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THE HELL OF THE BIBLE AND THE HARM OF THE CARD TABLE
Two Sermons By M. P. Hunt

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Message 1
THE HELL OF THE BIBLE

I am to talk with you at this time of the hell of the Bible. The rather I am to let the Bible talk with you of the hell revealed there in.

The message in the main will be made up of citations of scriptures. Theories, speculations and opinions as to hell are to find no place in this preachment. I am prompted to such a message in the conviction that of all the great fundamental doctrines of the Bible, hell is the most neglected. The why of this would make a sermon in itself; the fact of it I take it none will question.

This neglect accounts in no small degree for the let down in morals so manifest and for the crime wave that is sweeping our land. A would-be doctor, prescribing for the ills that beset us in the way of moral declension and crime, said, "Educate and all would be all right." Alas, Germany did that and was all wrong. In this our beloved country the centers enjoying the greatest educational advantages are proving the most degenerate. Look at Chicago, for instance. Universities, colleges, special schools and a wonderful public school system, and yet the good citizens petition the Federal Government through

Vice President Dawes to come to their relief against a crime wave that is menacing the city. Was it not two students of her greatest university that shocked the nation with the most diabolic crime on record? Education without God and apart from moral instruction only makes one

all the more dangerous to the social order. It is a fact not to be denied that many of our schools are transforming believing pupils into unbelieving; and what is worse, some schools glory in the achievement. Yes, I believe in education. I believe in it so profoundly that, though facing the sunset of life I am doing all in my power to add to my limited store of knowledge. I am thoroughly committed to the better equipment and endowment of our Christian schools; but I insist that first and foremost they should be safeguarded against false teaching. I am for teaching the truth, all the truth, all the time. I want the truth at any cost. If truth destroys my faith let it go; but I want truth and not a guess or science, falsely so-called.

In a way, Hell is not the most pleasant and engaging of themes; but that should not deter the minister of Jesus Christ from giving it the emphasis in his pulpit ministrations that God gives it in his Word. The great soul winners of the ages, so far as I am advised, have not shunned to declare the whole truth of God as to the hell that finally awaits the impenitent.

A church member of at least average intelligence surprised me sometime since by asking, "Is it not a fact that hell is mentioned but once or twice in the Bible?" How could an intelligent man under a ministry true to the Word of God have gotten such an idea? And was not his question a confession that he seldom read the Book for himself?

An Episcopalian Lenten preacher said, "Dante's Inferno had given color to hell rather than the Bible." Doubtless this made him to appear learned; but for one I question the correctness of the statement. The implication of his words to me were that Dante had overdrawn the picture. I hold that it is beyond the ken of mortal man to make hell more awful than has our Lord in the gospels and in Revelation.

We have come on a day when some among us profess to believe in the Bible and yet not to believe in hell. The one and only escape of such from the charge of imbecility is crass ignorance. To accept the Bible as a whole, is to believe in an awful hell. One may believe the Bible in spots and not believe in hell. You may in a phrase that is overworked say the Bible "contains the Word of God" and not believe in hell; but to believe the Bible as a whole and not in a hell is an impossibility, I can get God or Christ out of the Bible as easily and as logically as I can hell.

Hell And The Revised Version

I can remember the sensational headlines of the papers in May, 1881, when the Revised Version came from the press, to the effect that hell had been eliminated. Like many a sensational headliner this one faded into insignificance on examination, In the Revised Edition of the Bible the Hebrew word sheol in the Old Testament, and its Greek equivalent hades in the New Testament, are for the most part brought over into the Revised Version without translation. These words in the King James Version are most frequently translated by the word hell. It was this that gave rise to the sensational headlines. The Revisors in explaining why they did this say, "These words mean the abode of departed spirits." Hell, if it could be taken in its original sense as used in the creeds, would be a fairly adequate equivalent -- but it is so commonly understood as the place of torment that, to employ it frequently would lead to inevitable misunderstanding." So you see hell has not always signified among us the place of torment as it does now, and having lost its original meaning as the place of the departed dead, the revisors saw in thus bringing over into the Revised Version

the original words sheol and hades the best solution of a difficult problem. The only hell taken out was that that was never truly in the Bible. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16, we find the rich man in hades and in torment, and we find Lazarus in hades and in Abraham's bosom. Discriminating readers will find in the passage where the original words supplant the hell of the King James Version enough of the place of torment to move them with a heart of compassion for the finally impenitent.

