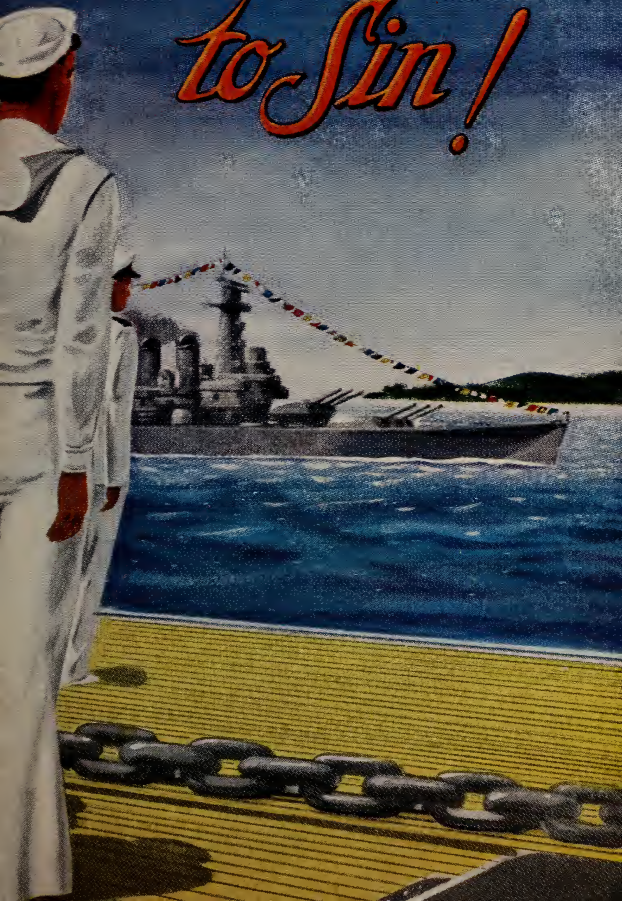


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Farewell to Sin!





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“Farewell to Sin!”

By

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“Farewell to Sin!”

Majestically, in all its magnificent power and might, the United States Navy is steaming along its course across the vast expanse of the gently rolling Pacific. There have been long and tedious weeks of arduous battle drill and gruelling practice. But that is over now, and with all duty well done, the great battleships are homeward bound once more. With happy hearts and gay spirits the officers and men are busy with their various daily routine work. While in the minds of all, thoughts are racing ahead to their beloved homeland and to their loved ones with whom they will soon be again.

It is early morning and as “the sun comes up like thunder” to burst forth in all its glory in the East, there appears, far ahead, yet sharply outlined against the horizon, a small, bleak and drab little island.

Suddenly, over the ship’s loudspeaker comes the order of the day. An un-

precedented procedure, with an unprecedented order. The entire fleet is to prepare itself for a "presidential review" and to "prepare to pass in review" before the island ahead, with a salute of the full twenty-one guns.

Officers and men spring into action. Soon flags are flying in the breeze. Then all the line flags are run up; from the bow far up to the dizzy heights of the steel mast-tops and then down to the fantail of the stern. The guns are readied for the salute. The entire personnel of every ship is arrayed in its finest "full dress" uniform. Every man stands at "attention" lining the rails.

The ships quietly and in perfect order swing into single file, each in its allotted position. The Review is on!

But why all this?

Because they are the officers and men of the United States Navy, representing a nation which will live forever in history as a country unsurpassed for its humanitarian principles, for its generosity to the suffering, its kindness,

thoughtfulness and goodness to the afflicted.

And this is the island of Molokai. And on this island live men and women who, in the opinion of mankind, are the most unfortunate of all peoples on the face of the earth. For they are the lepers of Molokai.

And so the entire fleet passes in imposing review!

To bring into the lives of these poor unfortunates a little happiness. A little consolation and comfort in the knowledge that they are not forgotten. That the hearts of this great people deeply sympathize with them in their sufferings and sorrows.

And surely every American, worthy of the name and the traditions of this beloved land, cries out in his heart to these gallant officers and men: "Well done, gentlemen!"

