



★ (Who Is) Firstcause1★ Author / Editor

★ Additional Reading ★

© donfrazier.org

"Our destiny is not mapped out for us by some exterior power; we map it out for ourselves.

What we think and do in the present determines what shall happen to us in the future."

~ Christian D. Larson

CHAPTER 8 - WARNING

Jesus told them, "Don't let anyone fool you. For many will come claiming to be the Messiah and will lead many astray. When you hear of wars beginning, this does not signal my return; these must come, but the end is not yet. The nations and kingdoms of the earth will rise against each other, and there will be famines and earthquakes in many places. But all this will be only the beginning of the horrors to come. "Then you will be tortured and killed and hated all over the world because you are mine, and many of you shall fall back into sin and betray and hate each other. And many false prophets will appear and lead many astray. Sin will be rampant everywhere and will cool the love of many. But those enduring to the end shall be saved. [Matthew 24:4-13 \(Living Bible\)](#)

"He has kept this secret for centuries and generations past, but now at last it has pleased him to tell it to those who love him and live for him, and the riches and glory of his plan are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ in your hearts is your only hope of glory. So everywhere we go we talk about Christ to all who will listen, warning them and teaching them as well as we know how. We want to be able to present each one to God, perfect because of what Christ has done for each of them." [Colossians 1:26-28 \(Living Bible\)](#)

To give a warning is a sign of love. Who warns like a mother, and who loves like a mother? Your mother, perhaps, is gone, and your father is gone. Let me take the place of those who have departed, and lift up a warning voice. With [Paul The Apostle](#) I would say: "I am not writing about these things to make you ashamed, but to warn and counsel you as beloved children." [1 Corinthians 4:14 \(Living Bible\)](#)

Many dis-regard God's warnings, and are angry with any who tell them of the obstacles in their path. They will understand better at the end.

The children of Israel had no truer friend than [Moses](#). They never went astray but he warned them; and trouble never came upon them except when his warnings were unheeded. [Elijah](#) was the best friend [Ahab](#) had.

I wish I could warn as Jesus Christ did. As he went up [Mount Olivet](#), His heart seemed to be greatly moved and He cried, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones all those God sends to her! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn't let me." [Matthew 23:37 \(Living Bible\)](#) Did He not warn them?

If a friend of mine were about to invest in a worthless silver-mine, do you think I would be true to him if I did not caution him against it? And do I show less love for him because I warn him against actions that will bring a harvest of misery and despair?

"Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul." [Ezekiel 33:4-5 \(King James Version\)](#)

Be sure that the seed you are sowing is good seed. Sow to the flesh, and a good harvest will be impossible. Good seed and bad seed cannot both succeed if allowed to grow together. One prospers at the expense of the other; and the likelihood is that the bad will get the upper hand. Weeds always seem to grow and spread more rapidly than good seed.

The longer they live, the firmer hold the weeds are gaining. Delay is dangerous, it is wise to exterminate the weeds at once. And beware of remaining longer in sin. The deeper you sink, the more bitter will be your restoration.

"So if your eye—even if it is your best eye!—causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. Better for part of you to be destroyed than for all of you to be cast into hell. And if your hand—even your right hand—causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. Better that than find yourself in hell." [Matthew 5:29-30 \(Living Bible\)](#)

Remember that the tares and the wheat will be separated at the judgment day, if not before. Sowing to the flesh and sowing to the spirit inevitably lead in diverging paths. "The ax of his judgment is poised over you, ready to sever your roots and cut you down. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire." [Luke 3:9 \(Living Bible\)](#)

"And even now the ax of God's judgment is poised to chop down every unproductive tree. They will be chopped and burned." [Matthew 3:10 \(Living Bible\)](#)

Beware of your habits. Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more attention to their conduct while in the early stage of life. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never it will never be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or of vice leaves its scar.

The drunken **Rip Van Winkle**, in Jefferson's play, excuses himself for every fresh carelessness by saying, 'I won't count this time.' Well, he may not count it, and a kind heaven may not count it, but it is being counted none the less. Down among his nerve cells and fibers the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up, to be used against him when the next temptation comes.

Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. Of course, this has its good side as well as its bad one. As people become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so people become saints in the moral sphere, and authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres, by so many separate acts and hours of work."