The Greek Word Gehenna

This word is found twelve times in the New Testament and is uniformly translated hell. In every instance, save one, it comes from the lips of Jesus Christ in most solemn warning of the consequence of sin. The history of the word is instructive. Joshua 18:16 and other scriptures speak of the "Valley of the Son of Hinnom" that lay to the south of Jerusalem. It was in this valley in the days of Ahaz that the horrible worship of Moloch was set up. Moloch was the God of the Amorites, A great iron monster, hollow inside, represented Moloch, In this a fire, it is said, was built, and when it was good and hot the sacrifice, a living child, was cast into the arms of the monster. The good King Josiah in his day put a stop to this horrid worship and the valley became the depository for the garbage of the city where all that was combustible was constantly burning. Because of the fire perpetually burning there the place came to symbolize the torment to which the unbelieving go in death. Thus the word took on its secondary meaning, the torment of the damned, and the Valley of Hinnom in the Hebrew is the Valley of Gehenna in the Greek.

Since I am seeking to show you the hell of the Bible let us read the scriptures where Jesus uses this word Gehenna: Matt. 5:22 is the first: "But I say unto you that every one who is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell fire." Matt. 5:29-30, "And if thy right eye cause thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into hell. And if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body go into hell." Matt. 18:19 is practically a repetition of the 29th verse just read.

Matt. 23:15: "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves." This is to say his damnation is doubly assured.

In substance, citations already given as to the hand and the eye are repeated in Mark 9:43-45 and 47. Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom ye shall fear: fear him who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea I say unto you fear him." In these scriptures we have the fact of hell enunciated again and again; but it is in Christ's descriptions of hell which we shall give presently that the abode of the damned is seen in all the horrible awfulness possible to human conception.

Peter's Concept of Hell

In 2 Pet. 2:4-6 we find the Apostle Peter warning the wicked of their impending doom in the following striking language: "For if God spared not the angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the ancient world, but preserved Noah with seven others a preacher of righteousness, when he brought a flood upon the world of ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, having made them an example into those that should live ungodly."

The word translated hell is the Greek word Tartarus. "To the Greek it signified a subterranean region, doleful and dark, -- where the wicked dead suffer punishment for their wicked deeds. It answers to gehenna of the Jews." Hell with Peter was at once tremendously awful and real. The devil is delighted to have hell disbelieved in or minimized.

The Worst To Come

You may eliminate all of these citations where hell is mentioned by name and the scriptures describing the place make certain its existence and greatly add to its horror.

Some of The Scriptures Describing Hell

Jesus in his explanation of the Parable of the Tares found in Matt. 13:37-43 says, "He that sowed the good seed is the Son of man; and the field is the world; and the good seed are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares the sons of the evil one; and the enemy that sowed them is the devil: and the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are angels. As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

But you say "A figure of speech." Do you think thus to minimize hell? Was Jesus guilty of exaggeration? I tell thee nay. To put it conservatively, hell will be not a whit less awful than Jesus has pictured it.

Our Lord in his great judgment day picture found in Matt. 25:31-46, says of those on his left hand: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels And these shall go away into eternal punishment."

Strange, is it not, that so many preachers pass up all these scriptures while making much of those that tell of heaven.

Jesus has a striking word on the place of torment in Luke 13:24-30. It was in answer to the question, "Are there few that be saved?" that Jesus said, "Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in and shall not be able. When once the Master is risen up, and hath shut the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord open to us; and he shall answer and say to you, I know ye not whence ye are; then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou didst teach in our streets; and he shall say, I tell you I

know not whence ye are; depart from me all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and ye yourselves cast forth without. And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south and shall sit 'down in the kingdom of God. And behold there are last who shall be first and first who shall be last." If many who are seeking to enter are failing what of those who are making no effort? Such as are living for the now, hoping after all that hell is a delusion or, that if there be one, God will be too good to send them there. I tell you such are going to pray for the mountains and hills to fall on them and hide them from the presence of him who judgeth the quick and the dead. Will you, hearer, be of that number? From that hour by the grace of God we would save you. This is a great day for broadmindedness, so called. But the gate to heaven is narrow and the path straight. Under the guise of broadmindedness and tolerance the devil is decoying thousands to hell. Yes, there is a very real sense in which I believe in broadmindedness and tolerance; but I want my broadmindedness and tolerance governed by the Word of God. The terms are greatly abused in this day. Jesus was at once broadminded and tolerant; but between him and those who in this day most boast of their broadmindedness and tolerance there is little, if anything, in common. They stand antipodes. With the broadminded of today, that is those who make capital out of their broadness and tolerance, any and all faiths pass muster. It was not so with our Lord in his days among us. He plainly said of the most religious, aside from his followers, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus stood for the authenticity of the Old Testament; for a hell as awful as language could print; for the necessity of the new birth in order to be saved. The self-advertised, broadminded of today let into heaven in their thinking millions whom the teachings of Jesus shut out. An editorial in a great daily sometime since said it was coming to be the consensus of opinion that the lost would correspond to the prison class of our land. That was broadness with a vim. Not only so, but if my memory serves me right, the writer gloried that the pulpit was moving to that point of view. Contrast this confessedly extreme statement with the words of Jesus, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:21-23)

"Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it." (Matt. 7:13-14) .

"Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many I say unto you, shall seek to enter and shall not be able." (Luke 13:14). With these utterances the self-advertised, broadminded and tolerant of today have no sympathy. To illustrate: The Right Reverend Thomas L. Settle, pastor of the Episcopalian Church of The Good Shepherd, Lexington, Ky., on Sunday after his appearing in Frankfort and making a speech in favor of commercialized vice in the form of legalized racetrack gambling, appeared in his pulpit with house filled with horsemen, many of them gamblers, and preached on tolerance. I heard him boast that there were enough churches for saints and that he, by the help of the crowd in favor of commercialized vice by the way of legalized gambling was building one for sinners, That is tolerance in its ripened fruitage. Going to church, belonging to the

church, giving to the church is a wholly different matter from belonging to the kingdom of God and going to heaven. Emphatically we are taught that, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Sinners must become saints. Paul in 2 Thess. 1:7-9 has to say, "And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven, with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance on them that know not God and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might."

Here is vengeance, fire, separation from God and a destruction that is eternal. From such a hell would I not only be saved, but I would have all men to be saved.

In the book of Revelation we have Jesus by the revelation of the Spirit speaking through John his message unto the churches. In chapter 14:9-12 he says, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead, or upon his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night."

"Ah!" but you say, 'is not that figurative language?' Yes, frankly, but will you charge the Son of God who died that you might live, with overdrawing the picture of the hell from which he would save you? If Jesus used such figures to describe hell what must the reality be?

Rev. 20:11-15 makes John to say, "I saw a great white throne and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead great and small stand before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire." Do you think Dante could add to our Lord's pictures of hell?

Who Will Go To Hell?

Ps. 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God." To be lost and go to hell you have but to forget God. Those who fail to minister unto Christ in ministering unto his needy ones. "Depart from me ye cursed, into eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink." (Matt. 25:41). "Inasmuch as ye did unto one of the least of these, my brethren, even the least, ye did it unto me." (Matt. 25:40).

A Generalization

Rev. 21:8: "But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."

John 3:36: "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Missing heaven is going to hell. Let a circle represent the earth, and a straight line from the center the way to heaven; all outside the line are in the way to hell. Whither are you bound? Have you the assurance of a reservation in glory? Have you been accepted in the Beloved? If you are in doubt, God does not want you to live in that state. "If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine." (John 7:17).

Paul said: "I know whom I have believed." (2 Tim. 1:12) . "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." (Rom. 8:16).

If the witness is wanting your title, to say the least, is faulty. I beseech you that you rest not till you have the assurance of the Spirit that you have been accepted in the Beloved.

And for you who believe not, may a fearful expectation of judgment move you to "Seek the Lord while he may be found." "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart." (Ps. 95:7, 8). My soul is deeply moved at the thought of men and women made in the image of God being doomed to spend eternity in a hell of unspeakable wretchedness, woe and suffering, made not for man but for the devil and his angels. I reprove myself that I am not more concerned, and that I can have any peace of mind until I have done my utmost for the salvation of the lost everywhere. Lost soul, "I beseech ye in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

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Message 2

THE HARM OF THE CARD TABLE

James 4:4: "Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God."

Matt. 15:24: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." James 2:12: "If we deny him, he also will deny us."

James 3:5: "Holding the form of Godliness, but having denied the power thereof."

Introductory

I regret there is any occasion for discussing the harm of the card table. The extent to which this evil dominates in the lives of professed Christians is not generally known. From the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the professedly good and the confessedly bad, the wise and the simple, the learned and the unlearned, come the devotees of the card table. A half century and less ago, God's people were practically a unit in their abhorrence of the card table. To be found with a deck of cards in your home or on your person was a disgrace. Who then, would have dreamed of the change that has come? Today prominent church workers give card parties and spend much time

at the card table. Is it to be wondered that spirituality is wanting and worldliness dominant in the lives of the most of the young people of our churches?

The only trouble in selecting a text was the embarrassment as to which of the many available to use.