Certain it is, also, that every man aboard those mighty battleships, standing erect with "eyes front," was proud and happy for this opportunity to par-

ticipate in this magnificent tribute and salute. For these men knew the horror of leprosy! And knew it well.

In their many weeks of service in the Far East, where this disease is so rampant and common, they had seen its victims. Had seen their sufferings and misery. And having seen, could never forget.

Do you know what leprosy is?

It is a disease that kills with the stealthiness of consumption. That murders with the sureness of cancer. But with a horror all its own. For this terrible disease destroys life by the rotting away of the body. The hands, the feet, and other parts of the body rot and fall away. With a stench and foulness only it could have. And, as for the suffering, there is nothing like it. It is a disease too horrible for words, too foul even for thought.

It is a living death! A death of agony and shame. Terrible and terrifying. One can only pray: "God have pity upon them!"

But why dwell upon this vile disease of leprosy?

Simply to bring out the appalling fact that while leprosy is so vile and evil as to chill the mind by its terror, yet there is another leprosy infinitely far greater in its vileness and horror and frightfulness. As far greater as a vast ocean compared to a tiny drop of water. Or a towering mountain compared to a grain of sand.

How can this be?

Because there is a leprosy, not of the body, but a leprosy of the immortal soul!

This leprosy is "mortal sin"!

And what is "mortal" sin?

The name "mortal" comes from the Latin word "mors," meaning death. Hence it is any sin which steadily, stealthily and remorselessly rots away, destroys and kills the life of grace in the soul.

Which ruthlessly cuts off the immortal soul from the grace and friendship of Almighty God.

Thus it is called the leprosy of the soul.

And these are not my words.

They are the words of Almighty God Himself!

Again and again, He speaks of mortal sin as the "leprosy of the soul!"

However, understand that it is of mortal sin alone that God speaks. For every offense against God is not a mortal sin.

You know that this is so. You know there are many offenses which, while they are displeasing to God, are not so bad as to cause Him to withdraw His friendship entirely. There are many sins which are not committed with full deliberation, or the matter is small, or perhaps the sin is more from ignorance than from malice. And God, Who sees things as they are in all truth and reality, and Who reads the human heart, while He is displeased, yet is not mortally offended.

But every sin in which the soul sees that it must choose between the friendship of God and the gratification of its unlawful passions, and then, in full

deliberation, in full defiance of the Commandments of God, that soul rejects God . . . *this is a "mortal sin."*

Then it is, that the soul which grievously offends God, cuts itself off from God's friendship and grace.

And if the soul goes into eternity in such a state of sin, it is sufficient to cause that soul to lose God forever. To merit the everlasting punishment, remorse, regret and pain of the Damned.

How can this be?

To the modern world which will condone almost any evil except the sin of being caught at it, which glamorizes sexual rottenness and filth, which constantly belittles decency and honesty and which scornfully ridicules truthfulness and righteousness, such action on God's part seems incredible and impossible.

Perhaps you, too, have adopted this attitude? This loose and false thinking?

Then look at sin for what it is. See it, not as it is in the dreams of fools and children, but as it is in actual reality

and fact. Know it for what it really is!

Use your God-given reason and intelligence. Use your God-given wisdom and common-sense. And do it now! Tomorrow may be too late. Your eternal destiny may depend upon it.

So know what sin is! Look at sin, face to face!

See its ugliness, its hatefulness, its diabolical rottenness.

Know what sin really means!

Thus, for instance, do you realize that mortal sin is a deliberate betrayal of your God? Betrayal of your Heavenly Father?

Surely if there is anyone who fills you with loathing and contempt, it is a son or daughter who would shamefully betray the love and confidence of a good, upright, lovable and trusting father. Bring dishonor and disgrace upon him. Subject him to scorn, ridicule, and contempt. Even the idea of such a thing as this sickens you. And especially when

such is done for some trifling, paltry advantage for themselves.

But is this not exactly what you are doing when you commit a mortal sin?

For you betray Almighty God, your Eternal Father!

He Who brought you into existence from absolute nothingness. And then gave you everything you possess. Gave you your mind, your body, and all your wonderful faculties as a human being. God, Who watches over you. Guards you. Protects you. Who lavishly pours forth His graces upon you. Gave you that soul of yours with its immortal life.

