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IF CHRIST HAD NOT COME
And Other Sermons
by Jarrette Aycock

Beacon Hill Press
Kansas City, Missouri

Other Books by Jarrette Aycock
The Nightingale of the Psalms
The Crimson Stream
The Grand Old Book
The Two Prodigals
The Prince of This World
Win Them

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INTRODUCTION

This volume is composed of inspirational messages used in my evangelistic campaigns throughout the nation. I acknowledge my indebtedness to many brethren in the ministry and to the many authors whose books it has been my privilege to read.

As a writer of an earlier century has said, "If any man claims anything in this book I throw up both hands and surrender."

Many have testified that they were blessed while listening to these messages; so I am encouraged to send them forth to the reading public with the prayer that God may bless them in printed form.

Jarrette Aycock
Kansas City, Mo.

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1
IF CHRIST HAD NOT COME

Christ was discussing with His disciples their relationship to the world when He made the statement, "If I had not come" (John 15:22). I should like to lift this statement out of its setting, change it by substituting the Name "Christ" for the personal pronoun "I," and consider the negative aspect of the Gospel: "If Christ had not come."

This opens a field of thought that gives us a greater vision and a deeper appreciation for the wonderful Christ and His glorious Gospel.

The Old Testament

If Christ had not come the Bible would close with the last verse of Malachi: "Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Its messages would be as difficult for us to grasp as it was for those who lived in the days when it was written.

The Twenty-third Psalm would be only a beautifully worded poem with much of its real meaning hidden from the hearts of men.

The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah would be as hard for us to fathom as it was for the Ethiopian eunuch, and the world would be asking, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" and "How can I [understand] except some man should guide me?"

No New Testament

If Christ had not come we would have no New Testament, with its four Gospels portraying wonderful stories and incidents in the life of Christ; narratives, which present Him as Servant and King, Son of Man and Son of God.

No Bethlehem

If Christ had not come the beautiful story of the Babe in Bethlehem, which for more than nineteen hundred years has been whispered in the ears of little children by godly mothers, would never have been told; the star in the east would have failed to shine; the angelic choir would have remained in heaven; the shepherds on the Judean hills would have heard no song; there would be no "peace on earth" and no "good will toward men."

No Miracles

If Christ had not come, there would have been no miracles.

The palsied man of Capernaum would have spent his days upon his mattress for there would have been no "Great Physician" to whom his friends could carry him.

The man at the pool of Bethesda, who had suffered thirty and eight years, would have continued to suffer while others pushed ahead of him into the healing stream.

The ten lepers would have grown more desperate, more wretched, more loathsome, until at last, with faces of horror and bodies of rotteness and filth, they would have fallen into the grave.

The blind men by the wayside would have continued to sit begging in darkness until death came and pulled them into eternity.

The widowed mother in the city of Nain would have buried her son.

Mary and Martha would have continued to grieve for their brother, Lazarus, for there would have been no resurrection in Bethany.

The tempest would have continued to rage, and the angry waves to dash at will, for there would have been no Master to say, "Peace, be still."

The little boy with the five barley loaves and few fishes would never have known how great small things can become in the hands of God.

No Parables

If Christ had not come we would not have the thirty great parables.

We would never have heard of the sower, the stony ground, the wayside and the good soil.

The lesson of forgiveness, as taught in the parable of the unmerciful servant, would not be known.

The people of the world, like the wicked servant, would have continued to bury their talents and hide them in a napkin.

The lesson on preparedness, as taught in the parable of the ten virgins, would never have been known.

The Good Samaritan would have passed the wounded man as did the priest and the Levite.

The prodigal son would never have found his way back home.

No Conversions

If Christ had not come there could have been no wonderful conversions.

John the Baptist could never have said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

We would never have heard of John, the tender, timid Disciple of Love.

Peter, the big-bodied, great-hearted, impetuous man, who was always blundering, yet always ready to apologize, who in one moment could thrash a fellow within an inch of his life, and the next moment weep over him, love him and bind up his wounds, would never have been saved. We would have missed much if Peter had not been converted. In no other apostle do we so plainly see the weaknesses of humanity and the magnitude of the grace and power of God.

Without Peter there would have been no climbing out of the boat and walking on the water. There would have been no great sermon with five thousand conversions, and no epistles to bear his name.

Who else could have so aptly worded the great confession, " Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God"?

If Christ had not come, Zacchaeus, the little publican of Jericho, would have continued to defraud the people. He would never have found a better way of life.

The demoniac of Gadara would have remained untamed among the tombs, neither clothed nor in his right mind.

The woman of Samaria would never have heard of the water of life, but would have continued to drink from the cup of iniquity until she had drained it to its dregs.

If He had not come, Saul, the little blood-thirsty Jew, would have seen no light on the road to Damascus; and the world would never have heard of the brilliant, kind-hearted Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles.

No Cross

If Christ had not come there would have been no Cross. Sinai with its law, fire, thunder and smoke would have been the world's supreme monument of God's greatest love and closest contact with man. All that sinners could do, would be to bring to a "man-made" altar the blood of bulls and goats, which has no power to take away sin. Only the priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and the veil of the Temple would have remained a solid curtain from top to bottom.

If He had not come we could never have sung:

"Down at the Cross where my Saviour died,
Down where for cleansing from sin I cried;
Thereto my heart was the blood applied;
Glory' to His Name!"

Cowper could not have written:

"There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

My friend, George Bennard, would have to find a new theme for his song, because the world would not know what he meant by "The Old Rugged Cross."

If Christ had not come we would be trembling with fear before Sinai, instead of weeping in love before Calvary.

No Resurrection

If Christ had not come there would have been no Resurrection.

Joseph's tomb would have been occupied by himself or some member of his family. The stone would have been left before the door, and the seal would have remained unbroken.

If He had not come the women would have gone about their work as usual. The angel would have remained in glory, and there would have been no Easter with its flowers and song, happy hearts and shining faces.

Springtime with its budding life would lose much of its meaning. We would not have known that "that which is sown in weakness shall be raised in power."

Without the Resurrection we would bend over the couches of our dying loved ones and say, "Good-bye forever." Our hopes would terminate with the grave, and "if in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable."

No Book Of Acts

If Christ had not come there would have been no book of Acts, recording the Day of Pentecost, the launching of the Church, the death of Stephen, the conversion of Saul and Cornelius and the spreading of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

No Epistles

If Christ had not come there would be no epistles to the Church, with their doctrines, ordinances, exhortations, and plans to spread the Gospel to the "uttermost part of the earth."

No Book Of Revelation

If Christ had not come there would be no book of Revelation. There would be no warning of the tribulation that is to come, and no news of the final overthrow of Satan and death. We would have no description of the "city foursquare," the final abode of the saints.

Without the book of Revelation there would be no climax to the Bible, no "Come, Lord Jesus."

No Church

If Christ had not come there would not be a Church with its many blessings to humanity.

Martin Luther would never have discovered that "the just shall live by faith."

Wesley would never have known that "men are justified before they are sanctified."

John Knox would never have cried, "Give me Scotland or I die."

Carey would have missed India.

Livingstone would have missed Africa.

Asbury would have missed America.

D. L. Moody would have remained a shoe salesman.

No Great Passages Of Scripture

If Christ had not come we would not have the great passages from the New Testament to quote to those in need. The Sermon on the Mount, with its wonderful beatitudes, would never have been preached.

We could not say to the sinner, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

We could not say to the discouraged, "[Cast] all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

We could not say to the doubtful, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

We could not say to the needy, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

If He had not come we could not tell the sick and suffering of that day when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

If Christ had not come what a dismal, dark, miserable world we would have! Surely, W. O. Cushing was right in his poem:

Oh, to have no Christ, no Saviour!
No Rock, no Refuge nigh!
When the dark days 'round thee gather,
When the storms sweep o'er the sky!

Oh, to have no Christ, no Saviour!
How lonely life would be!
Like a sailor, lost and driven,
On a wide and shoreless sea.

Oh, to have no Christ, no Saviour!
No hand to clasp my own!
Through the dark, dark vale of shadows,
Just to press my way alone!

Oh, to have no hope in Jesus!
No Friend, no Light in Jesus!
Oh, to have no Christ, no Saviour!
How dark this world would be!

Christ Has Come!

I cannot close this message without reminding YOU of something you already know --
Christ has come!

The Bible

The Bible does not end with Malachi's threatened curse. We have the New Testament, with its four Gospels; its twenty-one epistles; its book of Acts, recording Pentecost; the book of Revelation, which pictures the consummation of all things, and ends with "Come, Lord Jesus."

Christ has come, and His miracles stand out like stars in the firmament.

The palsied man took up his bed and walked.

The lame man at the pool was healed.

The leper was cleansed.

The blind received their sight.

Christ has come, and the widowed mother did not bury her son, for he lived again.

Lazarus was raised from the dead.

The angry storm heard the voice of its Master and grew quiet.

The lad with the loaves and fishes learned that a little in the hand of God would feed a multitude.

Conversions

Christ has come, and many wonderful conversions have been recorded.

Simon Peter was saved, and thousands were won through his ministry.

Zacchaeus climbed down from the sycamore tree to give half of his goods to the poor and restore fourfold to those he had wronged.

Christ has come, and the woman at the well believed and rushed back to her neighbors saying, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

Saul, the blasphemer, was saved and became Paul, the kind, the gentle, who cried, "Yea, I count all things but loss . . . that I may win Christ."

The Cross

Christ has come, and we do not have to look away to Sinai with its law and fire, but we can look away to Calvary, the hill of grace, and sing,

Down at the Cross where my Saviour died,

for the world knows its meaning.

Christ has come and paid the price, so that the drunkard may become sober, the thief may become honest and the harlot may become pure. Salvation has been provided for the sinner and cleansing for the believer; for Christ has come to destroy the works of the Devil.

Christ has come, and William Cowper has written:

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,

and we can understand.

George Bennard has written,

On a hill far away stood an old rugged Cross,

and the meaning is so evident that the world has proclaimed this the most popular sacred song.

The Resurrection

Christ has come, and there was a Resurrection. The Roman seal was broken; the stone was rolled from the door; the tomb was empty, for our Lord arose from the grave.

We are not worshipping a dead Christ, but a living Saviour, who has become the first-fruits of them that slept, and we know that if He arose, we shall rise also.

Look not at the grave. He is not there! He is risen! Now the heart can sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

The Church

Christ has come, and we do not have to worship within the cold gray walls of some synagogue a God that is afar off. We have a church where we can meet, sing His praises, magnify His Name and worship Him according to the dictates of our own consciences.

The Scripture Message

Christ has come and left us the New Testament, with its beautiful passages which contain a message for every heart.

We can quote to the sinner, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

We can say to the doubting, "[He is] able to do exceeding abundantly above all that [you can] ask or think."

We can remind the tempted that in every temptation He has promised to make a way of escape.

To the sick, the poor and the needy we can read His blessed words: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Christ has come, and to those in the valley of the shadow of death we can say, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

If there were no Christ, and had never been,
To save the sinner from the throes of sin,
What a dreadful place this world would be
But there is Christ for you and me.

* * * * *

2

THE HOME OVER THERE

I studied about California as a boy in school, in the Indian Territory. I never dreamed of going there for it was a land far away, with no particular appeal to me. As I grew older, neighbors began to move to the West Coast. They wrote of the beautiful land they had found there. A neighbor came back and spent an afternoon telling us of the wonders of that country. Then my brother went to California and after a few years returned for a brief visit. He brought with him a suitcase filled with oranges and said, "Out West they can be bought for five cents a dozen." These things began to interest me. I found an old geography book and looked at that long yellow strip on the western slope of the United States. As I looked at that map a longing came over me to see the Golden State.

One day I went to the railroad station and asked the price of a ticket to California. The agent gave me the information and a map of the country through which I would have to pass to reach my destination. I began to study the map. I read the name of every town on the route. As I thought about the trip my fever rose and I began to make plans to go. At last I got the money, purchased a ticket and boarded the train for California.

I shall never forget that trip -- the wide rolling prairies (unbroken in those days by farms), the towering snowcapped mountains, the long, dark, dank tunnels and the hot, dusty, seemingly endless desert. One night as we rolled through the desert I pulled the blinds and settled back to sleep. When I awoke the next morning the desert was gone, and we were traveling through the most delightful country my eyes had ever beheld. Beautiful homes, flowers and orchards were everywhere. I was so thrilled that I forgot about the plains, the mountains, the tunnels and the desert. At last I had reached the land for which I had longed so many years!

Longing For Home

When a child I used to hear my mother talk about heaven. Often she went about the home singing,

O think of the home over there,
By the side of the river of light,
Where the saints, all immortal and fair,
Are robed in their garments of white!

That, too, was a land far away, and I did not think very much about it. As I grew older, neighbors and loved ones began to move to that country, and so I became interested. I got the old Bible and traced the route. I made inquiry and found the conditions for passage to heaven. As I studied about that land beyond the blue, my desire to see it was increased. Now I am on the way there! Sometimes the journey is across rolling plains or over mountains cold, bleak and high. At other times it is through tunnels dark and dismal, or across deserts dry and hot. I have never become weary of the way, but sometimes I have become tired in the way. I know that someday I will fall asleep while crossing the desert of life, but I will awake to find that the plains, the mountains, the tunnels and the desert of life have been left behind. I will be rolling across the glad hills of God's glory! Then I will know the truth of the song:

The toils of the road will seem nothing
When I get to the end of the way.

We Are Interested In Our Homes Here

We are interested in our earthly homes; so why shouldn't we be interested in the home over there? There are many good people who know more about Boston, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Seattle than they know about heaven. You may say, "We can read of those cities." That is true. But you can also read of heaven. You say, "We have loved ones in those cities." Yes, and there are some of us who have loved ones in heaven. I do not believe anyone can give a better

reason for his interest in some city or country in this world than the Christian can give for his Interest in the home over there.

Abraham

Abraham became so interested in heaven that he never built a home. He was content to dwell in tabernacles of clay, "for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." He realized that here we have no continuing city; so he sought one to come. Abraham knew that if he built a home here, the earthquakes would shatter its foundations, the winds would wither its walls and the rains would rot its roof; so he sought a home in the skies.

Monotony

Often the thoughts of going home will help to break the monotony of the journey. My wife made her first trip home after two years of absence. While on the train she was seized with a dreadful toothache. But the pain became lighter the nearer she came to home. She said, "Three hours before the train arrived I had the baby ready, and had on my own hat and coat. I was ready to get off the train and the toothache was forgotten." Why? She was going home.

Today we are on the train of life; we are traveling home. The nearer home we get and the more we think of it, the less attention we pay to the miseries of the world.

A Beautiful Passage

One of the most beautiful passages referring to the home Over there is found in the words of Jesus as recorded by John: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Heaven Is A Place

From this passage we learn that heaven is a place. Heaven is just as much a place as Chicago is a place, and I believe a much better place. You say, "Heaven is a state." I would not argue with you, but just as Chicago is a place located in the state of Illinois, I believe that heaven is a place located in the state of glory.

A Prepared Place

Not only is heaven a place, but it is a prepared place. I like the personal note in this passage of Scripture. Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Then, if prepared especially for us, it will exactly suit us.

An old mother said to a friend in San Francisco, "Brother Mitchell, do you think I will know my son John when I get to heaven?"

He answered, "Mother, would you be satisfied if you didn't?"

As she thought of knowing or not knowing her son, tears sprang to her eyes and she said, "No, Brother Mitchell. If I did not know John I would never be satisfied."

"Then, Mother," he replied, "if it will take that to satisfy you, you are sure to know him. For when you get there, you'll be satisfied."

Made To Measure

We often speak of something as fitting "like a tailor-made suit." Such a suit is made to measure. If you please, heaven is made to measure. Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you."

A young man was injured in one of the mines of Scotland. He was brought to his home in an unconscious and dying condition. When he regained consciousness his old Scotch mother sat by his bedside weeping. He said, "Mother, why do you weep?"

She replied, "O my boy, your poor head is crushed so badly."

The dying boy smiled and whispered, "Don't cry, Mother, the crown will fit it anyway," and went to be with Jesus.

No matter how we may have been marred and marked by sin, if we have found pardon and cleansing in the blood of Jesus, when we get to heaven the crown will fit us anyway.

No Two Alike

There are no two people alike. I know the old Southern expression, "They are just as much alike as two black-eyed peas," but there were never two black-eyed peas exactly alike. Scientists tell us that there are no fingerprints the same, and no human voices register alike. No two people are the same. Jesus knows that, and knowing it, He has gone to prepare a place for you, and a place for me, and the places will suit us, because they are prepared especially for us.

