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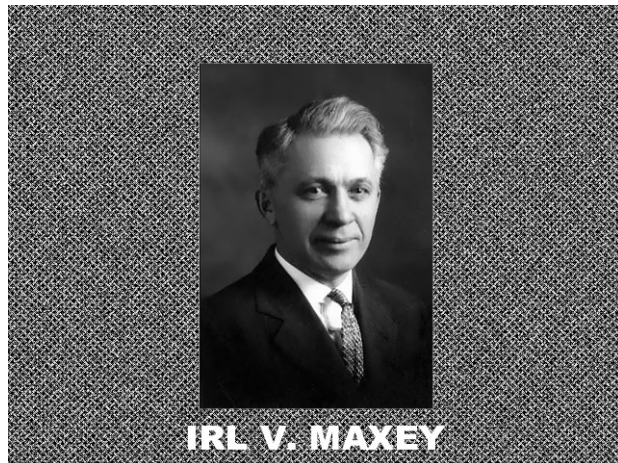
**WHAT I HAVE WRITTEN I HAVE WRITTEN
A Sermon By Irl V. Maxey**

**Digitized and Edited
By Duane V. Maxey**

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS FILE

This sermon was written on November 22, 1913 in Imbler, Oregon -- only about five weeks before the birth of our oldest brother John, who was born on December 29, 1913. Once again, papa had no title for the message, and it is I who have selected the title as fitting the text and contents of the sermon. -- Duane V. Maxey, (Ahwatukee) Phoenix, Arizona, February 1, 2006.

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Our text is those old words of Pilate to the crowd who were crucifying Jesus. He had written "Jesus the King of the Jews" in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. They said,

"Write, he said he is King of Jews." Pilate said, "What I have written I have written." These words are recorded in John 19:22.

SERMON TEXT: -- John 19:22 -- "Pilate answered, What I have written I have written."

Neither the Jews nor Pilate knew that Pilate had penned a glorious fact: "Jesus the King of the Jews." Oh friend, just stop a minute and think of those words. Pilate would not climb up and changes those words. Down through history they must go as they are: "What I have written I have written." God looked upon this world and wrote some laws in the actions of the universe and man that He does not change. He might have said, "What I have written I have written."

Henry Moses, the Sunday School worker was passing a place where they were putting in some cement walk. "Let me write my name," he said. "Be quick," they might have said, "make up your mind, for once this is set you can't change it." He stepped up quickly and wrote, "H. Moses," and down the years "H. Moses" will be how it must appear on that walk -- no chance to change it.

A girl ran into a live wire and was electrocuted. The company was sorry, but that did not bring back her life and restore her to her chair beside her father's table. Oh! what was written was written! Oh, listen friends! We, with the pen of time and with the indelible ink of eternity, write our thoughts and actions on our own memory, on the memory of others, and on the memory of God.

Oh, memory, you are a blessed thing! With you, I go back to my father's home. I gather with the family at the altar with delight. I hear my father's voice explaining the Scripture, and hear him praying. Oh, but also memory brings me back and I see my footsteps in wrong places. I'd forget, but memory recalls. Oh, we must face these facts.

The agony of hell will be memory, and the joy of heaven will be remembered mercy because God says "I'll remember your sins no more." My body is God's temple, and I should keep it that way, and if I mar its structure I must suffer the loss through this life. If you were careless and lost a finger, a hand, or a leg, and maimed your body, you must go through life thus. I feel sorry for you. I'd restore your missing limb, but what I cannot: What you have written you have written.

Also, when once I have thought a thing it becomes easier to think it again. Oh, the awful fact is: once a person has thought impurely that one can never think as purely again. Each thought digs the channel deeper, so that we will again fall into that channel of thought more easily. Every time a person spends five minutes in impure thinking, they have less time to and less power to think purely.

My words I can never recall. You swore once in your life, and you have long since quit. However, in the quietness of some evening it all comes back to you and

you feel the sting of shame that once you did such a thing. Thank God, if you can say: but God forgives, but ah, woe be unto you if you have not this joy.