The Eternal Father Who has always been so infinitely kind to you. Infinitely good to you. Infinitely patient. Infinitely thoughtful. He Who is so infinitely lovable and trusting.

And yet, in mortal sin, you betray Him!

For you are the living child of the Living God. Your soul made in His own image and likeness.

Your body is the temple of God, and within this temple He dwells in your heart.

Before you all the legions of Hell are powerless. For you are invincible. Nothing in Hell or upon earth can harm you, unless in treason and betrayal you hand over this body and soul of yours to the diabolical forces of evil. Unless you, yourself, bring them within this citadel of your soul to destroy it.

And what tempts you to do this?

A few pieces of silver? A few beastly satisfactions? The sexual excitement of loose living? The diabolical satisfactions of revenge or hate? Always some despicable, miserable, tricky payment! The price of your betrayal!

In the history of the human race, the great model and example of all traitors and betrayers is Judas.

Whose betrayal was so hateful, contemptible and loathsome that from that day on, until time shall be no more, no parents would curse their offspring with this despised name.

Yet, when you commit a mortal sin, the honored name of the saint which you bear is forgotten as the voice of your conscience calls you by the name which is now yours, this loathed name: "Judas!"

And do you not deserve it?

For when temptation came to you, as it comes to all, did you turn away in disgust? Laugh it to scorn? Cast it from you? Or did you not dally with the thought? Craftily think it over! And then did you not begin to bargain with Satan!

Yesterday, today, and tomorrow, it is always the same. Always there comes the inevitable hell-inspired question: "Will you betray God?" And mortal sin means that the answer is, "Yes! Give me my price and I also will betray Him."

"And even the angels weep!"

Again, need it be pointed out that while such betrayal is loathsome and repulsive beyond all measure, it has another characteristic that strikes terror into the heart.

To commit a mortal sin is to insult Almighty God to the best of your ability to do so!

It is one of the great mysteries of life that a man can sin and live to tell about it. If you do not realize this, then you do not realize the enormity of the insult and offense against Him.

For mortal sin is a direct insult to God. Any and every way that insolence and insult can be made terrible, you have it in a mortal sin. You mock God! You despise Him! You dishonor Him! With the added viciousness that it is a mockery, insult and dishonoring from you, His own child. And all this by the very faculties which were His gifts to you. For you use these very gifts to mock His goodness, to despise His love, to dishonor His image in your soul.

And remember this insolence is against Him Who created all of Heaven and earth. True to His laws, all the vast worlds of the universe flash through space in perfect harmony and order. All nature honors Him in its obedience. It

is man alone who rebels against His goodness and love. Who insolently disregards all His Commandments of decency and right living. Who outrages God's infinite justice and righteousness. Who flaunts His wisdom and knowledge. Jeers at His holy Will.

With diabolical malice and with basest ingratitude you stand against Him with the hateful forces of Hell as you re-echo that diabolical cry of Satan: "I will not serve. I will not obey!"

And again, why all this malice and hate and mockery?

For a few dollars of unjust gain? To satisfy the black passions of hellish desires? For a night's debauch? For what worthless object did you "kill a soul that should not die?"

How could you?

Do you not know that at the end of life lies death!

And that "it is appointed to man once to die and after this the judgment!"

As you value your eternal life, look at sin in common-sense and reason. See what you are doing to yourself when you thus turn against God. For remember there is no compromise with God, ever! You are either a child of God or a servant of Satan. It must be one or the other.

Surely you realize this! Know it beyond all doubt.

And surely you know also that when you are free from sin, your soul is as the most wonderful and the most beautiful of God's works. As Scripture joyfully tells you, you are but a little lower than the angels, and God has set you over all creation. You are the beloved and cherished of this Eternal and Almighty God. You are His child! In His image you have been brought forth from the eternity of nothingness.