Billy Bray

Did you ever read the story of Billy Bray? If not, you should do so at once. Billy Bray was an English miner, and a preacher of the Gospel. He would work in the mines until he had saved enough money to go forth and preach. Then when his money was gone and his clothes were shabby he would return to work again. It is said that he established more chapels than any ten preachers of his day.

Billy was preaching one Sunday afternoon in Cornwall. His clothing was very shabby. His suit was frayed at the elbows, baggy at the knees and worn threadbare at the cuffs. A widow in the audience noticed the condition of his clothing and thought of the suits that had belonged to her husband. When the service was over she went to the platform and said, "Billy, I see your clothes are getting shabby."

"Yes, lady," he replied. "I have worn them out preaching the Gospel."

She said, "My husband passed away a few months ago. I have a number of his nice suits hanging in the wardrobe at home. And I was just thinking how nice they would be for you." Then she added doubtfully, "If I were just sure they would fit you."

Quickly Billy said, "Did God tell you to give them to me?"

"Yes," she answered. "I am sure that while you were preaching, God told me to give them to you."

Billy said, "Then I know they will fit, for God knows my measure exactly."

Friend, He knows your measure and He knows mine, and knowing that, He has gone to prepare a place for us -- a place that will satisfy every longing and desire of our earth-weary hearts.

Jesus And The Spirit

Jesus is now in heaven preparing a place for us. While He is up there, the Holy Spirit is down here preparing us for that place. It will ultimately be a prepared people for a prepared place. The stones that went into the Temple were so prepared that when brought together they fit perfectly without the use of a hammer or chisel or trowel. Just so will the people of God, prepared by the Holy Ghost, fit perfectly into that place that Jesus has prepared for them.

The Father Encourages

While Jesus is preparing a place for us and the Spirit is preparing us for the place, God the Father encourages us on the way. If it were not for His encouragement the way would often be dark.

A lady with her little girl moved into a small town and hung out a sign, DRESSMAKER. Not only was she an expert seamstress, but she did beautiful needlework. One day the child, watching her mother embroider, said, "Mother, I wish you would teach me how to do work like that."

"All right," said the mother. "Bring me a piece of cloth."

She brought the cloth. Her mother drew a pattern on it, got a needle and thread and said, "Now, darling, do it this way."

The little girl worked hard and faithfully until it was finished. Instead of showing it to her mother she placed it on the sewing table for her to find.

The morning the pattern was finished they went downtown. While they were gone a neighbor came to call for the first time. She rapped at the door, but there was no answer. The door was standing open; so she stepped in and called. Receiving no response, she turned to leave when she noticed the child's embroidery on the sewing table. She picked it up, noted the broken threads, the knots and the dropped stitches. A look of disgust came over her face, and with a sneer she threw it down and walked across the street to a neighbor. "Say," she asked, "have you seen any of the work that woman, who claims to be a seamstress, turns out?"

"No," said the neighbor.

"Well I have," she replied. She explained why she was in the room and said, "I saw some of her embroidery, and it was positively dirty. It was wrinkled; the threads were broken and knotted, and the stitches were dropped. You could scarcely tell the wrong side from the right. I had planned to get her to do some sewing for me, but I would not let her use a needle on anything I have." So she went from place to place telling what she had seen in the home of the new dressmaker.

After a while the mother and the little girl returned.

The mother went to the table and saw the finished piece. Smiling, she ran to the child and caught her in her arms, saying, "Darling, Mother is so proud of you." Then, holding up the embroidery, she continued, "Honey, it is wonderful. I never dreamed you would be able to do so well. If you keep on, you will be able to do much better than Mother." The child's heart was glad and encouraged, and she wanted a new pattern. She was going to be able to do beautiful needlework.

Glory Is Ahead

We are like that sometimes. We go to church and volunteer to lead in prayer. We try to sing or testify. If no one else says anything, the Devil comes along and says, "My, that was awful. You can't sing. You can't pray. You are making a fool of yourself and boring every one. If I were you I would quit."

Do these things hurt? Yes. But if you did what you did for His glory, you will not go very far before God places His loving arm around you and says, "Child, do not become discouraged. You are doing well, and you will be able to do better after a while." And so we will, for when He comes "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

We may not be able to sing well now, but in that day angels will desire to listen as we sing the songs of redeeming blood.

A Reminiscence

The joy of the bridegroom is in the interest which the bride takes in the home he has prepared for her. Up to the time I was married I had never saved anything, though I had a very good job. As my wedding day drew near I began to look for a place to live. I walked the streets of

Los Angeles, looking for an apartment which I could rent for a week. I expected my marriage to be permanent, but I was getting my living quarters on the installment plan a week at a time.

One afternoon I found a place. After I had paid the rent for one week, paid the preacher and purchased the license, I had less than three dollars and a half with which to launch out on the sea of matrimony.

The place I rented was a small one-room apartment, with a tiny kitchenette, on the second floor of an old residence. It was cheaply and meagerly furnished. There was an old worn mat on the floor and no curtains at the windows. The green shades were torn. The old chairs had been broken and fastened together with bailing wire. The bed was a four-posted iron bed, and the knobs gone from the posts. The dishes were unmatched and cracked. The knives, forks and spoons were odds and ends. No two were alike.

One side of the table was fastened to the wall, and the other side was nailed to a stick that rested on the floor. The water conveniences were poor, and a two-burner plate resting on an orange box was our cook stove.

This was what I had to offer my bride, who had left a beautiful modern home.

The day after we were married I took her to the little apartment, opened the door, and, holding her by the arm, I walked in. I watched every expression on her face, and had she turned on me with scorn, it would almost have killed me. She took it in with a glance and then, turning to me with a smile, said, "Well isn't this dandy! And this is our little home!" When she said that my joy was complete. If my bride was happy, nothing else mattered.

The illustration is poor, but I believe Jesus rejoices when His children seem interested in the place He has gone to prepare. I am interested.

I would not want to miss it,
Walking up those streets of gold,
With the saints and martyrs, blood-washed,
Playing on their harps of gold.

Heaven Is A Happy Place

Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled." I love to think of that home where trouble never comes, where sickness never enters, where death is unknown.

We will be happy in the fellowship of one another. There are some in this world with whom we cannot have fellowship because there are barriers between us which are insurmountable.

While waiting for a train one day I spoke to a man about Christ. He looked at me blankly, shook his head and indicated that he did not speak my language. I took out my Testament, placed it over my heart and pointed up. Instantly he smiled and shook my hand, then, saying something in his

own tongue, he pointed toward the heavens. What fellowship we might have had but for the barrier of different languages!

One night in a meeting in Chicago I walked back in the congregation and invited a man to go forward for prayer. He quickly touched his lips and ear and shook his head, indicating that he as if to say, "It's all right. I know Him."

In heaven, barriers will be unknown. The confusion of tongues will be done away. Obstacles of life will be removed, and people will come from the east, and the west, the north, and the south and will dwell happily together in the home over there.

Heaven Is A Place Of Rest

To some people rest is unknown. From early morning until late at night they toil. They have neither vacations nor holidays. They love God, but much of the time they are too tired physically to worship Him as they would like. In heaven the struggles will be over. The weary days and dreary nights will have forever passed. There will be rest, sweet rest -- rest from toil, rest from temptation, rest of body, rest of mind and rest of soul.

There we shall meet to never part again;
Our toils will then be o'er;
We'll lay our burdens down at Jesus' feet,
And rest forevermore.

Gregory And Margaret

Did you ever hear the story of Gregory and Margaret? Because of Gregory's love for Margaret he was banished from his highland home. Before leaving he took her in his arms and said, "Don't cry. Bring your lantern every night; place it upon one of the high rocks near the shore, and sleep by it. As soon as I can find a home I will come back for you." Margaret returned home with a heavy heart, yet glad because he was coming back. Each night she took her lantern, went down to the shore and placed it upon a large rock. Then, wrapping herself in her great fur coat, she slept. Because of her loyalty to Gregory her own people turned her out of home. The people of the town criticized her cruelly. They called her a street-walker and a night prowler. In spite of what they said and did, each night she made her way to the rockbound shore, placed her lantern on a rock and slept in its light on the beach. One night she awoke with a start, thinking she had heard someone call her name. In the distance she heard the splash of a boatman's oar. She sprang up and listened. There came ringing on the night air, "Margaret." She shouted back, "Gregory," and ran down to the water's edge to meet her lover. A few days later they sailed away to the home he had prepared for her.

Because our Lord loved this world, men tried to banish Him from it. But before He went away He called the few who loved Him aside and said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would

have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

In other words, He said, "Watch and wait. I cannot tell you the day or the hour, but as soon as I have prepared a place, I will come for you."

If we are loyal to Him, loved ones may drive us from home, friends may turn against us, the world may criticize us, we may be called stargazers, fools or fanatics, but if we stay near the shore and keep our lamps trimmed and burning, one of these days we will hear the splash of the boatman's oar. The "Old Ship of Zion" will come sailing around the bend. We will hear our names called, and with a "good-bye" to this world with its sorrow and woe, we will fling our grips on board and sail away to the home over there.

I know of no better way to express my personal feelings about it than by quoting an old song I used to hear my mother sing:

I've heard of a city, far up in the sky,
I want to go there, I do.
'Tis built in the land of the sweet bye and bye,
I want to go there, don't you?
There Jesus has gone, to prepare us all homes,
I want to go there, I do.
Where sickness and sorrow and death never come,
I want to go there, don't you?

When the Old Ship of Zion shall make her last trip
I want to be there, I do.
With head all uncovered, to greet the old ship,
I want to be there, don't you?
When all the ship's company shall meet on the strand,
I want to be there, I do.
With songs on their lips and with harps in their hands,
I want to be there, don't you?
I want to be there, I want to be there,
I want to be there, I do.
I want to be there, I mean to be there,
I expect to be there, don't you?

Mother

My mother was a quaint little old-fashioned woman who had been reared in the deep South. She never lived in a town and was never in a large city. She did not know a great deal about this world, but she knew much about the home over there.

After I was saved, I visited her as often as my revival meetings would permit. Our yard did not have a gate, but the old-fashioned steps that went over the fence. If Mother saw me coming she

would meet me at the steps, and as soon as I reached her she would put her arms around me and say, "Son, I am so glad you have come! When are you going away?"

I would have to answer, "I can stay only a few hours, or overnight."

She would say, "Oh, I hoped you would stay a long time. It seems that you always have to hurry away. I wish we could be together as we used to be."

I would explain to her that I had to conduct a meeting. Many times I had gone out of my way for the short visit. When the time would come for me to leave she would often bid me farewell with these words: "Good-bye, son. If I do not see you again here, I will meet you in the treetops when Jesus comes."

Mother's Death

Then there came that sad day -- which has come to many of you -- when I received a telegram which said, "Come quickly. Mother not expected to live."

When I reached home I found her very low, but conscious. The old country doctor, who had been our friend and family physician for over twenty-five years, said she would not recover. We called in a brilliant young doctor from the city. I shall never forget his words when he came from her room. He said, "The old doctor has told you the truth. She will not get well. She may live a week or several weeks, but she will get no better; daily she will grow weaker."

I had been home several days and had to leave for a meeting in Washington. I went into her room and, kneeling beside her bed, I took her in my arms and said, "You have been one of the best mothers a boy ever had."

She feebly answered in her quiet humble way, "Not as good, son, as I ought to have been."

"Yes, Mother," I said. "I do not see any way in which you could have been better than you have."

Again she said, "Not as good as I ought to have been."

I said, "Mother, I have to leave. I have a meeting to conduct, and if I do not go now I cannot get there in time."

She placed her withered old arms about my neck, and with a faith that for more than sixty of her eighty-three years had been based upon the teachings of the Bible, said, "Good-bye, son, I will meet you in that better land where there will be no sad partings."

I loosed her arms from around my neck, folded them upon her breast and walked out. I never saw her again. A few weeks later I was handed a telegram as I entered the pulpit in Boise, Idaho. It read: "Mother went home at seven-ten tonight."

When We Meet Again

That is not the end of the story. I said I never saw her again, and that is true. But by the grace of God I expect to see her in that home over there. I have often wondered if, when by His grace I enter that beautiful city and meet my mother again, she will throw her arms around my neck and say, "Son, I am so glad you have come. When are you going away?"

In that day I will be able to answer, "Mother, I am not going away. I have held my last meeting. I have made my last trip. I am not going away this time, Mother. I have come home to stay."

We'll never say good-bye in heaven,
We'll never say good-bye.
For in that land of joy and song,
They never say good-bye.

* * * * *

3

THE CROSS

Today men look upon the Cross as an ornament. It is used to decorate churches. Some use it as a charm; others pin it on their lapels. In the days of Jesus this was not so. The Cross was a symbol of shame.

Methods Of Execution

The world has had many methods of execution: the stone, the stake, the poison hemlock, the firing squad, the axe, the gallows, the electric chair as well as crucifixion. Many of these, however, have so often been associated with honor that much of the stigma has been removed. Not so with the cross. Its victim, nailed to the rough tree and left hanging, naked, torn and bleeding before the throng, has always been looked upon as a specimen of disgraced and degraded humanity, more to be mocked than pitied. All the world looked upon the cross as a disgrace.

It seems that God must have purposely allowed this idea of crucifixion universally to root itself in the minds of men in order that a place more vile, more despicable and lower than any other might be provided where Christ could take the sinner's place and become the great outcast from God.

He took my place,
His life He freely gave;
He took my place,
My soul from sin to save;
He took my place
Upon the cruel tree;
He took the guilty sinner's place,

And I am free.

In the days of Jesus, stoning was the Jewish method of putting criminals to death, whereas crucifixion was the Roman method. Therefore, for the Jews to clamor for the crucifixion of Christ was another way of saying, "Let Him die the most shameful death. Let Him die a death so despicable that it will not only show Him to be an outcast from the race but an outcast from the world."

A Rumor Spreads

For years men had looked upon the cross as a place of shame, a place of weakness, a place of darkness. After the crucifixion of Christ, a rumor began to spread that the cross was a place of honor instead of shame; strength instead of weakness; light instead of darkness. The Apostle Paul said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." The world sneered at such a statement. The thought that a man should glory in a thing so disgraceful as the cross seemed to the world foolishness.

The Cross A Power

Paul and his companions, though few, knew whereof they spoke. The moment Christ cried, "It is finished," the Cross became a power; a power that went forth quietly, yet irresistibly, smiting all religions, smiting all shrines, smiting all altars; a power that spared neither superstition nor philosophy; a power that flattered no priesthood and submitted to no statesmanship; a power that drew no sword in its own defense, yet refused to yield or retreat before the armies of men and of nations; a "power of God unto salvation." The Cross is no longer a place of shame, for Christ has lifted it.

What Is The Cross?

What is the Cross as we know it today?

The Cross is the crisis of man.

The Cross is the crisis of the world.

The Cross is the crisis of Satan.

The Cross is the crisis of the Christ.

The Cross is the central theme of Christianity.

The Cross is the central fact of Christian revelation.

The Cross is the climax of all sin offerings and sacrifices.

The Cross is the weapon that rent the veil in twain.

The Cross is the highest peak in God's mountain range of grace.

The Cross is the fulfillment of God's greatest promise to man. Because He has kept His greatest promise, we know we can depend upon all the others.

The Cross is a bridge spanning a hitherto impassable gulf by which man can reach God, and dwell "in the secret place of the most high," and "abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

The Cross is God's pulpit from which He calls to the world, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The glory of the Cross was first proclaimed by a few persecuted, lonely Christians amid jeers and mockery. Soon it was seen by others and it began to spread.

In spite of dungeon, fire and sword.

Today, after nineteen hundred years, the inspired words about the Cross have been translated into a thousand languages and dialects and are being spoken, preached and sung by people of every kindred and tongue, and millions gladly sing,

In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.

The Contradictions Of The Cross

The Cross is amazing in its contradictions.

It illuminates, yet it darkens.

It interprets, yet it confounds.

It raises questions, but refuses to answer all that it has raised.

It solves difficulties, yet it also creates them.

It locks, yet it unlocks.

It closes some doors, yet it opens others.

It is wisdom, yet it is foolishness.

It is pardon and condemnation.

It is joy and sorrow.

It is antidote and poison.

It is hope and despair.

It is law, yet it is the only deliverance from the law.

It was the humiliation of Christ, yet at the same time it was His exaltation.

