whom we have taught! Next to the father and the mother, I should think the Sunday school teacher will take the most interest in the dying one. You will remember, “There lies withering the flower which my hand has watered. There is an immortal soul whom I have taught, about to pass the portals of eternity! O God, have I taught this dying child the truth, or have I deceived him? Have I dealt faithfully with him? Have I told him of his ruin? Have I set before him how he was fallen in Adam and depraved in himself? Have I told him about the great redemption of Christ? Have I shown him the necessity of regeneration and the work of the Holy Spirit? Or have I amused him with tales about the historical parts of the Bible and pieces of morality, and kept back the weightier matters of the law? Can I put my hand into his dying hand and silently lifting my heart to heaven, can I say, ‘O God You know I am clear of his blood’?” Ah, that is a thing that often stings the minister—when he remembers that any of his congregation are dying. When I sometimes stand by the deathbed of any of the ungodly in my congregation, it brings many a tearful thought to me. Have I been as earnest as I ought to have been? Did I cry to this man, “Escape for your life, look not behind you, stay not in all the plain, flee to the mountains!”? Did I pray for him, weep over him, and tell him of his sin; preach Christ simply, plainly, boldly, to him? Was there not an occasion when I used lightness when I ought to have been solemn? Might there not have been a season when I uttered something by mistake which may have been a pillow for the armhole of his conscience on which he might rest? Have not I helped to smooth his path to hell, instead of putting blocks in his way and chains across his path that he might be turned out of it and led to seek the Savior? Ah, while we know that salvation is all of grace, let none of us imagine we are free from the blood of souls unless we warn them with diligence; unless we preach with faithfulness, for this same Bible which tells me that Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, tells me that if I warn them not, their blood, if they perish, shall be required at my hand!

But now, teacher, let me tell you an occasion when you *must* give your account. You may put off all these seasons if you like. You may live as carelessly as you please, but if you have a particle of heart in you, you will have to give an account when you are sick and cannot go to your class. If your conscience is worth having—which some people’s consciences are not, for they are dead and seared—if your conscience is an awakened one, when you are put out of your work, you will begin to think how you did it. You should read the letters of that holy man, Rutherford. If ever there was a man who preached the gospel sweetly and with divine unction, I should think it must have been he. And yet when he was shut up in Aberdeen and could not get out to his much-loved flock, he said, “Ah, if the Lord will let me go out to preach again, I will never be such a dull drone as I was likely to be. I will preach with tears in my eyes, so that the people may be comforted and the sinners converted.” Perhaps when you are lying ill in your bedroom, little Jane may come to see you and say, “I hope you will soon get well, teacher.” Or William, or Thomas may call and inquire about you every Sunday afternoon, and ask the servant to give his love

to you and hope that teacher will soon come back again. Then is the time when I know you will be sure to cast up your account! You will say, “Ah, when I get back to my class, I won’t teach them as I used to do. I will study my lesson more, I will pray more. I won’t be so hot or so fast with them as I was likely to be. I will bear with their ill manners. Ah, if my Master will give me, like Hezekiah, another 15 years of labor and will give me more grace, I will strive to be better.” You will be sure to cast up your accounts when you get sick!

But if you do not do it then, I will tell you when you *must*. That is when you come *to die*. What a dreadful thing it must be to be an unfaithful preacher on a deathbed. (Oh that I may be saved from that!) To be upon one’s bed when life is over; to have had great opportunities, mighty congregations and to have been so diligent about *something else* as to have neglected to preach the full and free gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ—I think as I lie in my bed a-dying, I would see specters and grim things in the room! One would come and stare upon me and say, “Ah, you are dying. Remember how many times I sat in the front of the gallery and listened to you, but you never once told me to escape from the wrath to come? You were talking to me about something I did not understand. But the simple matter of the gospel you never preached to me, and I died in doubt and trembling—and now you are coming to me to the hell which I have inherited because you were unfaithful!” And when in our gray and dying age we see the generations which have grown up around our pulpits, we shall think of them all! We shall think of the time when as striplings we first began to preach. We shall remember the youths that then crowded; then the men and then the gray-heads that passed away. And I think as they come on in grim procession, they will, everyone, leave a fresh curse upon our conscience because we were unfaithful! The deathbed of a man who has murdered his fellows or of some grim tyrant who has let the bloodhounds of war loose upon mankind must be an awful thing! When the soldier and the soldier’s widow and the murdered man of peace rise up before him; when the smoke of devastated countries seems to blow into his eyes and make them sore and red; when the blood of men hangs on his conscience like a great red pall; when bloody murder, the grim chamberlain, draws red curtains around his bed and when he begins to approach the last end where the murderer must inherit his dreary doom—it must be a fearful time, indeed! But I think to have murdered *souls* must be more awful still—to have distributed poison to children instead of bread, to have given them stones when they asked us for right food—to have taught them error when we ought to have taught them the truth as it is in Jesus, or to have spoken to them with cold listlessness when earnestness was needed—oh, how your children seem to curse you when you lie there and have been unfaithful to your charge! Yes, you will have to cast up your account then, but let me tell you—your hope must all be fixed on Jesus and that must be the consolation of your life and death!