Beware of temptations. "Lead us not into temptation," our Lord taught us to pray: and again he said, "Watch with me and pray lest the Tempter overpower you. For though the spirit is willing enough, the body is weak." **Mark 14:38 (Living Bible)**

We are weak and sinful by nature, and it is a good deal better for us to pray for deliverance rather than for strength to resist when temptation has overtaken us. Prevention is better than cure. **Hidden under the soil may be seeds of passion and wickedness that only wait for a favorable opportunity to shoot up.**

People, pretend that it is necessary to see both sides of life. What foolishness! I am not called upon to put my hand in the fire to see if it will burn.

Begin to sow the good seed while the children are young, and there by prevent the weeds getting a start. Satan does not wait until they grow up, and we should not wait either.

There are many fishing nets so constructed as to allow none but full grown fish to be caught, the immature escaping. Satan has no such net. He catches them all, the weakest and youngest. We must care for our children or the devil will, The devil will not neglect them even though we might.

It is a master-piece of the devil to make us believe that children can not understand religion. Would Christ have made a child the standard of faith if He had known that they were not capable of understanding His words? It is far easier for children to love and trust than for adults, and so we should set Christ before them as the supreme object of their choice.

Do not neglect opportunities. **Napoléon Bonaparte** used to say: "There is a crisis in every battle, ten or fifteen minutes, on which the issue of the battle depends. To gain this is victory; to lose it is defeat."

Beware of sin. Its wages are Death, and the wages have never been reduced. It deceives people as to the satisfaction to be found in it, the excuses to be made for it, and the certainty of the punishment that must follow.

If it was not deceitful, it would never be delightful. It comes in innocent pretense, and saps the life blood, depriving one of the moral capacity to do good. [Canon Basil Wilberforce](#) walking in the [Isle of Skye](#), saw a magnificent eagle soaring upward. He halted and watched its flight. Soon he observed something was wrong. It began to fall, and presently lay dead at his feet. Eager to know the reason of its death, he examined it and found no trace of gunshot wound; but he saw in its claws a small weasel, which, in its flight, clinched near its body, had sucked the life blood from the eagle's-breast. Such is the end of every one who persistently clings to sin.

Do not be deceived by the attractiveness of this world. It will cheat you and destroy you. The devil administers many a sin in honey; but there is poison mixed with it. The truest pleasures spring from the good seed of righteousness, none else are profitable.

Beware of ignorance and indifference. You cannot afford to neglect your soul. There is too much at stake. [I never knew an idle man to be converted. Until he wakes up and realizes his lost and hopeless condition, God Almighty will not reach down and take him by the hand.](#)

[Remember that mere knowledge is not enough. Many a man knows the gospel precepts and promises by heart who is not touched by saving grace. Knowledge is often useless or positively harmful, and what we want is to know God's will and observe it.](#) Even good resolutions are not enough. No doubt they are helpful in their way, but the Bible does not lead us to believe that they can save a man.

It does say: "Even in his own land and among his own people, the Jews, he was not accepted. Only a few would welcome and receive him. But to all who received him, he gave the right to become children of God. All they needed to do was to trust him to save them. "to believe on his name." [John 1:11-12 \(Living Bible\)](#)

We, all of us, carry around with us material that Satan can work on. [Paul The Apostle](#) said: I know I am rotten through and through so far as my old sinful nature is concerned. No matter which way I turn I can't make myself do right. I want to but I can't. When I want to do good, I don't; and when I try not to do wrong, I do it anyway. Now if I am doing what I don't want to, it is plain where the trouble is: sin still has me in its evil grasp.

It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love to do God's will so far as my new nature is concerned; but there is something else deep within me, in my lower nature, that is at war with my mind and wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. In my mind I want to be God's willing servant, but instead I find myself still enslaved to sin. So you see how it is: my new life tells me to do right, but the old nature that is still inside me loves to sin. Oh, what a terrible predicament I'm in! Who will free me from my slavery to this deadly lower nature? Thank God! It has been done by Jesus Christ our Lord. He has set me free. [Romans 7:18-25 \(Living Bible\)](#)
Thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The issue that God has placed before us is clear-cut: "And all who trust him—God's Son—to save them have eternal life; those who don't believe and obey him shall never see heaven, but the wrath of God remains upon them." [John 3:36 \(Living Bible\)](#) He leaves us to choose, and the responsibility rests upon each of us.

It may cost you many a sacrifice, and wrench many a heart-string to choose right, take the decisive step now. The salvation of your soul outweighs all other considerations. Will you jeopardize your eternity for the sake of some present gain or pleasure?