It was Satan's greatest victory, yet his most woeful defeat.

It is sin doing its worst.

It is love at its best.

It is the door to heaven, yet it is the gate to hell.

Take the right attitude toward the Cross and you will live forever. Take the wrong attitude toward the Cross and you will be forever lost.

The Cross Is A Revelation Of Man

The Cross is a revelation of man. Nowhere else do we see humanity as we see it in the light of Calvary. On no other occasion was the totally depraved heart of man so completely laid bare. For centuries man had looked upon the cross as the most shameful, disgraceful death that one could die and yet, so wicked was his heart that he considered it the most appropriate death for the Son of God. How he must have gloried in such a thought, for, remember, it was not privately but openly that man clamored for His crucifixion.

In the midst of circumstances that should have called forth nothing but love, man exhibited the most terrible hatred the world has ever known.

What Think Ye of Christ?"

God said, "What think ye of Christ?" Sinful man laid hold on Jesus, dragged Him to Calvary, nailed Him to the Cross, lifted it to an upright position and said, "Do you wish to know what we think of Your Son? Behold Him dying between two thieves the shameful death of the Cross. That is what we think of Him."

Calvary is a picture of man taking sides with the Devil against God. Here the camouflage of man's religion is torn away and his heart of hell is revealed. Yet it was for this heart that Christ died and with a full knowledge of its condition He prayed, "Father, forgive them."

I saw One hanging on a tree
In agony and blood;
He fixed His languid eyes on me
As near His Cross I stood.

Sure never till my latest breath
Shall I forget that look;
He seemed to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt
And plunged me in despair;
I knew my sins His blood had spilt,
And helped to nail Him there.

A second look He gave, which said,
"I freely all forgive;
This blood is for thy ransom shed;
I die that you may live."

The Cross Is The Revelation Of The Law

The Cross is a revelation of the law. Nowhere else do we see the unchangeableness, the sternness, the power and the grandeur of the law as we see it at Calvary. There it is revealed to be holy, just and good.

The Law Is Strict

Some would have us believe that the law is too strict, too rigid, too stern, and that Christ came to temper it. No! Had it been too rigid, would God have permitted His only Son to face its full penalty? Remember, Christ kept the law, yet when He took the sinner's place He received no mercy at its hands. Rigid, relentless, uncompromising law said to Jesus, "If You would substitute for the sinner, You must fulfill all my precepts, You must endure all my penalties, as if You were guilty of the sins of all the world."

Knowing this, Jesus marched unswervingly to Calvary to bear your sins and my sins in His own body on the tree. Surely J. W. Van De Venter was right:

He paid my debt upon the Cross;
He died to set me free;
When nothing else could pay the loss,
He gave Himself for me.

The Cross Is A Revelation Of God

The Cross is a revelation of God. God was majestic in creation when He made the heavens and the earth, when He formed man of the dust of the ground, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and made him a living soul.

God was great at Sinai, when He appeared on the mountain top in the pillar of cloud and fire and wrote with His own finger the Ten Commandments on tables of stone.

God was wonderful in the Incarnation, when He left His throne in glory, came all the way to earth, wrapped Himself in a baby's skin and was born of a virgin. John leads up to it by saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

No wonder angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"! No wonder stars went on parade! No wonder shepherds left their flocks and wise men came from afar to worship! The world will never cease to sing:

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'Round yon virgin mother and Child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

That night God came to earth. That night the Redeemer was born. That was the Incarnation.

The Incarnation Is Not All

With all its wonder and glory, the Incarnation is not the whole of the Gospel, nor the half of it. It is at Calvary, not in creation, not on Sinai, not at Bethlehem that we get our first full revelation of God.

The Cross is a revelation of God's character.

The Cross is a revelation of God's love.

The Cross is a revelation of His heart.

The Cross is a revelation of the distance God will traverse for the sinner.

The Cross is a revelation of love being put to the extreme test.

Even the angels who had been with Him from the beginning had never before seen so much of God.

When I think of the Cross and its pictures of God, I feel like singing:

Jesus, keep me near the Cross,
There a precious fountain
Free to all -- a healing stream,

Flows from Calvary's mountain.
In the Cross, in the Cross,
Be my glory ever;
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.

The Cross Is A Revelation Of The Gospel

The Cross is a revelation of the Gospel. The Gospel is good news; and the Cross towers "o'er the wrecks of time," a great transmitter broadcasting Good News to the world. What news emanates from the Cross?

News that the first far-off prophecy has been fulfilled: the serpent's head is bruised.

News that the age-old prophecy of Jacob has been completed: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come."

News that the prophesy of Isaiah has come to pass: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

News that He who left "Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah" has arrived.

News that types and shadows are done away and the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" has come.

News that man may be reconciled to God.

News that there is an answer to every question raised by law or righteousness.

News that there is a solution to every problem raised by God or conscience.

News that there is an honorable settlement for every claim that is made against the sinner.

News that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

News that "ye who . . . were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

News that "now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

News that "we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life."

News that "if this earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

No wonder E. A. Hoffman wrote:

Down at the Cross where my Saviour died,
Down where for cleansing from sin I cried;
There to my heart was the blood applied;
Glory to His Name!

No wonder he concluded each verse with the expression "Glory to His Name!" and used it as a refrain. When I think of that wonderful Cross and the Good News that has emanated from it to all the world, even to my own soul, my heart cries out with Elisha A. Hoffman, "Glory to His Name!"

The Cross Is More Durable Than Time

The Cross will not pass with the years. It is more durable than time. It was in God's plan from the beginning.

For centuries God and all the people who had eyes to see, looked forward to the Cross, and FOREVER men will look back upon it.

Everything hinges upon the Cross.

The Cross was the decisive battle between heaven and hell.

The Cross was the climax of a deliberate plan.

By virtue of the Cross, Christ will return.

By virtue of the Cross, the prince of this world will be cast into the lake of fire.

By virtue of the Cross, the last enemy, which is death, shall be put down.

By virtue of the Cross, "the kingdoms of this world [will] become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Scoffers

The Bible teaches that in the last days there will arise scoffers. They are here now. They say, "The Cross is time-worn and time-honored. Its preaching is ineffectual. The Christ of the past and the Christ of the present are vastly different." They tell us that we need a modern Gospel.

Faith of Our Fathers

We do not need a new Gospel, for the faith of our fathers is living still. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. The power of the Cross still lives.

The preaching of the Cross is as effectual today as it was the day it changed John Bunyan from the swearing tinker to the immortal dreamer of Bedford Jail, and brought from his pen that great book Pilgrim's Progress.

The Cross has as much power today as it did when it took Dwight L. Moody from a Boston shoe store and made him a flaming evangelist.

The Cross is as efficacious today as it was when it lifted Jerry McCauley, the river thief, from his prison cell and made him an apostle to the lost.

The Cross is not time-worn

The Cross is not time-honored.

The Cross is not out-of-date.

The power of the Cross still lives, and so does the Christ who hung upon it.

We speak that which we do know, and testify of those things which we have seen, which we have heard and which we have felt in our hearts. The power of the Cross and its Christ has wrought a change in my life, and I can say with the apostle, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

Let the Heathen Rage

Let "the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing." Let the infidel howl. Let the critic scoff, the agnostic doubt, the atheist sneer. Let them come upon us singly, in groups or as an army. Let them take our chart. Let them take our compass. Let them break our mast, strip our sails, wreck our rudder and sink our boat. We will take the "Old Rugged Cross" for a raft and push out on the ocean of eternity to meet a sin-avenging God with only one plea upon our lips:

In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to Thy Cross I cling.

When I think of the Cross

With its arms stretching wide,
For you and for me,
And the whole world beside,

my soul sings with George Bennard:

I'll cherish the old rugged Cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged Cross,

And exchange it some day for a crown.

* * * * *

4

THE VALUE OF THE SOUL

Introduction

A few years ago in the city of Washington a great Conservation Congress was held to devise means whereby the coal, iron and timber of the United States could be conserved. Experts were there with their statistics, showing the value of the products and the great amounts that were being wasted.

When I read that article I thought, Oh, that we could call a meeting in this nation for the conservation of the souls of men!

We are greatly concerned about the timber and minerals of our land and spare no effort to conserve them. We have within our country more than one hundred million people, each possessing a soul, according to the words of Jesus, more valuable than the entire world. The majority of these souls are being wasted and lost, yet we are putting forth such meager efforts to tell men of Jesus and His power to save.

As the experts at Washington stirred the Congress with their facts regarding the forests, the iron ore and the coal of our land, so I trust God will help me to stir someone regarding the value of a soul.

Origin Of The Soul

We realize something of the value of the soul when we consider its origin. In Genesis 2:7 we read: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The soul is not the product of earth or evolution; it came forth direct from the hand of its Creator.

Redemption Of The Soul

We see its value when we consider the price paid for its redemption. Jesus valued it to the extent that He counted His own life as naught that He might redeem it. Do you wonder that He asked the question "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Devils Fight For It

The soul is so valuable that for six thousand years the devil has marshaled and remarshaled the Legions of hell and waged war against the forces of God and righteousness; and for one purpose only -- that he might gain possession of the soul.

What Is The Soul?

We also see its value when we consider what it is. What is the soul? It is the real man. It is that which we fellowship, that with which we associate and which we love. The most loathsome thing in the world is a body without a soul.

We often speak of beauty of form and face. In what does this have its origin? The soul. Remove the soul and the eyes will lose their luster, the cheek will lose its glow and the graceful form will be no more attractive than chiseled marble on the cold dead earth from whence it came.

You attend church and enjoy the company of your friends. You linger to converse with them after the service. But if the souls were suddenly snatched from these friends, their presence would become loathsome, and you would want to get away.

Of What Does The Soul Consist?

We can see its value when we consider of what it consists.

The soul has capacity; it has ability; it has duration; it is progressive.

It is immense in its capacity, powerful in its ability, eternal in its duration and endless in its progression.

Immense In Capacity

The soul has capacity both to receive and to contain. Other things mature and can become no larger, are filled and can hold no more. The physical reaches a maturity it cannot exceed. The oak attains a height beyond which it cannot go. The ocean has its bounds. Nations reach their limits. The soul does not. It is so immense in its capacity that it has no fixed bounds.

The rich man's barns became too small and were torn down for greater ones. But no such thing is necessary with the soul. It is immense in its capacity. It can contain either the glory of heaven or the damnation of hell.

Think of its capacity to receive and contain the past. With the recording pen of memory it writes on the tablets of the heart every thought and act of life. It can reach back twenty or thirty years and bring forth something you thought forgotten and make it as plain and visible to the mind as if it had happened only yesterday.

Powerful In Ability

The soul is powerful in its ability both to suffer and to enjoy. Joy cannot overcome it; suffering cannot annihilate it. Both joy and suffering often overcome the body. We have heard of people who had such an abundance of unexpected joy that their bodies were overcome and they

died. It is not an uncommon thing for people to suffer such agony that the body cannot endure it and life departs.

The soul is powerful in its ability. All of us have seen men step to platforms and sway audiences with eloquence, enliven them with wit, melt them with pathos, hold them with argument and charm them with music. All this indicates the power of the soul.

The artist takes his brush and portrays upon the canvas a picture almost as real as life. That, too, is the power of the soul. Take the soul from the artist and the brush will fall from the dead fingers, the colors will run together and the picture will become meaningless.

The great inventions of the day are the result of the power of the soul; for example, the automobile, the airplane, the wireless, the telephone and the radio.

When we read the biographies of the inventors, they tell us of struggles, privations, apprenticeships, education and training. But behind the struggles, behind the training, behind the apprenticeship and behind the education, was the power of the soul.

How powerful is the soul in knowledge! To what dizzy heights of human wisdom men have climbed! If it is possible for man to climb in fifty years as high in the tree of knowledge as we know some have ascended, to what heights could man climb if he could but remain upon the earth for one hundred, five hundred or a thousand years?

What will be the possibilities of the redeemed soul when he enters that sinless clime where he can follow his pursuits forever without the hindrances of sin, sickness, or death?

The Soul's Thirst For Knowledge

The soul is endued with an amazing thirst for knowledge. How it cries out for information regarding every new thing it sees!

Make your way to the foot of a mountain. Gaze at the snowcapped peak and something within you will say, "I want to know what is on that mountain." Climb its rugged sides to the top, gaze down into the valley below and something within you will say, "I want to know what is in that valley."

Stand upon the shore of the mighty deep. Watch the ships as they slip from view over the rim of the world and something within you will cry, as it did in the days of Columbus, "I want to know what is there."

Look at the moon more than forty thousand miles away as it casts its beams over the earth. Scientists tell us that it is a dead planet, a burned cinder having no light of itself, only reflecting the light of the sun. We accept that explanation because we have nothing better to take its place. But something within us says, "I should like to know."

We look at the king of day, ninety two million miles from earth. They tell us that the sun, too, is another planet. We think of what oceans, what lakes, what rivers, what mountains, what valleys, what peoples or what nations it might have. We accept the scientist's statement for we have no alternative. But I admit there is something in me that says, I should like to know; I should like to know."

Eternal In Its Duration

The soul is immense in its capacity, powerful in its ability and eternal in its duration.

The soul dies but never ceases to exist. In eternity it will have all the ability to suffer or to enjoy and all the capacity to receive or to contain that it has now. If this were not true, the soul never could enjoy heaven.

The destiny, the fate, the doom of the soul is settled in this life. When the soul leaves this body it will go into eternity and into heaven to enjoy the blessings, the peace and the glory of God, or it will go into hell to endure forever the agony, the woe and the torments of the lost and damned.

A Home

You have a home in which you live. You pass from room to room in that home. You occupy various chairs. But the home that knows you now will soon know you no more. Other hands will clasp the knob on your door, other feet will wend their way through your room. Other people will occupy your chairs. But you will have a home in eternity, as surely as you have one here.

You will walk along the streets of the city of God and through the rooms of those mansions fair, or you will tread the paths of eternal destruction, through valleys of midnight darkness and dungeons of eternal despair.

Father, mother, that child you hold in your arms is the most helpless of all creatures. It has no instinct. It has no knowledge, no power to preserve its life for even one day. It is more dependent than the worm crawling beneath your feet. Yet there is wrapped in that little bundle of flesh a soul that is immense in its capacity, powerful in its ability and eternal in its duration -- a soul destined to exist somewhere forever. What are you doing to conserve it?

If there were only one person destined to live forever, what a difference that would make. The great and mighty of earth would make a beaten path to his door. Men would travel from the uttermost parts of the earth to gaze into the face and hear the voice of one who would never die. Papers would comment and authors would speculate regarding the things that he would view a million years hence.

But immortality is not the privilege of one person or of a chosen few. It is the created condition of every soul. You may speculate concerning the objects along the shores of eternity, but someday speculation will give place to sight.

If a million years from now the archfiend of hell contrives a new and more terrible way of punishing the wicked, every unsaved soul will see it.

If a million years hence, God, in His mighty wisdom and power, creates some new beauty, some new glory for His saints, every redeemed soul will see it.

Endless In Its Progression

Consider also the endless progression of the soul. That it progresses in this life there is not a doubt. Whether in righteousness or sin, the soul is continually on the stretch. How it grows! How it expands and reaches out! At times it seems to make its way to the door of this temple of clay and there, like some mighty bird of prey, stretch its wings as if it would tear itself away from its earthly mooring.

It must have been on such an occasion as this that David cried, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest."

A Glimpse Of Heaven

Because I know that it will someday be our eternal home, the more I think of the city of God, and the more I read about it, the more convinced I am that one look within the lovely portals will more than pay us for all we may have endured here.

I read the story of an orphan boy whose little sister was extremely ill. He dreamed that if he could find a leaf of the tree of life she would get well. His search for the garden in which the tree grew was long and tedious; few knew of its location. At last he found it and begged the gatekeeper to give him one leaf for his dying sister.

The keeper replied, "If she gets well are you sure she will never be sick again? Will people always be good to her?" The boy said he did not know. "Then," said the keeper, "look into the garden, to the place to which she will come if she does not get well. Then if you still want a leaf I'll go myself to the God of the garden and get one for you."

He opened the gate a little and the boy looked in. He caught a glimpse of the glory of the garden of God, and turning away with tears in his eyes, he said, "I guess I'll not take the leaf. I wish God would bring me here, too." Just one look will be worth a world like this.

Just To Look Upon His Face

If one look will be so wonderful, how wonderful it will be to be on the inside, to be as familiar with angels and archangels, with cherubims and seraphims as we are with our closest friends!