I lay down the premise that the card table is bad and only bad. There is not a Scripture for its justification; but literally hundreds for its condemnation. Some of you who indulge in cards may wish that I be specific. This I am going to do.

1. The card table is not a wholesome recreation.

My first ground of condemnation is that on which many seek to justify the card table. I believe in amusements, in recreations, and count them worthy of a place in every life; but the card table is not a wholesome recreation. Instead of freeing the mind, it enslaves it; instead of resting the body, it tires it. The exercise so many need in recreation is wanting. It lends itself to the bad and not the good. The pull is in the wrong direction. As a mere recreation it is not on any wholesome ground to be desired.

Southey objected to cards not only on moral grounds, but because as he put it, "They act on a social party like a torpedo silencing the merry voice and numbing the play of the features."

2. It is waste of precious time.

Paul exhorts, "Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

There is no gainsaying that the card table grips its devotees as does no other amusement. It draws them together with regularity and promptness and holds them long. In a prominent Baptist church in this city, not so long ago, a teacher in the Sunday school left the Saturday night card table at one o'clock on Sunday morning, This is not an isolated instance, much the same thing is constantly happening. Adison says: "It is very wonderful to see people of the best sense passing hours together in shuffling and dividing a pack of cards with no conversation but what is made up of a few game-phrases, and no other ideas but those of black or red spots ranged together in different figures. Would not a man laugh to hear any one of his species complaining that life is short."

The evil is widespread. Instead of redeeming their time, card players worse than waste it. I have known society women in a certain Baptist church to be entertaining at cards at the very hour of a revival service in said church. Think you they were trying to redeem and make the most for God of their time?

It is an open secret that thousands of women are so infatuated with the card table as to neglect their homes to the sad demoralization thereof. If you could know how the card table has blighted and ruined thousands of homes, you would throw up your hands in horror.

3. The card table is destructive of the spiritual life of Christians who indulge. This, I may say, is the universal testimony. There are a few card playing members who are active in the life of the church, but they are not spiritual, They may think they are. Samson wist not that the Lord had departed from him. In the nature of the case, it cannot be otherwise. "How can two walk together except they be agreed."

The devil and his minions make much, very much, of the card table and think you the Holy Spirit call dwell in one who becomes a partaker in one of the devil's chief agencies for the ruin of people for time and eternity?

Some one may question that the devil and his minions make much of the card table. If so, I would remind them that cards are the tools of the gambler, the pastime of thieves, thugs, and the underworld in general.

4. The card table strongly tempts to trickery and cheating and leads to jealousies, bitter bickerings, and alienations.

All who read cannot but be familiar with the rows brewed over the card table.

Anthony Comstock made note of the crimes having their origin at the card table, as they came under his observation for one year. One hundred and twenty-eight persons were either shot or stabbed over the card table, six attempted suicide, twenty-four committed suicide, sixty were murdered in cold blood, and two were driven insane. How is that for innocence?

So baneful is the card table that it is not tolerated in the lumber camps of the Northwest or in the United States navy. If you could know the hidden jealousies and alienations among society people due to 'the card table, you would open your eyes in wonder. Can that which is not tolerated

The card table is never elevating and it never leaves its followers just where it found them. None, no not one, can escape its pernicious influence. It has thrown its spell over many, to their moral and spiritual hurt, who suspect it not.

5. The card table is one of our greatest gambling schools.

"Shocking," you say. A fact, nevertheless. Christians who play cards need to be shocked. For them the crack of doom will bring a shock they have never dreamed of. If saved, it will be as if by fire, works burned up, and much of life wasted. As a prisoner in the penitentiary at Auburn, N. Y., handed back to the preacher who had brought it, the picture of his mother, he said:

"I do not want it here. It was in her parlor I learned to play cards, and at her table I took my first drink, and the two brought me here."

The social card table starts most of the recruits for the gambling world. The tendency of the card table is inevitably toward gambling. Indeed it is the prizes that go with the game in the parlor that gives it much of its zest.

When the fond mother showed her son at the breakfast table one morning the beautiful present won at the card party the evening previous, he was emboldened to show her a large roll of bills won in a gambling hail, while she was playing in the parlor, with the remark: "Mother, I beat you."

As her pupil, having been taught by her to play, and that for a stake, had he not a right to suppose she would be proud of his efficiency?

Mr. John Philip Quinn, the converted gambler of Chicago, speaking out of an experience as the head of a gambling house for twenty-five years, says: "Card-playing in the home is the kindergarten for the gambling saloon."

Mr. John Bigelow in Harper's Monthly says: "Nine people out of ten, when they for the first time accept an invitation to join in a game of whist or poker, have no more suspicion of the passions they may be about to nurse, than the maid of sixteen when she engages in her first flirtation."