And it will be very sweet when you come to die, you that have been successful in winning souls to Christ. Ah, that will bring a little life into the cheek of the consumptive teacher who, dying young, when you remind her that there was a little girl who, a year before she was taken ill, kissed her hand and said, “Good bye, teacher, we shall meet in heaven. Do not you remember, teacher, telling me the story of Jesus on the cross and taking me home one Sunday afternoon, and putting your arms around my neck and kneeling down and praying that God would bless me? Oh my teacher, that brought me to Jesus!” Yes, teacher, when you are lying on your bed, pale and consumptive, you will remember that there is one up there beside your Savior who will receive you into eternal habitations—that young spirit who has gone before you—who by your means was emancipated from the wickedness and bondage of a sinful world! Happy is the teacher who has the hope of meeting a whole band of such in heaven! Such a thought often cheers me. Let the world say what it will, I know when I die there are many a spirit who will think of me in later years as the man who preached the gospel to him; many a drunk brought to Jesus, and many a harlot reclaimed by God’s grace. And to the teacher it must be the same to think that when she claps her wings and mounts from this lower valley of earth to heaven, she will see a bright spirit coming down to meet her and she will hear the Spirit saying—

“Sister spirit, come away.”

And when she opens her eyes, she will see that the song came from the lips of one to whom she had been blessed as the means of conversion! Happy you who shall be welcomed at the gates of Paradise by

your spiritual sons and daughters, and who shall have besides your Master's welcome, the welcome of those whom He has given you to be jewels in your crown of glory forever and ever!

Now to conclude. We must all give an account to God in the Day of Judgment. That is the thing which makes death so terrible. Oh, Death, if you were all—what are you but a pinch and all is over! But after Death, the judgment; *this* is the sting of the dragon to the ungodly. The last great day is come. The books are opened—men, women and children are assembled. Many have come, and some on the right, and some on the left have already heard the sentence. It is now your turn. Teacher! What account will you render? In the first place, are you in Christ? Or have you taught to others what you did not know yourself? Have I any such here? Doubtless, I have, for alas, there are many such in our schools. Oh, my friend, what will you say when the Master, opening the book, shall ask you, “What had you to do, to declare *My* statutes?” Will you look at Him and say, “Lord I taught in Your schools, and You have eaten and drunk in our streets.” If you should say so, He will say, “Verily, I never knew you, depart from me you cursed.” Then, what have you to say with regard to your schools—for although our state at last will really be settled according to our interest in Christ, you will be *judged* by your works, as evidences. The Scripture always says that we are to be judged according to our works. Well, then, the book is opened. Some of you hear your own name read, and you hear that one brief sentence—“Inasmuch as you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you a ruler over many things—enter you into the joy of your Lord!” Oh, heaven of heavens! And is this the reward of the little trouble of teaching a few children? Oh, Master, You give ingots of gold for our grains of dust—our fragments of service You reward with crowns and kingdoms! But He turns to others, and to some of you He says, “Inasmuch as you did it not unto the least of these My brethren, you did it not unto Me. Depart from Me into everlasting fire in hell, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Which of these two shall be said to *me*? Which of these two shall be said to *you*? “Oh, as in God's sight I charge you by Him who is the Judge of the quick and the dead; by the swiftness of His chariot wheels which now are bringing Him here; by the solemnity of His awful tribunal, by that sentence which shall never be reversed—judge yourselves—for then you shall not be judged! Give an account of your stewardship to your conscience and to your God! Confess your sins, seek His help, and begin from this hour, by His Holy Spirit, to undertake His work afresh. And may you stand before His face clothed in the righteousness of your Redeemer, and washed in His blood. Though not boasting in your works may you be able to stand accepted in Him, and your works shall follow when you rise from your labors, and you shall be among the blessed that die in the Lord!

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