Men speak of an "abundant entrance." How wonderful, how glorious it will be merely to enter, to stand beside the crystal stream, to know that after all our doubts and fears, after all our struggles and trials, we are in heaven at last!

Then we will not be dreaming, not hoping, not believing, but realizing and seeing!

What a privilege to look on the face of Jesus, to have Him speak our names and clasp our hands!

A story is told of Dives and Lazarus. When they died, each was escorted to his eternal abode by the same angel.

The angel said to Lazarus, "Lazarus, I have been told to give you anything you desire; please make your request."

Lazarus replied, "Do you have a stool here somewhere that I could have?"

"Yes," said the angel, "but what do you want with a stool?"

"I want to go over to the throne, sit at the feet and look upon the face of the Man who died for me."

The angel said to the rich man, "What is your request?" Dives replied, "I want the finest place to live that you can secure. I want the finest food on my table. I want a paper to come to my room every day, and be sure that you bring me gold. I want plenty of money.

"All right," said the angel, "you may have your desire."

Time passed. One day the rich man saw the angel flying by, and he cried out, "Angel, get me out of here. This is not heaven; this is hell. I have eaten food until I am gorged. I have counted money until it burns my fingers and my soul as if it were fire. This is hell, I tell you. Get me out."

"Yes," said the angel, "that is hell; but I cannot get you out, for between you and heaven is a great gulf, over which you can never pass."

After much time had passed the angel walked over to Lazarus and said, "You have been here a long time. This morning I am taking a group of saints out on the glad hills of God's glory, and showing them some of the scenery and beauties of heaven. Wouldn't you like to go?"

Lazarus replied, "No, angel; go and show others the beauty of heaven; this is scenery enough for me. I want to see Jesus."

I want to see Jesus, don't you?
My Saviour so faithful and true.
When I reach the strand
Of that loved bright land,
I want to see Jesus, don't you?

Progressing In Righteousness

Just to enter those pearly gates will be wonderful; but the soul will continue to progress. The thought is overwhelming. Not only will the redeemed move from this temple of clay into glory, but there they shall continue to grow in grace and the knowledge of God. There they shall move on and climb on and rise on, until the most humble saint today will someday pass the present exalted seat of the greatest Christian in heaven now. In the wake of these growing saints the humble will follow, ever seeing new beauties, beholding greater glories, becoming more and more like the Christ whom they love and serve. As eternity rolls on they will have an ever greater ability to enjoy and an ever increasing capacity to receive and contain the grace, the love and the glory of God.

Progressing In Wickedness

If the soul is lost, what will it mean? Men grow in sin here. Some seem to have an alarming capacity for iniquity. To what depths men have plunged in this life! Our newspapers are filled with such accounts of horror that we can hardly conceive of souls which would sink so low.

To be lost will be awful, for it will mean to be shut out from God, shut out from love, shut out from light, shut out from heaven. It will mean to be stripped of everything that is beautiful and lovely. It will mean to be shut in with corruption, wickedness and all that is vile. It will mean having as companions howling fiends and hissing devils.

To be lost will mean far more. The soul will progress in hell. The moral man here will no longer be a moral man in eternity. You are sinking now, and if you die in sin you will sink on forever into greater sin, until the time will come when the most moral man will pass the present position of the vilest sinner, ever falling lower and lower into sin, with a greater capacity to receive and contain, and a greater ability to suffer the woes of the lost forever.

* * * * *

5

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

In the twenty-second chapter of Matthew, Jesus Christ asked a question which was destined to become one of the most famous questions of the ages: "What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?" It is the question on the lips of religionists all over the world today. It is the question of Jesus to the multitudes. It is the question of God to the world today: "What think ye of My Son?" It is a question that has come down through the ages. The Church should consider this question and make her way through sandy desert, over the barren wastes, climb the highest mountains, descend into the darkest valleys, cross the widest streams, hail all whom she meets and ask of them, "What think ye of Christ?" This is the real issue between the Fundamentalists and the Modernists. The issue is not the inspiration of the Scriptures. The real issue is Jesus. Whose Son is He? The answer to that question ends all arguments.

A Subtle Attack

In this chapter of Matthew we have a picture of certain people who were trying to confuse the Master with difficult questions.

The first who came were the Herodians, trying to ensnare Him regarding the law. With much flattery they said, "Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" But perceiving their wickedness, Jesus said, "Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? ... Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." And when they heard these words they marveled and went away.

Next came the Sadducees. They tried to ensnare Him regarding the law of Moses and the resurrection by questioning Him regarding marriage after the resurrection. Without hesitation He answered them, and the Scriptures say that they were astonished at His doctrine.

When the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees they came questioning Him regarding the commandments. Whereupon, as soon as He had answered them, He also asked them a question, saying, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?"

A Fair Question

Many questions are foolish, but a more sane question could not be asked than the words of the text. Many questions are unfair, but there is nothing deceptive about this.

If I asked you what you thought of the President, you would not hesitate to give your opinion. If I asked you what you thought of one of your friends, you would be quick to answer.

At certain periods each year we hear ringing from pulpit and press statements of what the world thinks of such men as Washington, Lincoln and other great leaders of the past.

What you may think of the present leaders of our nation, or the leaders of the past, is not extremely important. But "What think ye of Christ?" is the most significant question you will ever hear. Not only will your answer affect you in this world, but it concerns your eternal destiny.

Many Answers

For more than two thousand years men have been trying to answer that question, and their answers have been varied and many.

Some would have us believe that Jesus was a good man nothing more. Some say that He was a willful impostor. Others tell us that He was a deluded enthusiast. Some say He was the product of evolution; that what we are now, God used to be; that what God is now we all will be someday; that Jesus was "just a little ahead" of His fellow men. There are some who believe that He was born of earthly parents, just as other men, and that He became the Son of God. There are others who tell us that He is, that He always was and ever shall be the Son of the Everlasting God.

To this latter theory I hold with all my heart. I believe that Jesus was God incarnate, God come down to live among men; that He was born of a human mother, but He was conceived by the Holy Ghost; that He was both human and divine.

Christ Is Divine

I believe in the divinity of Christ because of the Biblical evidence, the miracles He performed, the words He spoke and the arguments found in His conversations. I believe in His divinity because of the life He lived. I believe in His divinity because the belief harmonizes with the thoughts of the greatest minds who have lived since His day. I believe in His divinity because of His power over sin. And last, I believe in His divinity because of a personal experience which I have in my own heart.

Wonderful

Isaiah said He was "wonderful." Who has looked into the life of Jesus of Nazareth and refused to agree with the prophet?

He was wonderful in the fact that He did not view the people as a crowd; He did not see them as a mass; He saw them as individuals. He never sought the multitude, yet never passed by an individual who needed attention. His heart went out to people. His impulse was to pity them, sympathize with them and help them. "He took their pain, laid it on His own heart, until tears were His meat and drink, by day and by night." He became a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He took upon Him the woes of the world until He was bowed as with the weight of years. His cheeks were grooved with the tears of sympathy.

He was wonderful because He was a beneficent man -- not only a well-wisher, but a well-doer. He was continually doing good; opening blind eyes, healing the sick, cleansing the leper, raising the dead, breaking the bands of Satan and loosening the serpent's coils. Those who followed Him declared that He did all things well.

He was wonderful in the way He spoke. Police sent to arrest Him remained silent. When they heard His voice their murmurings were silenced, hushed was their tumult, and they returned to their superiors, saying, "Never man spake like this man.

He was wonderful because He was unselfish. He emptied Himself and made room in His soul for the lives of others. He had no hours in which to greet the public. He was readily accessible at all times. No private secretaries had to be interviewed before one could see Him.

He Claimed To Be God

What think ye of Christ in His claims to divinity? That He made such assertions no one can deny. Someone has said, "There are nearly one hundred and fifty such claims in the Gospels."

In Capernaum

It was evening in Capernaum, the city of our Lord. The streets were crowded, and what a crowd it was! The lame, the halt, the blind were there. Here was a deaf-mute with a foolish grin, there a leper drawing his tattered garments about him, while with sad voice he cried, "Unclean, unclean." Yonder was a man whose face was hardened by the lines of sin and shame, while his eyes flashed the hellish fire of the demon that dwelt within.

In the midst of the crowd was a low building which was filled to the doors with an eager throng. In the center of the building stood Jesus of Nazareth, healing the sick and teaching them the way of life.

Down the street came a strange procession. Four men were bearing a paralytic on a mattress. They made their way to the door but were unable to enter because of the crowd. They went to the windows, but they were filled. Then, climbing onto the low roof, they removed the tile and lowered the sick man into the presence of Jesus.

Had one asked those about Him, "What do you think of Jesus?" they would have answered, "He is a great man, a wonderful teacher and a mighty healer." But when Jesus saw the faith of those who had brought the sick man, He said to the paralytic, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." At once there was an uproar. The leading men declared that it was blasphemy and asked, "Who can forgive sins but God?"

In this question they were right. Man cannot forgive sins. Again and again the Scriptures teach that forgiveness comes from God. When Jesus announced that this man's sins were forgiven He clearly and definitely announced the fact that He Himself was God.

Philip

Jesus claimed to be God when He was talking to His disciples. You will remember that Philip said, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"

Prayer

He claimed to be God from all eternity when He prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." In this statement He referred to the days when God created the world and hung it in space, beyond the beginning of time, into the unfathomable eternity, and declared that even then He was clothed with the glory of the very Selfhood of God.

When Conversing with the Jews

He claimed this title when conversing with the Jews and answered their questions by saying, "Before Abraham was, I am." And in that answer He claimed to be of greater antiquity than their father Abraham, as great as that might be. He claimed to be the same one who spoke to Moses from the burning bush. He claimed to be the great I AM, who was the God of Abraham, Isaac and

Jacob. When the Jews heard that assertion they understood what He meant and immediately seized stones to stone Him, but He passed from their midst.

At another time, while talking in their presence, He made the statement, "I and my Father are one. Again they were about to stone Him when He calmly said, "Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?" They answered, "For a good work we stone thee not; but for a blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." The Jews were not deceived. They knew that He claimed to be God.

His Own Arguments

His own arguments proved that He claimed to be God.

inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered, "Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is God."

What is the argument here? Simply this: "You call Me good. There is none good but God. If I am not God, I am not good."

"What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" Was He a good Man? If He was God, yes. But if He was riot God, He was not good, but the greatest impostor that ever lived. If He was not God, then not only does disaster fall upon Him, but upon all His followers. If He was not God, then He has never forgiven the sins of a single soul, and all those who have died in the past two thousand years trusting in His Name have died unsaved and have gone into eternity without God.

If He Is Not Divine

You remember the condition of your own heart, your heavy burden and your loathsome sin. You abhorred yourself, and your situation seemed hopeless. But in your distress you called upon Christ for help. You accepted Him as your Saviour, your Sacrifice, your Substitute and your God. Now you say, "I'm saved, I'm saved." All this and more you have felt in your heart and confessed before men. But, if Jesus was not God, He never forgave your sin; you have been deceived; your peace has been a false peace; your hopes have been in vain. Your paradise has been a fool's paradise. If He is not God He has no power to forgive sin.

If He is not God then away with the New Testament, for it tells us that He is. If the New Testament is a fraud then away with the Old Testament, for it has its fulfillment in the New. When Christ goes out of the Bible, God goes out, too, and we are left hopeless and wrecked on the sands of time.

His Holy Life

"What think ye of Christ?" His holy life proved Him to be God.

He was holy. He was harmless. He was sinless. He said, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Someone has said, "For two thousand years He has been discussed by a hostile world. The strongest searchlights of criticism have been turned on the land in which He lived. Every rod of ground upon which He traveled has been dug up, surveyed or trodden. His words have been measured and then weighed in the balances of the greatest scholars of the world. The most powerful X rays have been turned upon every sentence endeavoring to detect a flaw, a break or an error. His very words have been split open as you would break a rock, and their contents poured into the crucible of criticism."

His teachings have been, as it were, technically dissolved and each part analyzed. Still, after two thousand years of the closest scrutiny by the greatest minds of earth, not an authoritative lip can make a charge against Him. Still the challenge is flung at the feet of a wicked and godless world, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Like the Sadducees of old, men are silent.

Great Minds

"What think ye of Christ?" Every great mind has been engaged with the thought of Him.

"He has towered in the world as its central figure, so human that the most humble and the poor are at home with Him, so divine that the greatest have looked up to Him. His influence has penetrated the civilized world, and His words have been translated into almost every language under heaven."

Geniuses

The greatest geniuses of earth have bowed to Jesus. Poets, scientists, artists, philosophers, statesmen and warriors have paid Him tribute, and many of them have stood ready to crown Him Lord of all.

Poets

"What think ye of Christ?" Our greatest poets believed in Him. Jean Paul Richter writes, "The life of Christ concerns Him who being the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy, lifted with His nail-pierced hands empires from off their hinges, turned the stream of centuries out of its channels and still governs the ages."

Scientists

Ask the scientists, "What think ye of Christ?" You will find that such men of science as Galileo, Newton, Bacon and Kepler set the Name of Jesus above every other as the Name by which man must be saved.

Pasteur, one of the brightest lights in science, a Catholic, died clasping a crucifix as evidence of his faith and hope in Christ.

Philosophers

Philosophers think well of Him. None has passed Him in silence. Carlyle called Him "our divinest symbol." Channing confessed, "The character of Jesus is unexplainable on human principles."

Statesmen

Make your way into the presence of the greatest statesmen of time, and you will find that such men as Gladstone and Webster believed in Him. William Jennings Bryan said, "It is easier to believe Him divine than to explain in any other way what He said, what He did, and what He was."

Soldiers

Ask the heroes of the great battlefields of the past, "What think ye of Christ?" You will find that they believed in Him.

Napoleon once remarked to an officer, "Do you know who Jesus Christ is?" When the officer declined to answer, the great general said, "Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and I founded great empires. Upon what did these empires depend? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded His empire upon love, and to this very hour millions would die for Him. I think I understand something of human nature and I tell you that these were men and I am a man, but Jesus Christ was more than a man."

His Enemies

His enemies spoke well of Him. Pilate thrice spoke in the presence of the throng, saying, "I find no fault in him." His wife declared Him to be a just man.

Mark tells us that the centurion who saw Him die said, "Truly this man was the Son of God."

Ask Judas, and hear him say, "I have betrayed the innocent blood."

Ask the devils, and hear them answer, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?"

I have read that Voltaire, the infidel, in death cried, "I am abandoned by God and man! I shall go to hell! O Christ! O Jesus Christ!"

Thomas Paine, the greatest of American infidels, died quoting the words of Jesus on the Cross.

Artists

The great artists had faith in Him. It has been said that Raphael's pictures of the Transfiguration and of Christ bearing the Cross are evidence of his faith and hope. When he finished his wonderful picture of the Madonna, he threw himself on his face and wept. There was a picture in his heart which he could not paint.

Masters In Song

As for the masters in song, their love for Christ and their thoughts concerning Him are expressed in every word and song, and are sent over the world, announcing their praise of Him who gave His life that man might be redeemed.

Ask Charles Wesley "What think ye of Christ?" and hear him sing:

Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high.
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last.

Ask A. J. Gordon "What think ye of Christ?" and hear him answer:

My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine;
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign.
My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour art Thou;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

Ask Joseph Scriven, and hear him say:

What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to hear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
O what a peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we hear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer.

Ask Fanny Crosby, the little blind poet of Bridgeport, Connecticut, "What think ye of Christ?" Then hear her lift her voice and sing:

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,

Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Edward Perronet voices the sentiments of every Christian of every age when he sings:

All hail the pow'r of Jesus' Name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,
Ye ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him who saved you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all.

O that with yonder sacred throng
We at His feet may fall;
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Christ's Power Over Sin

Christ's power over sin proves Him to be God. "For two thousand years in every age, in every clime, among all classes of men, from the refined infidel to the vilest sinner, from the cold-hearted atheist to the brutal idolater, men have been changed through faith in His Name."

Men who have been vile; men who have been bondslaves to the god of lusts, whose base passions have been set on fire of hell; men with low thoughts, rotting bodies and sin-cursed souls, have flung themselves at the feet of Christ and heard His words, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." They have arisen to find that "old things are passed away and all things are become new."

No one can save men but God; Jesus saves men; therefore, Jesus must be God.