Dr. W. W. Hamilton, in his vest-pocket edition of "Worldly Amusements," tells of a college where every pupil had to sign an agreement not to play cards. Among the professors was one, a Christian in name, who played cards and defended the practice. His example led a number of the young men to disregard their word of honor and to spend precious hours from their books over the card table, with the result that a number of them became professional gamblers. In the Judgment that card-playing professor will have the blood of those young men on his hands, just as will thousands of parents have their hands stained with the blood of their own children whom they have foolishly led astray.

A well-known gambler in a Southern city said: "I do not make gamblers, I only graduate them. Gamblers are made by the fathers and mothers in the homes."

Mrs. A. B. Sims, a prominent society woman of Des Moines, Iowa, the winner of the national championship cup at the Whist tournament in St. Louis, created a sensation by denouncing cards on the ground that the game was degrading and supported her contention by various citations that had come under her observation.

Bishop Vincent in his day said, "The fact is that the path to the innermost hell of gambling is through the clover-bloom of fashion card playing. The victims in the gambling dens today were once votaries in the parlors of fashion where no (or only nominal) stakes were set and where people were bent on nothing but 'fun' or to 'pass the time' or 'To be in style.' Some years ago the Civil Federation of Chicago interviewed 3,000 professional gamblers, all of whom, with but few exceptions, said they learned to play cards in the home.

In a men's meeting in Ohio a onetime saloon-keeper with a gambling den in connection with his saloon arose and said experience had brought him to the conviction, "that the gambling den is not nearly so dangerous nor does it do anything like the same amount of harm as the social card party in the home." A moment's reflection will make you to see that it is the social card table that is

constantly supplying the material for the finished gambler. Paul's position, "If meat make my brother to offend I will eat no more meat while the world standeth" would, if applied, put an end forever to card playing upon the part of professed Christians.

6. Card-playing flagrantly violates James' ideal of a pure Christian as one that keeps himself unspotted from the world.

No-accounts glory in shooting craps. With the criminal elements of all nationalities are to be found dirty, greasy decks of cards. Go to the jail or the penitentiary, and you will find groups at cards. In the dives and houses of sin cards are a principal pastime.

They are the tools of the gamblers' clubs, and think you a Christian can play them and keep himself unspotted from the world? As well talk of swimming in a pool of filth and coming out unpolluted. You would not want, and you know it, a card-playing preacher, and why one standard for him and another for the members? If it is wrong in him it is wrong in any child of God. In what sense is the card-playing Christian guilty of adultery? In that while claiming to be the Lord's, he is living with and for the world. The text says, "Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God." I am sure no sane person would ever seek the card table if on the hunt for the friends of God.

Jesus exhorted self-denial and cross-bearing, the card-playing Christian practices self-indulgence and refuses the cross.

The card-playing Christian holds to the form of godliness but denies the power there of.

The card-playing Christian, instead of the transformed life that will prove what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God, lives a life of worldly conformity that blots out the distinction between the believer and the non-believer.

The light of the card-playing Christian has become darkness. Not even their most intimate associates would turn to them in the hour of conscious spiritual need for guidance and comfort. Over the card table you cannot pray. it is no place for prayer. The venerable Rev. W. Romaine was once the guest of some card playing members of his church and when they asked him to join with them in a game he made no objection but when all was in readiness he asked to be allowed to pray God's blessing on the pastime. This so shocked the lady that she bluntly said she had never heard of such a thing. The pastor quietly asked if we should engage in anything on which we could not ask God's blessing, and that was the end of the proposed game. The breath of the under world is there.

"Good people do play cards," some say. I know it, but they are not as good as they would be if they desisted from this pernicious indulgence. They pay an awful price for their indulgence in the eyes of God and man.

They must needs blunt and stultify their own sense of right and wrong. They know their indulgences have the appearance of evil and are therefore in violation of the plain command of God's Word.

Dr. J. G. Holland said, "I have all my days had a card playing community open to my observation, and I am yet to be made to believe that that which is the universal resort of the starved in soul and intellect, which has never in any way linked to itself tender, elevating, or beautiful associations -- the tendency of that which is to unduly absorb the attention from the more weighty matters -- can recommend itself to the favor of Christ's disciples. The presence of culture and genius may embellish, but they can never dignify it. I have at this moment ringing in my ears the dying injunction of my father's early friend, 'Keep your son from cards, over them I have murdered time and lost heaven.'"

I would to God that every deck of cards might be voluntarily banished from the home of every professed follower of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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THE END