Protected and guarded by your Loving Father you are safe from all harm or danger. Master of your own life and fate, you can scorn all temptations. Ride over them rough-shod. Trample all evil underfoot. For you are God's

own, and God is omnipotent and all-mighty. Heaven is already yours, with its eternity of incredible joy, happiness and glory. Your conscience is tranquil and knows no fear. You are filled with the peace of God. Nothing disturbs you. All things work for your happiness, for God dwells within you.

Every victory you gain over temptation, every conquest over sin, every little act of charity, mortification, or penance, simply means added treasures for you in the eternal kingdom of Heaven.

As you know in the "Apostles' Creed," you belong to the "Communion of Saints." Thus these great heroes and heroines of God claim kindred with you. The angels of God love you and hail with joy and delight your valiant loyalty to God.

Every day in its passing finds your soul more lovable in God's holy sight, more pleasing to God's holy eyes.

Every minute, in the passing of time you march on joyfully and gloriously to your eternal destiny. Onward to that

glorious Kingdom of God where time shall be no more. Where for the endless ages of eternity, you shall dwell in that Heaven where "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it even entered into the heart of man what things God hath prepared for those who love Him."

Surely there are none so blind as those who will not see!

Surely there is nothing so hard as a heart which has been hardened by evil.

For only too well, do you know what happens when mortal sin takes over.

All the beauty and glory of the soul is destroyed. Your glorious soul which was once the dwelling place of God, becomes the habitation of the legions of Hell. No longer are you the master of your life, for now you are ruled by your evil desires and passions. Diabolically and revengefully they degrade you. Making you an object of contempt, even to yourself.

Gone is your virtue. Gone is your gaining of merit. You are forced to

know yourself for what you have become. Shabby, cheap and coarse! Despicable beyond words!

The peace of God has given place to fear and dread. You are wretched with the very thought of death and what it will mean to you. You feel your sin steadily and surely driving out all real happiness, all true joy. The "Communion of Saints" is no more. For now you belong to the company of the enemies of God. For now you are associated with the forces of evil. Now you are one with the reprobates of Hell. A child of God has become a servant of Satan. Following Satan in vice, viciousness, hate, and all that is vile and evil.

Lost is that tranquillity of a good conscience. From now on your conscience is your enemy. With your mind filled with bitter and reproachful memories. For as certain as it is that God exists, the remembrance of wholesome, clean, decent and happy days will return to plague your sinful life. And there is nothing in the world which can punish more cruelly. Nothing

which can strike back more viciously, than a conscience which has been tortured and tormented.

It has never happened differently. For how can it? You are a living child of the Living God who has turned away from Him. Thrown away your priceless birthright. Given up the fellowship of the angels, saints, and all good-thinking and decent-living people. Cut yourself off from everyone and everything worthy of your respect, trust, and love.

You, a soul made in the image of God, have chosen to be a demon. Dwelling with the fearsome spirits of Hell. Allied with all evil souls. Living with all that is vile and loathsome. Aligned with those who hate, despise, and loathe you, as you do them. **THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE DAMNED!** The only difference between you and the damned in Hell is that you have not gone there as yet. For Hell is now your eventual destiny. Hell with all its diabolical fury, hate, despair, remorse and regret.

What can you be thinking of, to commit mortal sin?

You know that God exists. That He made you. You know what is right and what is wrong. You have your conscience. You have the Commandments of God written in your inmost soul!

And God is lovingly yet gently warning you, every moment of the day and night. By the passing of time. By the death of your relatives and friends. By the coming and going of the seasons. In the daily acquiring of those little characteristics which cause people to term you as "old." In the daily journey you make along the path of life to the grave.

Is it that you think you can deceive God? But God reads the innermost thoughts of your heart! Is it that you think God can be mocked? But you know that "God is not mocked!" You that are so wise to do evil, are you foolish enough to think you can escape the consequences? Do you think you can compromise with Almighty God? You know you can. not! Then how can you go on insanely wearying the eternal God of infinite Holiness and

Justice by your loathsome words and sinful actions?

In simple common-sense and reason then, why these mortal sins? Why deliberately seek your eternal rejection from God? Why deliberately turn away from the eternal joy and happiness and all that Heaven offers? Why deliberately turn to the wretchedness of Hell? How can you do this?