A man was speaking to a group of students in Glasgow. He had been magnifying the power of Christ to save from the lowest sin. In the midst of his message he lifted a piece of paper in his hand and said, "I have a letter here from one of your number, asking how it is possible for one who has been low and vile to be lifted out of sin and made pure and clean." Then, turning to the open window, he pointed to a fleecy white cloud that hung a thing of beauty in the heavens and said, "O cloud, from whence did you come? The cloud answers me, saying, 'I came from the low, dark, muddy streets of the city. The sun of heaven reached down and lifted me up, up, up, and with its rays purified me. Now his shining upon me makes the thing of beauty you behold.' " The speaker continued, "To you who wrote this letter, and all others, let me say that the Sun of Righteousness

can reach down and lift you out of the mire and clay, transform your life and make you a new creature."

Do You Doubt?

If you doubt Christ's power on earth to forgive sin, find the drug addict that has been cured, the thief that has been made honest, the harlot that has become pure, and ask them, "What think ye of Christ?" They will sing to you that --

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

If you doubt His power to save find the redeemed drunkard, the man who had tried every cure, broken every pledge, in whose breast had burned fires of hell; and when you have found him as he sits in some mission hall, in some church or under his own vine and fig tree, sober and happy, ask him how it happened, and he will sing, too, of how --

Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.

Personal Experience

I believe in the divinity of Christ because of a personal experience in my own heart. I, too, was bound by sin, broken in heart and life, but I came to Christ on the recommendation of others. They said He could help me. I called upon Him, and He forgave my sin. I know He lives today, for He lives in me. I know He is divine, for He has done a divine work in my heart.

The old Welsh mother said to her friend, "I believe that when Jesus was on earth He spoke Welsh." The other old saint replied, "I don't know if He spoke Welsh then or not, but I know He speaks it now for He was talking to me today." I know He speaks to men, for He has spoken to my own soul.

I was once far away from the Saviour,
As vile as a sinner could be,
And I wondered if Christ the Redeemer
Could save a poor sinner like me.

I wandered on in the darkness,
No ray of hope could I see.
The thought filled my heart with sadness,
"There's no hope for a sinner like me."

And then in that dark lonely hour
A voice sweetly whispered to me,
Saying, "Christ the Redeemer hath power,
To save a poor sinner like thee."

I listened and, lo, 'twas the Saviour
That was speaking so kindly to me;
I cried, "I'm the chief of sinners,"
And He saved a poor sinner like me.

* * * * *

6 SALVATION

I preached one morning on the subject of salvation. At the close of the service I heard a man ask a lady how she liked the message. She replied, "He did very well, but he did not cover his subject." She was correct. I did not cover it then, and I do not expect to cover it now. In fact, I never expect to cover it completely. Salvation is too big a subject to cover in any one sermon or in any number of sermons.

Although we have no hope of exhausting our theme or covering our subject in this message, there are three things regarding salvation which we would like to submit for your consideration: (1) it is universal in its extent; (2) it is present in its application; (3) it is eternal in its duration.

1. Universal In Extent

It is universal in its extent. I believe that when Christ died, He died not for a chosen few, a small number or a select crowd, but that all who would come to Him might be saved. Of this fact the Bible abounds in proof. Hear Jesus saying in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Paul says in Romans 1:16: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." The book of Hebrews tells that "he [tasted] death for every man"; the Apostle Peter declares, "The Lord is not ... willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Salvation is universal in its extent.

Helpless Man

It has been well said, "When man sinned he fell away from God and a gulf intervened as bottomless as hell and as black as midnight, and throughout those yawning depths devils howled and demons hissed, while thunders rolled and lightnings flashed, and no genius of man could bridge it and no contrivance of man could cross it and hell held high carnival over man's lost condition. But in the midst of their glee Jesus Christ left His home in glory and came to this world, and at the cost of His life flung a bridge across that hitherto impassable gulf, and called it salvation, and announced to the world that 'I am come that [ye] might have life, and . . . have it more abundantly.' And for nearly two thousand years poor old sin-cursed and sin-wrecked

humanity has been staggering across salvation's bridge into the arms of a loving God and finding that though their 'sins be as scarlet,' He will make them 'white as snow,' and 'though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'

O the love that drew salvation's plan!
O the grace that brought it down to man!
O the mighty gulf that God did span
At Calvary!

All Invited

There are many things which are not universal, and many things which all of us will never be able to have. We cannot all be millionaires, but the salvation of the Lord maketh rich, and we can all have that. We may never be able to climb to the lofty tops of the great mountains and gaze upon the grandeur of this world, but we can all climb to the mountain peaks of full salvation and behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire in His temple; for salvation is universal. When the great and mighty of this earth make a feast, they may not invite their neighbors or tell the man across the street, but they will send invitations across the town and across the country and across the ocean and invite their chosen few and their select crowds to partake of the feasts they have prepared; but when God had provided the feast of salvation He sent out an invitation, saying, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." To make sure that no one was slighted, He said to His servants, "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage." He said, "Pay no attention to their nationality; do not notice their tattered garments. No matter how poor they may be or how low in sin, be sure to tell them I said that they should come." Then, to make us all feel welcome, He broadened His invitation and said, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

Hope for All

Salvation is universal in its extent, and there is not a walk of life, nor a class or race of people into which the King of kings has not made His way and snatched some of them as brands from the burning and by the power of salvation changed them into ambassadors of heaven.

Go among the rich, and regardless of the difficulties in the way, salvation has reached many of them. We love to think of such men as John Wanamaker, Charles N. Crittenton and H. J. Heinz, who used their wealth for the Lord. Go to the poor, and regardless of their poverty, there is salvation for them. One of the utterances which fell from the lips of Jesus was: "The poor have the gospel preached to them." This is one table from which none has ever been turned away hungry.

Go to the colleges and universities of our land, where the wise men are eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and no matter how learned they are, there is salvation for them. Some of the wisest men of earth have placed their all at the feet of Jesus and accepted salvation on the simple terms of the Gospel. Mr. Gladstone said of the sixty great men with whom he was personally acquainted, 'Fifty-seven of them are Christians.'

Consider the prisons of our country where men are caged and guarded like lions, herded like cattle, shut out of society and wanted by no one, and there is salvation for them. Some of the brightest lights the Christian world has ever known came from behind prison bars.

We have heard it said that the Negro does not have a soul. But can anyone who has been in the Southland and seen their black faces shine under the power and glory of God doubt for one moment that the same Christ who gave His life for the white man died that the black man might be saved? The black race has produced such Christian characters and soul-winners as Booker T. Washington, C. A. Tindley, John Jasper, Amanda Smith, George Washington Carver and many others. It was a Negro who wrote that wonderful song:

There's nothing between my soul and my Saviour,
Naught of this world's delusive dreams
I have renounced all sinful pleasure,
Jesus is mine, there's nothing between.

It was Charles P. Jones, the colored song writer of the South, who wrote:

There is no one in the world like Jesus,
He's the treasure of my soul,
When in trouble He dispels my sorrow,
When I'm sick He makes me whole.

Oh, I love to tell the merits of my Saviour
Every soul I can to win.
Oh! I love to tell the story of His power,
How He saves and keeps from sin.

If you doubt the universality of salvation, go to the heathen lands and see the inroads which Christianity has made. Go to China and see men turning from idols to God; go to Japan and see men turning from Buddha to Christ; go to India where men threw their children to the crocodiles and see them now as they place them before the feet of Him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Go to the islands of the sea, among the cannibals, and see them as they cease to feed upon human flesh and begin to feast upon that flesh which is meat indeed. Then you will begin to understand what Jesus meant when He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Why this "go"? I'll tell you why. Jesus died not for a chosen few, but for every man "from Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand," and "from the great river to the ends of the earth." Salvation is universal!

2. Present In Its Application

Salvation is present in its application. We do not need help for yesterday. Yesterday is gone. It will never return, and the very best you and I can hope for concerning yesterday is mercy and forgiveness. We do not need help for tomorrow. It may never come. But, oh, if I know anything about the needs of humanity, and if I know anything about your heart and mine, what we need is

something that will help us today. Thank God, salvation will do that. Titus 2:11-12 says: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this PRESENT world." If you could come to Christ today and accept salvation, and it failed to stop one sin or break one habit, and you derived no benefits from it whatever until the hour you died, it would still be worth more than all this world. But, thank God, a man does not have to wait until he dies to reap its benefits; it becomes effective as soon as he believes it.

Most insurance policies pay their dividends at death, but this is one that begins paying the moment you take it out. Notice the present application in the following passages of Scripture. John 8:32 says, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." If you are not free, you do not have the truth. In Romans 8:1-2 we read, "There is therefore NOW no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 6:22 tells us: "But NOW being made free from sin -- not after a while, but NOW], and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

Immediate Results

The drunkard in the prison today is not drinking, the gambler is not gambling, and the thief is not stealing, but they are not free; they are in bondage. If released the drunkard will drink at the first opportunity, the gambler will gamble and the thief will steal. But if salvation comes into their lives, the drunkard will pass a dozen saloons in one block and never look in, the gambler will brush the cards aside and bet no more and the thief will become known for his honesty.

I have seen a drunkard who had not drawn a sober breath for months come to an altar of prayer and in five minutes find salvation and walk out sober, never to touch liquor again. I have seen a thief come, and go away an honest man; a liar come, and go away truthful; and I have seen a blasphemer come and find this salvation and go away with a "new song in [his] mouth, even praises unto our God."

Down in the human heart,
Crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore
Touched by a loving heart,
Wakened by kindness,
Chords that are broken will vibrate once more.

A Help in Trouble

Not only is salvation present in its application in regard to our sins, but David says, "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord: he is their strength in the time of trouble." It also has a present application in trouble. A friend of ours in the South told us that when her only little girl passed away, she threw herself across the bed, and it seemed as if her heart would break. Stretching her hands to God, she said, "O Lord, if you ever helped, help me now." A voice seemed to say, "Daughter, underneath are the everlasting arms"; and that little mother followed her child to

the city of the dead and shouted while the clods fell on the coffin lid. Why? Because salvation is a strength in time of trouble. And when fate sweeps away your job and all you have, and there is no money in the bank and little to eat, when rent is due, credit gone and loved ones are ill, you can sing with Isaac Watts:

I'm glad salvation's free,
I'm glad salvation's free,
Salvation's free for you and me,
I'm glad salvation's free.

Mother

I was reared by an old-fashioned mother, and she dearly loved to sing. She was not a trained singer, but you could understand every word she said. She loved the old songs, and although I never heard her sing in public, she sang all day long as she went about her work. Our home was very poor and many times there was no money for pressing needs. Often we children grieved her heart either by our waywardness or by our neglecting to write. She was growing old and the burdens were heavy upon her shoulders. I did not realize it then, for I was godless and unsaved. But I can hear her now as I used to hear her then, and I am beginning to understand the thoughts of her heart as she sang:

In every condition, in sickness in health,
In poverty's vale or abounding in wealth,
At home or abroad, on the land on the sea,
As thy days may demand shall thy strength ever be.

There was one other stanza about which I wondered. I could not understand it then, but now, after many years of trying to live for God and finding that the Devil tries to contest every inch of ground, and also finding how near Jesus is to His own, I know what mother meant when she sang:

The soul that on Jesus doth lean for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes,
That soul, tho' all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake!

3. Eternal In Its Duration

Salvation is eternal in its duration; it never grows threadbare or wears out. The world is hungry. In this all of us are alike. Man is an eternal being, and there is an eternal longing in every human heart, and an eternal salvation is required to satisfy the eternal longing of the soul.

That there is pleasure in the world we do not deny. We know there is pleasure in the dance, in the card party, in the theater. But if you indulge in such pleasures, after all is over and you make your way to your home and pillow your tired head, there is an aching emptiness in your heart which the pleasures of the world cannot satisfy.

Hungry Hearts

Mark Twain was perhaps the greatest humorist of his or any other age, yet it is said "that while he laughed with the world, his lonely spirit struggled with the sadness of human life and sought to find the key." Beneath the laughter was a hungry soul that fun could not satisfy.

Charlie Chaplain, the world's greatest comedian, recently said, "I am oppressed at times with what the world calls 'world weariness'; I then feel a total stranger to life, as though I were upon the wrong star, and I am disgusted with the character that circumstances has forced me to create, and dissatisfied with the matter that limitations have forced upon my will." What does this mean? Simply this: in spite of his two-million-dollar home in Hollywood, in spite of the fact that he is the fun god of the world and, in spite of his wealth, in the breast of Charlie Chaplain there is an eternal longing -- as there is in the heart of every other man -- that pleasure and money cannot satisfy.

The greatest chasms of earth are to be found not in the regions of mountains and deserts, but in the heart of humanity. You cannot fill the human heart. If you could throw all the mountains of the earth into the human heart, they would not fill it. If you were to put into it New York, London, Paris and the other great cities of the world, they would sink from view. If you threw into this heart-chasm money, power and pleasure, and upon that all the isms and false religions of the world, they would never fill nor satisfy it. Yet with all its vastness it can be filled. What will fill it? No genius of science nor knowledge of man, but the Salvation of Jesus Christ. When salvation comes into the heart of man it goes to the deepest depths, it rises to the highest heights, it reaches the farthest outposts, it fills every nook, every crevice and every cranny of the human heart. The aching emptiness is gone, and the soul begins to sing:

I'm satisfied with Jesus here,
He's everything to me";
His wondrous love has filled my heart,
From sin He's set me free.

A great preacher, at the close of a sermon which he preached one night in a Midwestern city, was approached by a very intelligent young woman, a university graduate, who asked him if he had considered Christian Science. He told her that he had not, and did not care to do so. She replied that since she had come and listened to him he should permit her to tell what Christian Science had done for her. He answered, "Very well, what has Christian Science done for you?" She told him three or four physical and mental benefits she had received, the different outlook it had given her on life and other advantages. When she had finished he said, "What else has it done for you?" She answered, "I believe that is all." The preacher said, "Jesus Christ and salvation have done for me what you say Christian Science has done for you -- and then some. She looked up and said, "What do you mean by 'then some'?" He answered, "Christ has given me the consciousness that my sins are forgiven and that I know God." As the tears came into the eyes of the young woman she took a step forward and said, "Oh, brother, that is what I want!" You may receive some help and find some truth in the isms of the world, but if you want your sins forgiven and that eternal

longing in your heart satisfied, you will have to get the salvation of Jesus Christ which is eternal in its duration.

Salvation, since it is eternal in its duration, goes with us not only through life but through death. It does not stop at the banks of the river, but crosses over. Paul realized that Nero's axe might sever his head, but not his salvation. He declared triumphantly, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord . . . shall give me at that day." David realized this truth when he said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death." He knew that in salvation he had something that would not leave him in the darkness but, being eternal, would take him through into the sunlight on the other side.

John Newton in that wonderful old song "Amazing Grace," emphasizes the three phases of salvation. In the first stanza he sings of the depths to which it goes -- it is universal in its extent; in the second he sings of its power to preserve in this life -- it is present in its application; in the last he sings of its scope in the world to come -- it is eternal in its duration.

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
That sav'd a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.

* * * * *

7

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

There is not a more interesting book in the Bible than the book of Revelation; there is no book which more clearly describes the future.

It has been called by some a sealed book, a book of mystery, a theological puzzle, a religious conundrum. Because of this, many Christians have passed it by as unfathomable and have thereby missed untold blessing.. Others who read it look upon its language as figurative and its incidents as allegorical. To them it is a book of speculation.

The Key

It is said that every book in the Bible has its key chapter, every chapter its key verse and every verse its key word. To me, the key to Revelation is found in the lock of the door as we enter the book.

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John."

Here we find five things about the book.

1. What it is: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ."
2. Whence it came: "Which God gave unto him."
3. Why it was written: "To shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."
4. How it came: "Signified ... by his angel."
5. Unto whom it came: "Unto his servant John."

It does not seem reasonable that God should write a book for His people for the specific purpose of showing them things which would be hereafter, place it among the other inspired writings where they could see it and handle it, yet so camouflage it and veil it in mystery that it could not be understood.

Many houses for years have been considered haunted because no one took the time or trouble to investigate. When investigation was made the weird noises and ghostlike sounds were easily explained.

As It Reads

Dr. J. A. Seiss, author of one of the best commentaries on Revelation, has said that the book is more easily understood if we accept it as it reads instead of trying to make it mean something else. This is reasonable. If God did not mean what He said, surely He would have said what He meant.

Do you not believe that if we will earnestly study it, devotedly read it, and diligently search it, God will open it unto us? I believe He will.

Do You Understand It?

You ask: "Do you understand the book of Revelation?" I must answer, "No, not all of it." I would have to give you the same answer regarding any other book of the Bible.