"For salvation that comes from trusting Christ—which is what we preach—is already within easy reach of each of us; in fact, it is as near as our own hearts and mouths. For if you tell others with your own mouth that Jesus Christ is your Lord and believe in your own heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in his heart that a man becomes right with God; and with his mouth he tells others of his faith, confirming his salvation." [Romans 10:8-10 \(Living Bible\)](#)

There is hope for the wretched sinner. Wherever weeds grow, there is the possibility of good seed growing. The greater your need, the more welcome will you be to Jesus. The proud and the self-confident He knows afar off, but the faintest whisper of the remorseful sinner commands His attention.

Our Lord gave us a simple test to help us in our choice. He said, "A tree from good stock doesn't produce scrub fruit nor do trees from poor stock produce choice fruit. A tree is identified by the kind of fruit it produces. Figs never grow on thorns, or grapes on bramble bushes. A good man produces good deeds from a good heart. And an evil man produces evil deeds from his hidden wickedness. Whatever is in the heart overflows into speech." [Luke 6:43-45 \(Living Bible\)](#)

Many of us have not the time or ability to unravel complex arguments, or grasp profound doctrines. Certain phases of truth are often inaccessible to the ordinary mind. But the test Christ gave is short and practical, and within the reach of anyone of us.

With all reverence we may apply this text to our Lord Himself. We have His own authority for it. On one occasion when the Jews objected to His actions, He said: "John shone brightly for a while, and you benefited and rejoiced, but I have a greater witness than John. I refer to the miracles I do; these have been assigned me by the Father, and they prove that the Father has sent me. And the Father himself has also testified about me, though not appearing to you personally, or speaking to you directly. But you are not listening to him, for you refuse to believe me—the one sent to you with God's message." [John 5:35-38 \(Living Bible\)](#)

On another occasion, "The Jewish leaders surrounded him and asked, "How long are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." [John 10:24 \(Living Bible\)](#)

Jesus answered: "I have already told you, and you don't believe me," Jesus replied. "The proof is in the miracles I do in the name of my Father. But you don't believe me because you are not part of my flock. My sheep recognize my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they shall never perish. No one shall snatch them away from me, for my Father has given them to me, and he is more powerful than anyone else, so no one can kidnap them from me. I and the Father are one." [John 10:25-30 \(Living Bible\)](#).

"After dark one night a Jewish religious leader named [Nicodemus](#), a member of the sect of the [Pharisees](#), came for an interview with Jesus. "Sir," he said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miracles are proof enough of this." [John 3:1-2 \(Living Bible\)](#)

And [Saint Peter](#) said: "But anyone who asks for mercy from the Lord shall have it and shall be saved.' "O men of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus of Nazareth by doing tremendous miracles through him, as you well know." [Acts 2:21-22 \(Living Bible\)](#)

Christ said: "Don't misunderstand why I have come—it isn't to cancel the laws of Moses and the warnings of the prophets. No, I came to fulfill them and to make them all come true." [Matthew 5:17 \(Living Bible\)](#)

Will non-Christian religions bear the test? **Stoicism** was perhaps the noblest of the **Greek philosophies**, but it rapidly developed into utter cynicism, and culminated in the asserted impossibility of attaining to virtue.

Epicureanism started out fairly well, but its founder was not dead before it earned for itself the disgraceful name that it was a doctrine worthy only of swine. Look at **Buddhism**, with its filthy ceremonies and cruel tortures.

All these systems exhibit a conflict between theory and practice. They failed in their object, because they approached the difficulty on the wrong side. **They trimmed away at the branch, not recognizing that the tree was rotten at heart.**

Christianity alone will stand the test of raising man out of the pit. It demands as the first necessity a new birth, regeneration by the Holy Spirit. "What I am telling you so earnestly is this: Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. Men can only reproduce human life, but the Holy Spirit gives new life from heaven; so don't be surprised at my statement that you must be born again!" **John 3:5-7 (Living Bible)**

It does not place **sanctification** before **justification**, but having first imparted life from above, it throws around the redeemed sinner the love of Christ and the fellowship and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

"Let men cast off their wicked deeds; let them banish from their minds the very thought of doing wrong! Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy upon them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon!" **Isaiah 55:7 (Living Bible)**

#

"When anyone is going wrong, it is a mistake to warn him not to go further. It is also a mistake to leave him alone. The proper course is to call his attention to something better, and frame our conversation in such a way that he becomes wholly absorbed in the better. He will then forget his old mistakes, his old faults and his old desires, and will give all his life and power to the building of that better which has engaged his new interest."

Christian D. Larson