Is it reason to turn away from the infinite love of the great God to the hate of Satan?

Is it reason to seek a short, cheap satisfaction at the price of an eternity of regret and remorse?

Is it reason to embrace impurity or drunkenness at the cost of eternal damnation?

Is it reason to permit pride or blasphemy or dishonesty to make you an outcast from God and Heaven forever?

How true that often-repeated phrase, "If you would only stop to think, you would never sin."

Thus your God-given common-sense and intelligence plead with you not only to avoid such sin, but to avoid even any lesser sin lest little by little it should lead you on.

“He that loves the danger shall perish by it,” said God Himself!

Furthermore, you must avoid, no matter what the cost, any occasion that might cause you to sin.

Whether this occasion is a place or a person. As you value your salvation, avoid them. Give them up, gladly and joyfully. Be your real self. Be faithful to your birthright. For you are a living child of the Living God.

You have your free will! Then choose to be loyal and true to God.

Temptation may be strong, constant and persistent!

But you can always walk away from any temptation!

Leave this foulness, this leprosy of the soul, with all its filth and rottenness, to the minions of Hell.

Put out of your life forever, this insolence, this fearful, terrifying insulting of God.

Have no part, even in the smallest degree, of this repulsive betrayal of the Great and Good God Whose own you are. Rather be it that you engrave deeply in your heart those splendid, shining words of faith and love: "Though all others betray Thee, I will not betray Thee."

If, praise God, such has been your life that you have been preserved from this diabolical leprosy, betrayal, and hellish insanity of mortal sin, then let your heart be full of love and gratitude to Almighty God.

Yet never presuming on your own strength and fortitude, but instead constantly keeping close to God and constantly nourishing this strength and fortitude with God's holy sacraments. As the Apostle says: "Wherefore he that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall."

But what if you are in mortal sin now?

Did not the Eternal Father send His only-begotten Son into the world to save sinners?

And did not this Son cry out again and again, "I came not to call the just, but sinners to penance?"

And with His coming, as St. Paul tells us, "where sin abounded, grace did more abound."

For this He came. Jesus Christ, the Son of God and God Himself, to suffer and die, as no man has ever suffered and died, to open again for you, the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven.

You know these truths only too well!

And that all-consoling and all-comforting truth that in His Sacraments you have the means for forgiveness, strength, courage, and love beyond all human power of realization.

And especially, as far as you are concerned, there is that glorious Sacrament of Penance. For in this sacrament, He

has left for you a sane, sure, and reasonable way for you to receive a certain forgiveness of any and all sin. An absolute certainty of forgiveness because it is based upon His own words. His solemn promise as the Son of God and God Himself.

For to His Apostles and to their successors until the end of time, He lovingly promised; "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them."

And until the end of time, whenever a sinner of contrite heart shall come before His priest and humbly confess his sins, then does Christ speak through the lips of His priest and work through his hands, and the redeeming power of Christ shall wipe all sins away.

"Thy sins are forgiven thee. Sin no more."

And even "if your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow."

It is as simple and easy as that!

And what a happiness shall be yours!
And what a spiritual joy and gladness!
And what a peace shall flood your soul!

And what a love shall possess you! For it is the love of your eternal Father Who Himself has said: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love!"

All this shall be yours, as you rise from your knees. Reconciled to your Eternal God. Your sins rolled away forever.

And may I remind you that while all Hell may rage, nevertheless all Heaven shall rejoice.

For as Christ Himself has said: "So there shall be joy in Heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need it not."

For surely to know oneself forgiven, and forgiven at the great cost which Christ paid for your soul, will bring a spiritual resurrection, glorious, wonderful and sublime.

It will create a new character within you.

For it will bring God back into your heart.

It will make your soul once again

beautiful, shining and glorious, to be so forever. To be eternally, God's.

For you are the living child of the Living God!

Made to His own image and likeness!

"Made a little less than the angels."

"Crowned with glory and honor."

Endowed with immortality!

With an eternal destiny!

To live forever, through the endless ages, in the joy, peace, happiness and love of Him Whose own you are!

And what else really matters?

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