I do not understand all of the book of Genesis, but I have learned from reading it the origin of the earth, for it says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." I have also found

in it the origin of my own being, for it declares, "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

This is priceless knowledge. If I never learn anything else about the first book of the Bible, the knowledge of these facts will be more than worth all the time I might have spent in studying it.

The Book Of Job

Consider one of the great central books of the Bible, the book of Job. I do not understand all of it, but I have learned from reading it that God can take a man through any and every kind of difficulty, keep him from sin and enable him to emerge a conqueror. This knowledge has paid me for all the time I have spent in studying the book of Job.

The Psalms

Consider another great central book of the Old Testament, the book of Psalms. I do not understand all of it, but while reading it I discovered that

The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The Book Of Malachi

I cannot comprehend the entire book of Malachi, but while studying it, I learned that God is interested in the most minute things concerning His people; that He listens to their common conversations. In Malachi I read, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. Is this not exceedingly valuable knowledge?"

The Book Of Matthew

I do not understand all of the book of Matthew, but I found while reading it that Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I have tested that promise and found it to be true.

The Apocalypse

No, I do not understand the entire book of Revelation, but the first verse of the first chapter tells me that it is a "Revelation of Jesus Christ." That alone makes me want to read it and learn more about it. Read it, study it and you will find that Jesus Christ has not an attribute which is not revealed in this wonderful book.

In it He is revealed to be what Isaiah prophesied when he said, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David . . . The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

How He Is Revealed

He is revealed as a Judge, striking terror to the heart of the wicked and lawless.

He is revealed as a Mighty Warrior, leading His holy army to conquest and to victory.

He is revealed as a great General, going forth conquering and to conquer.

He is revealed as a Comforter, strengthening the weak and binding up the brokenhearted.

He is revealed as a Father, pitying and protecting His children.

He is revealed as a Saviour, rescuing the lost and hopeless. He is revealed as the Prince of Peace, abolishing strife and discord and restoring harmony and contentment.

He is revealed as an Emancipator, breaking the shackles of slavery and setting free those who all their lives have been subject to the bondage of sin.

He is revealed as a Pioneer, opening a new and a better country for His people.

He is revealed as a Philanthropist, building homes for the needy and with His gifts making glad the hearts of the poor.

He is revealed in majesty, honor, and glory, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today, and forever.

Alpha And Omega

The first chapter of Revelation contains the most wonderful word picture of the glorious personality of the Son of God that ever came from tongue or pen.

There He is revealed as the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. His snow-white hair, His flaming eyes, His voice like the sound of many waters and His stirring identification testimony, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death," proclaim Him to be the Glorious One.

Message To The Church

The second and third chapters reveal Christ's attitude to and desire for His Church in what is called the message to the seven churches. In a sense these are not seven messages but one great message to the seven churches which compose the congregation. Christ is in the pulpit and the seven churches occupy the pews.

This message reveals Him to be a God of love and a God of mercy; a God of justice and a God of judgment; a God who is keenly interested in every act of our lives and has an infinite knowledge of all our ways.

Things Hereafter

Chapter 4 initiates the specific revelation of those things which are to come. John introduces the revelation by saying, "I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter."

Before this time John was like a little boy watching a ball game through a knothole in a fence. He could not see all the players. The entire field did not come within his range of vision. Occasionally he heard the crack of the bat on the ball and saw a player dash by, but John could not tell whether it was a "two bagger" or a home run. He could not see whether it was stopped by a baseman or one of the fielders. Then God seemed to say, "John, get away from the knothole. Come over the fence. Let us go up into the grandstand where you can see the entire field, the diamond, the bases and all the players. Come up where you can see who makes a home run, and where you can see who wins the pennant, and, John, if you will stay with Me, I will show you who will win the world series."

We miss much today because we live on a low plane. God is saying to every one of us, "Come up higher, and I will show you more." The higher we climb in grace, and the higher we rise above the world, the greater revelation will God be able to give us.

John, caught up in the Spirit, began to look and listen. As he saw and heard, he wrote, chapter after chapter, concerning seals, and trumpets of woes, and vials -- a terrible picture of sin, ripe unto harvest, and bearing the fruit of death, of hell and of carnage.

He saw a picture of Satan's power and wicked reign. He observed tribulation judgments, and had occasional glimpses of divine mercy.

The Tribulation

From his exalted position John saw the opening of the seals. He saw the red horse and his rider, War, as they dashed forth upon the race course of time with power to take peace from the earth. Before their terrible charge, peace palaces crumbled; peace conferences were disbanded. He saw leagues of nations and leagues of notions come to naught as nations broke their peace pacts and sprang at the throats of one another.

John saw the black horse of sin and his rider, Famine, as they joined the eternal race accompanied by drought and pestilence, followed by plague and starvation.

He saw the pale horse and his rider, Death, as they, too, joined the race. He carried his scythe of destruction, and the rich, the poor, the young, the old fell before him like ripened grain before the reaper's blade.

The Sixth Seal

John saw the opening of the sixth seal.

And lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

And said to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

I used to hear my now sainted mother sing an old song with weird words and doleful melody which was based upon this passage of Scripture:

I've a long time heard that the sun will be darkened
And the moon will be bleeding in that day.
O sinner, and where will you stand in that day?
You will cry to the rocks, and the rocks will flee away,
And the rocks will flee away in that day;
In that day, in that day,
O where will you stand in that day?

I do not know where you will stand, but I do know Christ assures us He will never forsake the soul which flees to Him for refuge. Hell itself is powerless against the soul which trusts the Saviour.

I do not presume to predict dates, but I know that whether that day come soon or late, if you will give your heart to Christ, you can say with the apostle, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

The Trumpets

John heard the blasting of the trumpets. He saw hail and fire mingled with blood cast upon the earth. The third part of the trees and the third part of the creatures in the sea died.

He saw hell opened and those horrible locust-like creatures, with poisonous tentacles and maddening sting, come forth into the earth with power to torment the bodies of men for five months.

He saw men in such agony of body and mind that they desired to die. They sought death, but death fled from them. John saw men, as it were, place revolvers to their temples to blow out their brains, but the bullets failed to find vital spots, and their agonies were increased. He saw others lift vials of poison to their lips, but death would not release them, and their misery was augmented. They prayed for death, but their prayers were unanswered.

The False Prophet

John saw the rise and reign of the false prophet. He saw him spread himself in great power. He saw him perform great miracles, bring down fire from the sky and give life to an image made with hands. John saw him become so popular and powerful that the multitudes gathered about him. The world worshipped at his shrine, and laws were passed which provided that all who failed to worship him should be put to death.

Vials Of Wrath

John saw the vials of the wrath of God poured out upon men who did not repent and who worshipped the beast and the false prophet. He saw horrible sores, similar to leprosy, break out upon their bodies. Agony, torment and pain were their companions day and night.

He saw the sun or some other planet swing so close to earth that men's bodies were scorched with great heat. Their misery was so unbearable that they gnawed their tongues for pain; yet they repented not, but blasphemed the God of heaven. Babylon

He saw Babylon rise and climb into world glory until she was seen and admired by all the wicked of earth; then John saw her fall and her glory was taken away because of the wrath of God.

The General Judgment

John saw the general judgment and the doom of the unbelieving dead, which he described in these words:

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

A Dark Picture

So dark are most of the scenes described by the apostle, that if we looked only upon them, we would cry out with the dying infidel, "All is lost -- finally and irrevocably lost. All is dark and doubtful."

But, remember, when you read the last book of the Bible, that it is a revelation of Jesus Christ. I care not how dark the picture, how terrible the scene, how awful the tragedy, look closely and you will see behind every dark cloud, every dark picture, every tragedy the hand of the Master, moving, molding, forming and planning to bring out of that dark chaos a redeemed world in which His people may serve Him without fear in holiness forever and forever.

The New Heaven And New Earth

John saw a new heaven and a new earth.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

The Holy City

John saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven and he said:

I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof

And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

A Book Of Invitations

The Bible is a book of invitations. From the day God called Adam in the garden to the present moment, He has been calling, calling, calling.

Old Testament Invitations

He called Noah into the Ark; He called Abraham out of Haran, Israel out of Egypt, Moses to Sinai, Joshua into Canaan and David to a closer walk and fellowship with Him. He climaxed the invitations of the Old Testament when He said through the lips of His prophet Isaiah:

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price."

New Testament Invitations

Listen as you turn the pages of the New Testament and you will hear the bells of invitation ring.

He called fishermen and tax-gatherers to be His apostles, publicans to be His disciples, sinners to be His friends and climaxed His earthly life with the invitation:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The Crowning Invitation

It was left to the Apostle John in the last book of the Bible, the last chapter of that book and the seventeenth verse, to record the crowning invitation of the Bible, of the world, of the universe:

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come."

Then he reached out and touched the length and the breadth and the height and the depth of all the world; he included the white man, the red man, the black man and the yellow man, men of

every kindred, people and tongue, when he said, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Let him come and escape the ravages of sin.

Let him come and escape the terrors of the tribulation

Let him come and escape the damnation of hell.

Let him come and find hope.

Let him come and find life.

Let him come and find Christ.

Let him come and find heaven.

This crowning invitation, with its grand word, "whosoever," reveals the height of His love, the depth of His compassion, the breadth of His mercy, the triumph of His power and the infinity of His grace.

This climactic invitation with its grand word "whosoever" Is within itself a revelation of Jesus Christ.

When John heard the voice saying, "Surely I come quickly," he was moved to conclude the last book of the Bible with the prayer of Christians through the ages, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Then follows the beautiful benediction, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

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8

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is first mentioned in Genesis 1:2: "And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." There we find He was a co-worker with the Father; and He has never worked apart from Him.

When God created man He said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." The Holy Spirit has always been associated with every divine act, but His manifestations in the Old Testament were exceedingly different from His work today.

In The Old Testament

In the Old Testament He is specifically mentioned more than eighty times, and there are at least four operations ascribed to Him.

The Old Testament gives examples of His filling men for a specific purpose. It speaks of His abiding or dwelling in men. It tells of His coming upon men. There are other passages in which the original language implies His coming mightily upon men.

The Holy Spirit filled men.

The Holy Spirit dwelt in men.

The Holy Spirit came upon men.

The Holy Spirit came mightily upon men.

The Holy Spirit came upon men for a special occasion. or a specific purpose. It is interesting to note the times, the ways and the occasions in which these manifestations took place.

The Holy Spirit Filled Men

When the Tabernacle was being built, the Holy Spirit filled men for a specific purpose. In Exodus 31:3-5 we read: "I have filled him [Bezaleel] with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship."

Here we have an example which shows that the Holy Spirit filled a man in order that he might be a better blacksmith, a better stone mason, a better wood carver, a better carpenter, a better architect. Though we live in a later dispensation, it is still true that the filling of the Spirit equips a man for better workmanship in any walk of life. Let Him come into your heart. He will make you a better workman, a better salesman, a better executive.

He Dwelt In Men

The Old Testament, in at least two instances, tells us that the Holy Spirit dwelt in men.

In Genesis 41:38-39 we read that Pharaoh, king of Egypt, described Joseph as a man who was qualified as a ruler. He placed him over the affairs of his kingdom, and specifically stated that he did it because Joseph was indwelt by the Spirit of God, and was discreet and wise.

Again, in Numbers 27:18, we read that God appointed Joshua to succeed Moses as a leader of Israel. "The Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit," and commanded that he be placed over Israel.

In both Joseph and Joshua the Holy Spirit developed qualifications for leadership. However, His presence and power were manifested not in imperialism or totalitarianism, but in discretion, wisdom and gentleness.

These fruits of the Spirit revealed so long ago in the lives of Joseph and Joshua are evidenced today in the lives of all who yield themselves into His keeping.

He Came Upon Men

In the Old Dispensation the Holy Spirit many times came upon men to qualify them for a particular task.

In Judges 6:34 we are told, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered after him." This is an example of His coming upon a man to qualify him for leadership and victory.

In I Chronicles 12:18 we read that the Holy Spirit came upon a man to prove to King David that Benjamin and Judah were loyal. "Then the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said, Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers. Then David received them." Here the Holy Spirit came upon a man to make him a messenger of peace.

In II Chronicles 24:20 we learn of His coming upon Zechariah to enable him to protest against idolatry. "The Spirit of God came upon Zechariah . . . and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you."

In each of these instances we are told that His coming upon these men meant that He clothed Himself with them. They did not put Him on. He, the Holy Spirit, put them on.

The Holy Spirit put on Gideon like a garment, made him a leader in Israel and gave him victory over the Midianites.

The Holy Spirit wrapped Himself with Amasai and convinced King David that Benjamin and Judah had not come to betray him, but that they were loyal and dependable.

The Holy Spirit put on Zechariah like a coat, and gave him the will, the voice and the power to protest against idolatry, though he knew it would cost him his life.

Let me remind you that today when the Spirit comes to our hearts, we do not put Him on. He puts us on. We do not use Him. He uses us. It is not our power. The power is His. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.

He Came Mightily Upon Men

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan calls our attention to three passages in the Old Testament in which the original language implies that the Holy Spirit came mightily upon men.

We read in Judges 14:6 that a lion roared against Samson: "And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand." Here the Spirit manifested Himself in great strength.

A second passage is I Samuel 10:10, which tells us that the Spirit of God came upon Saul, the first king of Israel, and he prophesied.

In I Samuel 16:13 we read that the Spirit of God came upon David for the governing of the people. "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward."

The Original Thought

The original thought in these Scripture passages is that of forcing forward or pushing. The literal thought is this: the Holy Spirit attacked these men.

The Holy Spirit attacked Samson, forced him into a battle with a lion and gave him such physical strength that "he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand."

The Holy Spirit attacked King Saul and wrung from his lips prophetic utterances which so stirred the people who heard him that they said one to another, "What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"

The Holy Spirit attacked David, forced him into the rulership of a great nation and made him the world's greatest king.

Each Did A Specific Work

It is interesting to note that each of these men did a specific thing. Samson slew a lion. Saul prophesied. David ruled a nation. Yet each was under the compulsion of the same Spirit.

The Spirit Is Everywhere

The hand of the Holy Spirit is seen throughout the Old Dispensation. As someone has said, "He was the Spirit of conviction while sin worked itself out from the fall to the Flood.

"He was the Spirit of detailed service while the people of God were being organized into a nation.

"He was the Spirit of strength while they were fighting for the land and casting out the opposers of God and His cause.

"He was the Spirit of hope during the days of wandering and was continually going about among them, speaking to everyone who would listen, and pointing ahead for those who would see, and reminding them, by type and by shadow that there were better days to come.

The Old Dispensation Manifestation Of The Spirit

However, few in the Old Dispensation, with all its manifestations of the Holy Spirit, knew Him as we know Him today, as the Sanctifier of individual lives in the sense of cleansing and keeping. These marvelous manifestations of His power were reserved for a later dispensation. It is our privilege to live in this later dispensation and to have the Spirit in all His wonderful power and blessing.

In the Old Dispensation He seemed at times to come upon men irrespective of character. When He needed a man He chose one, filled him and put him on like a garment; or He attacked him, forced him into the gap and accomplished great things with him.

The Old Has Passed

The Old Dispensation has passed and the New Dispensation has come, but the Spirit is the same.

It is the same Holy Spirit that moved upon the face of the water.

It is the same Holy Spirit to whom the Father referred when He said, "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness."

It is the same Holy Spirit that filled Bezaleel with wisdom and knowledge and all manner of workmanship.

It is the same Holy Spirit that clothed Himself with Gideon and defeated the Midianites.

It is the same Holy Spirit that put on Zechariah like a garment and protested against the idolatry of Israel.

No longer does He come upon men irrespective of their characters or regardless of their wills. Today the Holy Spirit comes upon men who are tired of sin and willing to forsake it He regenerates them, blots out their transgressions, forgives their iniquities and adopts them into the family of God.

No Longer Compulsion

In the Old Dispensation the Holy Spirit compelled men to do His bidding. He forced Samson to do battle with a lion. He wrung from the lips of Saul prophetic utterances. He forced David into the kingship of a nation.

In this New Dispensation the Holy Spirit forces no man; but to every believer who will fully consecrate his life, placing his all upon Jesus Christ, the Christian's altar, the Holy Spirit will come upon him with His burning, purging, cleansing power. The Spirit will so burn, so purge, so cleanse, so renovate and fill his soul that it will not be necessary to force him to do God's bidding. The natural cry of his cleansed heart will be, "I delight to do thy will, O my God."

