

Reaping the Whirlwind

D.L. Moody:

I remember in the north of England a prominent citizen told a sad case that happened there in the city of Newcastle-on-Tyne. It was about a young boy. He was very young. He was an only child. The father and mother thought everything of him and did all they could for him. But he fell into bad ways. He took up with evil characters, and finally got to running with thieves. He didn't let his parents know about it. By-and-by the gang he was with broke into the house, and he with them. Yes, he had to do it all. They stopped outside of the building, while he crept in and started to rob the till. He was caught in the act, then into court, tried, convicted, and sent to the penitentiary for ten years. He worked on and on in the convict's cell, till at last his term was out, and at once started for home. And when he came back to the town he started down the street where his father and mother used to live. He went to the house and rapped. A stranger came to the door and stared him in the face. "No, there's no such person lives here, and where your parents are I don't know," was the only welcome he received. Then he turned through the gate, and went down the street, asking even the children that he met about his folks, where they were living, and if they were well. But everybody looked blank. Ten years rolled by, and through that seemed perhaps a short time, how many changes had taken place! There where he was born and brought up he was now an alien, and unknown even in the old haunts. But at last he found a couple of townsmen that remembered his father and mother, but they told him the old house had been deserted long years ago, that he had been gone but a few months before his father was confined to his house, and very soon after died broken-hearted, and that his mother had gone out of her mind. He went up to the mad-house where his mother was, and went up to her and said, "Mother, mother, don't you know me? I am your son." But she raved and slapped him on the face and shrieked, "You are not my son," and then raved again and tore her hair. He left the asylum more dead than alive, so completely broken-hearted that he died in a few months. Yes, the fruit was long growing, but at the last it ripened on the harvest like a whirlwind.