My actions are sky-rockets to tell where I live, and the light they send I will never forget. That action of mine was so mean. I wish I could forget it, but oh, back it comes. A man once, when he was young, belonged to the navy and thought he would spend his life there. He thought it would be fun to have a vulgar picture tattooed on his arm. After a while he quit the navy, kept company with a fine, pure girl, and his life had changed, but he always kept his sleeve down to hide his arm. By and by he was married to this girl and children came into his home, but he was always careful to keep his sleeve down. Years passed, and death took him away. When he was lying in the coffin someone pulled his sleeve back, and there was the tattoo. How oft in life he would have changed it, but he could not, and in death it was still there. "What I have written I have written."

Should I fall into horrible sin after once knowing Christ, that will write itself on my memory, and I will never forget it. That will stand in my way.

We will not only write on our own memory, but also on the memory of others. Our thoughts will affect others. You cannot think evil of people and not affect them. Oh yes, our thoughts are being written on the lives of others and will never be erased.

Our words to others are read forever: "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men" (2 Corinthians 3:2).

John Newton, I think it was, was once a very profane boy working as a roustabout on the docks. A pure boy was working by his side. He noticed the boy and teased him. He swore vulgar oaths in his presence. He told vulgar stories. He called him "Sunday School Boy." Finally, the boy yielded and swore at Newton.

Years passed. Newton was convinced of sin and became a Christian. God called him to preach. He became an earnest preacher. One night someone knocked at his door. He opened the door. A stranger said, "This is Rev. Newton?" "Yes sir," Newton replied.

"Well, I want you to come and see a man who is dying."

"Certainly," Newton said, "I will come at once."

He reached the bedside and talked with the dying man about his soul and pointed him to Christ.

All of a sudden, the man half-raised himself in the bed and pointed his finger at Newton and said, "You, John Newton -- YOU point me to Christ? when you're the man who took away my innocence!"

Newton acknowledged that past sin and asked forgiveness. God had forgiven Newton, but what was written was written., and that man's soul went into eternal darkness and despair.

Oh, that people had always lived pure lives and had always heard pure words out of my mouth! But my words are written down and the day closed, and eternity will find what I have written.

But say I should fall as a preacher. Folks will never forget it, and the influence will take souls down to eternity. I know when a preacher falls much is said about it and those who do not want to live right hide behind it. When a preacher goes wrong 'tis awful. I knew a Methodist preacher who could have been a bishop as brilliant as his life was, but tonight he is spending a 20 years term in the penitentiary for killing a girl. Oh, what an awful chasm where he went down! for it took dozens with him -- like Korah of old -- and today children are raised on the edge of this chasm and slip in, ever and anon. The people of that town will never forget that, even after the preacher has served his 20 years and should live for Christ the rest of his days. "What I have written I have written."

Oh, worst of all -- God remembers! We are writing on His memory. Our thoughts are recorded. People cannot read and write those, but God can. Our thoughts, our words, our actions, God writes down, and we must meet the record in the Judgment.

How, then, may I be saved?

Oh, glory to God! Taking my place, Jesus says, "I am guilty for Him." He takes away our guilt. He remembers our sins no more. He forgives them.

Our cycle goes on -- Oh, must go on, and Jesus will be with us in the Judgment. But some things God does not change. He never gives us back a leg or an arm, nor a strong body. He lets us reap and suffer. A little girl falls in the mud and bruises herself. Her mother gathers her up, washes her face and forgives her, but she suffers the bruise.

I knew two boys to be expelled from school for drunkenness. Their father came to take them away and told Dr. Chamberlain: "When the boys were in their formative period I was a drunkard. Now, I am a Christian and would give so much if I could change that influence on my boys, but I cannot." He might have said, "What I have written I have written." God forgave him, but the awful results were still on his children.

Oh, let us live for God! Let us start now, children, and live for God.

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THE END OF THIS SERMON