Pentecost

The Holy Ghost Dispensation was ushered in on the day of Pentecost. It was the coming into the world of a new temple -- not a temple of wood and stone, of brass and iron, but a temple of human beings indwelt by the Spirit of God.

Centuries before, when two young men were prophesying in the camps of Israel, Joshua tried to get Moses to stop them and Moses said, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!" On the day of Pentecost, Moses' prayer was answered. The Spirit came upon all the people of God. We are still living in that glorious dispensation. Today every man may have the Spirit in all His wonderful manifestations.

Pentecost was the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophesy of Joel, "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."

Simon Peter, having received the fullness of the Spirit, took up the message, looked across the centuries to the people of every generation of every race, and said, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

The Fruit And The Work

Paul tells us that the fruit of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." This is the fruit that springs from a Spirit-filled heart.

There is also a definite work of the Spirit. The work of the Holy Spirit is to regenerate, to cleanse, to abide, to teach, to remind and to comfort.

He Comes To Abide

Jesus said, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."

Perhaps the disciples said, "Master, you have been with us three years. Now you are going away, but You have promised to send us another. How long will He stay? Will He die? Will He be crucified?" Possibly Jesus answered, "No, do not look for death. He will never die. Do not talk about departure. He will never leave you. When He comes He will abide forever."

Friends in a certain city took me to see a beautiful mansion which was deteriorating. It was situated in the center of a plot of ground the size of a city block and was completely surrounded by beautiful trees. The house needed to be repaired. The grounds were unkempt and covered with weeds.

Years before the place had been advertised for sale. A stranger came to the city, saw the mansion and after some investigation purchased it. He hired workmen who cleaned the grounds and repainted and redecorated the building inside and out. Then he furnished it elaborately. One day, however, he was seen to leave the building, enter his car and drive away. He never returned. No one has heard of him since. The building has fallen into decay.

The Holy Spirit does not renew, cleanse, furnish the heart, and then abandon it. He comes to abide.

He abides, He abides,
The Spirit now abides with me.
He'll not leave me on the way,
He'll be with me every day,
For He's promised to abide with me.

The Home Of The Spirit

I once said to a carpenter, who was taking great pains with a house which he was building, "Why are you taking such pains?" He replied, "I am not building this place to sell or to rent. I am building it for my home. I am going to live here."

The Spirit of God does not purchase the heart of man to build, cleanse, polish and furnish in order that He may sell it or make of it a rooming house or tourist camp for the Devil. He purchases the heart of man to make it His home. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" He comes in to abide.

He Comes As A Teacher

The Holy Spirit comes into our hearts as a Teacher. Jesus said, "He shall teach you all things." He is the Author of the Scriptures: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

It is a great privilege to sit at the feet of a Spirit-filled Bible teacher and listen to him expound and explain the Word of the Lord, but no teacher, however holy or well trained, can take the place of the Holy Spirit as a Teacher in the heart. The Bible will not move you or thrill you until you know the Author and have His presence in your soul.

The Holy Spirit teaches us that true honor is to serve God.

He teaches us that true nobility is to be born of God.

He teaches us that true riches are to be found in the grace of God.

He teaches us that true happiness is the peace of God.

He teaches us that true life is to know God.

He teaches us that the only true security is to be hidden with Christ in God.

He teaches us how rightly to divide the Word of Truth.

He teaches us the difference between right and wrong.

He teaches us the true value of spiritual things.

He teaches us that "the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable."

He teaches us that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

He Comes As A Reminder

"He shall . . . bring all things to your remembrance," said the Master regarding the Holy Spirit. In no other work has the Holy Spirit been more faithful than in this task of reminding.

He reminds us of our duties and privileges in Jesus Christ. He reminds us of promises and vows we have made to our Maker.

He reminds us of helpful promises from the Bible just when we need them most.

He reminds us that we are pilgrims and strangers in a strange land.

He reminds us that here we have no continuing city. He reminds us that we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus, and equal heirs with Christ our Lord.

He reminds us "that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

He Is A Comforter

Jesus said, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

The long, long night is past,
The morning breaks at last;
The Holy Ghost from heav'n,
The Father's promise giv'n;

O spread the tidings round,
Wherever man is found
The Comforter has come!

We are told that the word "Comforter" as used in the Bible does not mean the same as it does today. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit is a Comforter in the fullest sense in which we use the word.

He comforts us with the assurance that our sins have been forgiven. Though we may yet have to reap some of the harvest of the wild oats we have sown, all the past is under the blood.

He comforts us with the knowledge that our hearts have been cleansed from sin, and our hateful dogs of temper can no longer break their leash and spring upon our friends. They have been taken away and crucified with Jesus Christ.

He comforts us in the hour of temptation. When it seems that we can hold out no longer, He whispers, "You do not have to yield, for 'there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'"

He comforts us in the time of sorrow. When there is a crepe on the door and grief in the heart of man, He stands beside the heartbroken one, points to the Man of Sorrows and says, "[Cast] all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

In Battle

He comforts us in the hour of death. When the voices of hell surround you, when the submarines of the pit are rising beneath you, when the bombers of perdition are roaring above you, when the cohorts of destruction are strafing you, the Holy Spirit will rush to your side, O warring saint, and shout, "Fight on! Fight on! Fight on! The greatest harm that men and devils Can do to you is to take life from your body. I guarantee the safety of your soul."

In Death

He comforts us in the hour of death. When the voices of friends recede, when our eyes grow dim and the sights of the world disappear, He reminds us of the Psalmist's wonderful assurance: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

In our last hour on earth the Spirit will sweetly whisper, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

* * * * *

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER

The Jews' Passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him (John 11:55-57).

The question "What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?" was asked by three classes of people: strangers, Christ's friends and His enemies. In asking this, they proved that they were blind.

The Beginning

Let us go back to the beginning. What were the coats of skin with which the Lord God clothed the first pair in the Garden of Eden? A type and a shadow.

What were the firstlings of Abel's flock which he offered as a sacrifice to God? A type, and a shadow.

What was the altar which Noah built on Mount Ararat after he came forth from the ark and upon which he offered clean beasts to the Lord? A type and a shadow.

When Abraham took his only son, Isaac, into the land of Moriah to offer him as a burnt offering to God, and was stopped by the angel of the Lord, who provided a ram for a substitute, What was this? A type and a shadow.

The children of Israel had been in Egyptian bondage for four hundred years when God sought to deliver them by the hand of His servant Moses. He brought nine great plagues upon Egypt, but Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to let Israel go.

One day God said to Moses, "Take a lamb without blemish, and kill it. And . . . take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast . . . and the blood shall be to you for a token . . . when I see the blood, I will pass over you."

The children of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses, and that night the destroying angel passed through the land. Everywhere there was tragedy, heartache and death, except in those homes where the blood was on the door.

What was that? The first Passover? Yes, and more.

A test of faith? Yes, and more.

An example of God's delivering power? Yes, and more -- much more!

What was it? It was a type, a shadow of One who would someday come into the world and deliver man from a greater bondage than the bondage of Egypt -- One who would deliver him from the bondage of sin and Satan.

When the Lord passed over Egypt
There was weeping everywhere,
For an angel smote the first-born
Of each family dwelling there;
But some houses he passed over,
As His Word had said before,
And death entered not the portals
Where the blood was on the door.

We are in a land of danger,
And death lurks on every hand,
But that soul has perfect safety
Who obeys our Lord's command,
For secure in God's pavilion
He can watch life's breakers roar;
For God's angel guards the dwelling
Where the blood is on the door.

Not the blood of lambs or cattle
Sprinkled over any part,
But the blood of Christ the Saviour
Can redeem a human heart;
Then when death these ties shall sever,
And we walk on earth no more,
We may live with Christ forever
If His blood is on the door.

A Twofold Purpose

God commanded Israel to keep the Passover throughout their generations. He gave it to them for a twofold purpose: to remind them of His delivering power and to point to the Coming One. He wanted them to look backward in remembrance and to look forward in expectancy. He wanted them to look backward with thanksgiving and to look forward with praise.

They were faithful in keeping the feast of the Passover, but there came a time when they forgot to look backward and failed to look forward. The Passover had degenerated.

Thanksgiving

The Passover degenerated as has our Thanksgiving, a day instituted by our fathers in the early years of our country, a day on which people should gather in their homes and churches and praise God for the yield of the land and thank Him for the gifts which His bountiful hand provides.

But, alas, our Thanksgiving has degenerated. It has become a day of feasting, a day of games and sports. During the last few years it has been juggled in the hands of politicians. Some want to observe the third Thursday of November and others wish to recognize the fourth Thursday as Thanksgiving. This discussion has not been motivated by the desire to give thanks for the yield of the land, but rather to decide which day will be the most practical for their games and gate receipts, and enable merchants to sell the most merchandise.

Christmas

The Passover degenerated as has our Christmas, a day set aside for celebrating the birth of our Lord, a day in which we present gifts in memory of the fact that God so freely gave His only begotten Son that the world might have life.

Our Christmas has degenerated. It has become a day of reveling and mirth, a day of feasting and drinking. There is perhaps no day in all the year more dissipated than is Christmas.

Thousands celebrate this day without any real knowledge as to why it is a holiday; thousands of others observe it without remembering its real intent; without remembering Jesus, God's wonderful gift to the world.

The Sabbath

The Passover degenerated as our Sabbath has. Originally a day instituted by the Almighty as a day of rest, a day of worship, the Sabbath has degenerated into a holiday rather than a holy day. It has become a day of feasting, sports and games. Many churches dismiss or shorten their services so that their communicants may have more time on the golf course or at the ball game. Many professed Christians, who have too much religion to attend in person such Sunday games, stay at home beside their radios and listen to men who are desecrating the holy Sabbath of God.

The Passover

The Jews continued to keep the Passover, but they forgot to look backward; they observed the feast, but they failed to look forward. The Passover had degenerated into a great religious picnic, a great national holiday. It was a day to which the politicians looked forward, a day on which they could rub elbows with the multitude and gain influence for their cause. It was a day to which the merchants looked forward, when great crowds came to the city, and they could raise their prices and sell their wares at larger profits. The real meaning of the Passover was forgotten.

God Never Forgets

Men may forget, but God never. Days may degenerate with man, but never with God. He still longs for the people of America to gather in their homes and churches on Thanksgiving Day to thank God for the yield of the land, and His bountiful gifts.

God still longs on Christmas, when men present their gifts, for them to remember that He freely gave His only Son to die that they might have life -- everlasting life.

God still says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." That commandment is just as binding today as the day He wrote it with His own finger on a tablet of stone and gave it to Moses.

God never forgot the Passover. Each year when Israel met on that occasion, God looked backward to that night in Egypt and remembered its significance. Each year God looked forward to the time when at the Passover He would fulfill His promise and send the Lamb of God to die for all the world. That far-off day was a type and a shadow.

Another Passover

Another Passover was at hand and many had come up to Jerusalem to the feast, but this year there was a new interest. It was the young Prophet of Galilee. His mighty works and messages had stirred all who had heard Him, and His fame had spread throughout the land.

There were strangers who came up to the feast, who had heard of the Galilean, and they hoped that on this occasion they might see Him. When they did not find Him in the Temple they asked one another, "What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?"

There were also at the feast friends of Jesus, who had heard Him in Samaria of Galilee. They were expecting to see Him at the feast, but when He did not appear in the Temple court, they asked, "What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?"

The chief priests and scribes were there. They hoped on this occasion to find something against Christ, that they might destroy Him, for they hated Him. But when they saw Him nowhere about the Temple, they asked, "What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?"

With the strangers it was a question of curiosity. With His friends it was a question of anxiety. With the chief priests and scribes it was a question of hate. But whether the question was prompted by curiosity, anxiety or hate, in asking it, they proved they were blind. They did not fathom its meaning. They did not understand.

He Could Not Miss It

They asked, "What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?" They did not know that He could not miss that feast. They did not know that He had been on His way to that feast for more than four thousand years.

He had started to that feast when He walked through the garden calling, "Adam, where art thou?" It was the cry of a brokenhearted father for a lost child.

He was thinking of this feast when He said, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." There is scarcely a page or a chapter in all the Old Testament in which you will not find the footprints of the Son of God on His way to the feast.

On The Road

He was coming to this feast when He passed the altar of Abel and accepted his sacrifice.

He was on His way when He paused on Mount Ararat to receive the offering of Noah.

He was on the journey when He passed through the land of Moriah and provided a ram for a substitute for Isaac, whom Abraham was about to offer as a burnt offering.

On The Way

Jacob saw Him one dark night as He crossed the Brook Jabbok at a place called Peniel. Jacob wrestled with Him throughout the night, but as the day was breaking, He touched his thigh, changed his walk, transformed his life and went on His way to the feast.

He was journeying to this feast when He paused at the house of the Israelite on the night of the first Passover. When the death angel came, He pointed to the blood drops on the door post and on the lintel.

Moses saw His shadow, and heard His stately steps as He passed Mount Sinai on His way to the feast.

Elisha said, "He will be there, for I saw Him pass in a fiery chariot with horses of fire," and Elijah, the first "hitchhiker," caught a free ride to the city of God.

Other Witnesses

Job said, "I did not see Him but I know He will be there, for I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."

The Psalmist said, "He will be there, for I heard Him say, 'Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.'"

David said His journey would lead him through the valley of the shadow of death, and he planned to secure Him as a guide when he passed through that valley.

Isaiah knew He would be there, for He saw Him coming from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah.

Malachi said, "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple."

John the Baptist heard Him coming and sprang forth before Him, saying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Yet there were many who stood around the Temple that day and asked one another, "What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?" They were blind. He could not miss that feast.

The Birth Of Christ

He was on His way to the feast that night when the angelic choir sang:

"Glory to God in the highest,
On earth peace,
Good will toward men."

He was coming when the angel said to the shepherds, "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

He was on the road to the feast when the wise men saw His star in the East and came to worship Him.

"On that night when in Judean skies
The mystic star dispensed its light,
A blind man moved in sleep,
And dreamed that he had sight.

"That night when shepherds heard the song,
Of hosts angelic choiring near,
A deaf man moved in slumber's spell,
And dreamed that he could hear.

"That night when in the cattle stall
Slept Child and mother, cheek by jowl,
A cripple moved his twisted limbs,
And dreamed that he was whole.

That night when o'er the new-born Babe
The tender Mary rose to lean,
A loathsome leper smiled in sleep,
And dreamed that he was clean.

That night when to the mother's breast
The little King was held secure,
A harlot slept a happy sleep,

And dreamed that she was pure.

That night when in the manger lay,
The Sanctified who came to save,
A man moved in the sleep of death,
And dreamed there was no grave.

-- Author Unknown --

The Journey Continues

Jesus was on His way to that feast when He met Nicodemus and talked to him of the new birth.

He was on the journey when he paused to rest on the well curb in Samaria and talked to the woman about the Water of Life.

He was coming when He passed the pool of Bethesda and healed the man who had not walked for thirty-eight years.

He was on His way to the feast when He stopped beneath a sycamore tree in the city of Jericho, and said, "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down, for to day I must abide at thy house."

It was on this same street that Jesus encountered blind Bartimaeus, brought daylight into his blind eyes, and sent him away a healed and happy citizen.

Will He Be At The Feast?

"What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?" He could not miss that feast. It was for this cause that He was born. It was for this purpose that He came into the world.

He was on His way to this feast when He healed the woman of the issue of blood, when He raised Lazarus from the dead, when He met the bier at the gate of the city of Nain, when He raised the dead boy to life, when He interrupted the funeral and sent the mother and son away rejoicing.

He Came To The Feast

Jesus came to the feast, but why was He there?

Not for any social privileges it might offer.

Not to gain political prestige with the rabble.

Not to appease physical appetite or desire.

Not to satisfy the curiosity of the strangers.

Not to gratify the admiration of His friends.

Not to defy the hatred of the scribes and Pharisees.

Not as a type and shadow of something yet to come.

Not to sprinkle the blood of bulls and goats on a material dwelling.

Why Was He At The Feast?

He was there as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world.

He was there as the Passover Lamb of which there had been many types and shadows.

He was there to sprinkle the blood of the Son of God upon the door posts of the hearts of humanity.

He was there to enter once into the Holy Place and obtain eternal redemption for all.

He was there to die that we might have life, and have it more abundantly.

He was there to taste death for every man.

He was there to bear our sins in His own body on the tree. He who knew no sin was there to be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

He was there to suffer without the gate that He might sanctify the people with His own blood.

Christ Our Passover

Though each step of the way grew darker and more palling, He never for a moment swerved from the purpose for which He had come.

He willingly submitted to the sinful men who came to arrest Him.

He spoke kindly to Judas who betrayed Him.

He patiently received the crown of thorns.

He humbly wore the purple robe and carried the reed down the streets of Jerusalem, a mock king, while Herod and the rabble ridiculed Him.

He staggered under the heavy Cross to the hill called Calvary.

Without force, of His own accord, He stretched His hands for the cruel nails, and held His quivering feet still while they drove the spike through the skin and flesh into the wood beneath.

Like a sheep before her shearers, He was dumb when they lifted the heavy Cross and dropped it into the socket in the rock.

Oh, that you could see Him, that I could see Him, as He hung upon the Cross! Oh, that we could fully realize who it was that died upon that tree! It was Jesus -- the man. But it was also Christ -- God.

God And Man

Have you seen the picture the poet has painted of that tragedy, which showed that Christ was both God and man?

His holy fingers formed the bough
Where grew the thorns that crowned His brow.

He grew the forest whence there sprung
The tree on which His body hung.

He died upon a cross of wood,
Yet built the hill on which it stood.

The nails that in His hands were driven
Were made from iron that He had given.

The spear that spilled His precious blood
Was tempered in the fires of God.

The tomb wherein His form was laid
Was hewn from rocks that He had made.

-- Author Unknown --

It Is Finished

Hanging upon the middle cross, Jesus, the God-man, our Passover Lamb, clenched His hands over the nails and, looking down upon the vilest, guiltiest sinners taking part in His crucifixion, said, "Father, forgive them."

Then He cried with a loud voice, "It is finished," and dismissed His spirit. Instantly the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. A way was made into the Holy of Holies, and since that day, no bishop, no pope, no priest nor anyone else can come closer to the great throbbing heart of God than you or I. Thank God, He came to the feast!

* * * * *

10

THE AMAZING BOOK

Do you want something old, something settled and sure,
That has stood through the ages and still shall endure;
Reliable records of all that is past,
Indelibly graven, forever to last?
Then come to the Bible and the message it brings,
The Book of Beginnings, first cause and first things,
Creator, creation, a story sublime,
The darkness of chaos, the dawning of time;
The world that once was, the world that now is;
Man made by God's hand, in His image, all His.

Do you want something modern and startling and new,
As fresh as the morning, as dear as the dew;
Today's current topics brought quite down to date,
Forecast of tomorrow that's never too late?
Then come to the Bible, for its prophecies hold
The symbols of all that the years shall unfold,
A wonderful outline of history's course
From a truly authentic and trustworthy source.

While the vivid events of the past it can tell,
And the future's great drama is pictured as well,
Satisfying and full is the message it brings;
The Book of Completion, the end of all things.

-- Author Unknown --

When we consider this Book, which is both old and new, both ancient and modern, realize the attacks that have been made upon it, the efforts that have been put forth to destroy it, the laws in some states barring it from the public schools and ponder the fact that it is virtually the only book which teachers are forbidden to read to their classes, then, on the other hand, when we consider the grip it has on the world and the heartstrings of humanity, we stand before it in awe and exclaim, "Amazing Book!"

Amazed am I in its presence,
This wonderful, Holy Word,
Containing the sweetest story
That mortals ever heard.

The Bible And Great Men

The Bible, which is said to be the first book printed, stands as a peer among all other books; and since it left the press it has held first place in the minds of the great; it is the world's masterpiece in literature.

No book has been so highly and so universally recommended by the great and near great of earth as the Bible, and no other book has been so universally used by such men. Not only did they study, reverence and recommend this Book because they were brilliant men, but because they found that the use of the Bible enriched their minds, refined their natures and improved their tastes for that which was good and noble, thus helping to make them noble characters who are among men as Rainier, Hood, Whitney and Shasta are among the mountains of our country.

Tributes

We would like to present here tributes to this amazing Book made by men who have helped to make history.

Thomas Carlyle, the great philosopher, said: "The Bible is the Book wherein the spirit of man can find light and nourishment for that which is deepest in his heart."

Henrich Heine, the Jewish poet and journalist, said: "What a Book, vast and wide as the world, sunrise and sunset, promise and fulfillment, birth and death, the whole drama of humanity in this one volume."

William Jennings Bryan, the silver-tongued orator of the Platte, said: "To the young man who is building character, I would present the Bible. It furnishes wise counsel for the youth, it throws light on the pathway of those in mature years, and is the only Book one wishes to have by him when he knows the end is near; then it is, he finds comfort in the Book of books."

Daniel Webster, whose name still heads the list of American statesmen, said: "From the time at my mother's feet and my father's knee, the Bible has been my daily study and vigilant contemplation; if we abide by its principles, our country will go on prospering and to prosper."

William E. Gladstone, whose name heads the list of British statesmen, referred to the Bible as "an old, old story, in an old, old Book which is the greatest and grandest guide ever given to mankind."

If the Bible was worth while to such characters as these, if it found a place in their lives, surely there is a place and a need for it in the heart of every man and woman today.

Open your heart to the influence of this amazing Book. It will enlarge your soul, weed out of your life those tares which would hinder and degrade; increase your capacity for love and beauty; develop those passions which are pure and noble and tune your heartstrings to a higher key.

Presidents

If the President of our country should come to you and recommend a concern in which it was worth while to invest, a book that you should read, or a painting that you should see; if you had money, would you not invest it, would you not read that book, and if possible, see that painting? The answer is obvious -- certainly you would.

Then let me remind you that a group of men, all Presidents of this great nation, have given to us a recommendation of the Bible and urge by example and direct statement that we give it a place in our lives.

Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States, who drafted the Declaration of Independence, a man who for forty years was in the public life of our country, and who might be properly called the father of democracy in America, said: "I have always said, and always will say, that the perusal of the Sacred Scriptures will make us better citizens, better husbands and better fathers."

John Quincy Adams, sixth President of our nation, whose body lies beneath the aisle of an old New England church, said: "The Bible is the Book of all others, to be read by all ages and in all conditions of human life, and never to be omitted unless by some o'erwhelming necessity."

Andrew Jackson, our seventh President, as he lay dying, pointed at the Bible, saying, "That Book, sir, is the Rock on which our republic rests."

Ulysses S. Grant, the eighteenth President, one of the most courageous men who ever led an army to battle, and who showed his true greatness by refusing to take the sword from the defeated General Lee, said: "Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet anchor of your liberties. Write its precepts upon your heart and practice them in your life."

Woodrow Wilson, the World War President, wrote to the young men in the army: "When you have read your Bible you will know that it is the Word of God, because in it you will have found the key to your own heart."

Herbert Hoover, the "depression" President, said, "There is no other book so full of concentrated wisdom, whether it be of law, business or morals; he who seeks for guidance in any of these things may look inside its covers and find illumination, for it is the world's richest library of human experience."

Were these men fools and fanatics? Were they deceived as to the content and value of this Book? Certainly not. They knew whereof they spoke.

Was it not faith in the God of whom the Bible speaks that caused President Washington to kneel and pray during the terrible winter at Valley Forge?

If Abraham Lincoln had been in doubt as to the value of this Book would he have spent a night in prayer with Bishop Simpson for God to save the Union?

Would President James A. Garfield have been a preacher of the Gospel if he did not believe in the only Book in which that Gospel is written?

The fact that Theodore Roosevelt made his way on many a Sunday to the little Dutch Reformed Church and often filled the pulpit is not only evidence that he believed in God but also in the Book of God.

If the Bible has found a place in the hearts and lives of the men who have stood at the head of our nation, shall it not have a place in your life and mine? If their recommendation regarding other things is valued, appreciated and accepted, shall we not accept their recommendation of the Bible, the Book of books, and make it the guide for our lives, the companions of our hearts and the foundations for our characters?

The story is told of a young man who went to the city seeking work. With grip in hand he made his way into a manufacturer's office and applied for a job. The manufacturer asked him if he had recommendations, whereupon the boy opened his suitcase and began to search for his papers. As he did so, a Bible dropped out. "What is that book?" asked the man. "A Bible, sir," answered the boy. "Do you intend to practice it?" the man asked. "Yes," was the reply. "That is recommendation enough," the manufacturer replied. "The position is yours."

Take the Bible into your heart and life. Queen Victoria said that it was the secret of England's greatness. It will be a foundation stone for your life, and if you possess any qualities for greatness it will arouse them, stir them and direct them in the path of truth and right where most can be accomplished.

The Bible -- A Book Of Authority

The Bible is a Book of authority. It does not speak of everything, but of what it does speak it speaks with authority. It has been said that "the best ancient history man ever wrote was found to contain two thousand mistakes, but the widest learning that skepticism can command has failed to demonstrate one historic inaccuracy in this record."

Lieutenant Maury said: "Whenever, in my investigation of any scientific problem, I find anything said on that subject in the Bible, I always find the Bible statement is the safest platform on which to speak." Professor Clay said: "Nearly every historic statement of the Old Testament has been confirmed."

These are only a few among many statements which might be quoted from eminent scholars of the world to show that though scientists have changed their guesses again and again, they have always come back to the Bible to find that what seemed to be merely a hint or a casual sentence was not an error but a peephole into a vast storehouse of scientific knowledge. Many men, greatly inflated over some new discovery or invention, have had their balloons punctured by some old saint who looked into the Bible and found that their "new" discovery had been hinted at or prophesied thousands of years ago, and they have been made to feel that Solomon was not a fool when he said, "There is no new thing under the sun."

We search the world for truth, we cull
The good, the true, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
And all old flower fields of the soul;
And, weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from our quest
To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book our mothers read.

An Authority on Religion

The Bible was not written as a book of science; it is not a treatment of geology; it is not a work of astronomy; what it says regarding scientific subjects is rather illustrative or incidental.

The Bible is a book on religion; it is the history of humanity and the story of God's love for a fallen race. It was written to tell us whence we came and whither we are bound, to give us the choice between two destinies, to show us how to live and what to do to achieve the better of the two destinies. It was written to set forth the principles of the Christian religion, and it is an absolute and final authority upon that.

A religion that does not affect man's emotions is worthless. A religion which affects only the emotions is equally worthless, but we are not to view our consciences or our emotions as our guide to right living; we must look to the Bible. "This should be both our rule of faith and practice." At the same time, if we adhere to the Word and follow its guidance and precepts, it will stir our emotions to their depths and give us a conscience void of offense toward God.

I went one day to a printing establishment and asked for a price on some cards I wished printed. A man took the card, measured it and examined it. Then, after having consulted a book, he quoted me a price. I told him I had been having cards printed for less and he replied, "Well, I don't know about that. This is a union shop, and this is the price the book says we must charge. We go by the book." I thought, That is the keynote of our religion; we do not go upon theory, tradition or emotions; we go by the Book.

The Bible is a Book of authority. "The young should read it to know how to live, the old to know how to die, the ignorant for wisdom, the learned for humility; the rich for warning, the poor for enrichment, and all for salvation, for it is the Book for all sorts and conditions of men."

An Authority on Problems of Life

The Bible speaks with authority on the problems of life. It may not always be possible to ask or follow the well-known slogan of Dr. Sheldon, "What would Jesus do?" But it is possible and it is practical to apply the principles of Christ taught in the Word to every problem that may confront us.

We may meet, and no doubt will have, problems which are not mentioned in the Scriptures, but no condition, no matter how new or strange, will be so isolated that we cannot find principles

in the Word which are applicable to it. Read the biography of almost any Bible character and see how closely his problems of thousands of years ago resemble the problems we are facing today: they were confronted and had to grapple with love and hate, courage and fear, wealth and poverty, friends and foes, joy and sorrow, popularity and loneliness, prosperity and adversity just as we do.

I read the story of a Chinaman, burning with hatred for some man who had wronged him, who came to a missionary and had a knife with which to kill his enemy. He asked the missionary how he could kill him in a way that would cause the most pain and suffering. The man of God told him he had a Book that would tell him just how to do it; so he took the knife and gave him a copy of the New Testament. The Chinaman went away and after ten days returned, saying, "This book say best way is not to kill him but love him. You keep knife. I keep Book." He had found the principle that best solved his problem.

Friend, do you desire to know how to answer the questions of life and cope with the dangers along the way, whether seen or unseen? Do you desire to face the issues and handle the difficulties? Then obey the exhortation of the Apostle Paul: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

O friend of mine, let me urge you who may have laid aside your Bible for other interests, go back to the Bible; for be these other interests ever so wholesome, they cannot take the place of the Word of God. Go back to the Bible, the Book of authority, from which all other worth-while books draw their inspiration.

Thou truest friend man ever knew,
Thy constancy I've tried;
When all were false, I found thee true,
My counselor and guide.
The mines of earth no treasures give
That could this volume buy;
In teaching me the way to live,
It tells me how to die.

The Bible Commands Respect

A Book so profound in its teachings, so authoritative in its statements, so clear in its doctrines, so indestructible in its contents, calls for respect, and if we are sometimes appalled at the neglect and indifference to it, at the same time when we stop to consider we are amazed at the reverence and respect it is given, not only by the people of God, but also by multitudes who have never known Him.

Our government so respects the Word that no man takes the oath which makes him President of the United States without the use of the Bible. When Chief Justice Taft administered the oath which made Calvin Coolidge the President, the Chief Executive said, "So help me God," and lifted a small Bible which his parents had given to him when he was a boy and kissed it.

The Gideons

The Gideons, as an organization of Christian businessmen, have accomplished a great work for God and Christianity by placing well-bound copies of the Bible in millions of hotel rooms all over America and other countries. This has opened the door to hearts of multiplied thousands of people.

Before I was converted I often stayed in a hotel room where there was a Bible and although I did not read it, I always looked upon it with respect, for it was the volume which my mother had taught me was the Book of God. For more than twenty-five years I have been traveling through the United States as an evangelist, and in the majority of the hotels where I stay there are Gideon Bibles. I have observed with thankfulness that these have been carefully preserved. This does not mean that they are ignored, for some have born marks of considerable use, but they have not been used for scratch pads; the leaves have neither been torn nor mutilated. This indicates a profound respect for the Bible by people from all walks of life.

A Shield of Temptation

The very presence of this amazing Book is a shield against temptation, for not only do men respect the Bible, but also the person who carries it. Young people, particularly, will find that those with whom they work and with whom they associate will respect the man or woman who reads and cherishes the Word of God.

In Literature

Again we exclaim, "Amazing Book!" when we consider its place in literature. Goethe said: "The Bible has served me as a guide in all my literary work." Although he was a professed skeptic, the walls of his home were covered with religious maps and pictures.

The Bible has been called the fountainhead and the foundation stone of all good literature, and if all the books in the world which have borrowed from the Bible were set on fire today, 90 per cent of the world's great libraries would be in ashes tomorrow.

A noted English writer tells us that the finest gems in both poetry and prose are to be found within its pages, and that the account of Paul's shipwreck is the most perfect narrative in print. 'The world's greatest model of peerless eloquence,' he said, 'is not to be found in the orations of great orators or the writings of great men, but in the eleventh chapter of Matthew in the words of Jesus, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

Men who know, tell us that books which live longest are those which follow the pattern of the Bible and which contain the most quotations from Scripture. Alfred Lord Tennyson included three hundred and seventy-five passages from Holy Writ among his writings; William Shakespeare, in giving his literature to the world, gave with it five hundred and fifty-seven quotations from the Word of God; John Ruskin, the great English writer, saturated his literature

with passages of Scripture, quoting from the Bible nearly a thousand times. When asked for his opinion of the Word he said: "Make it the first morning business of your life to understand some portion of the Sacred Scriptures; then practice it throughout the day."

Talmage

So closely is the Bible allied with the literature of the world that DeWitt Talmage said: "Every great book that has been published since the first printing press was lifted has directly or indirectly derived much of its power from the Sacred Oracles; Milton's Paradise Lost is borrowed from the Bible; Spenser's writings are imitations of the parables; John Bunyan saw in a dream what Saint John had previously seen in a vision; Macaulay crowns his most gigantic sentences with Scripture quotations; Walter Scott's characters are Bible men and women under different names; Hobbs stole from this 'Castle of Truth' the weapons with which he afterward attacked it; and the writings of Pope are saturated with Isaiah. The Bible is the fountain of truth from which other good books dip their life."

"Holy Bible, Book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine;
Mine to tell me whence I came;
Mine to teach me what I am.

"Close I press thee to my heart,
All I am I owe to thee.
We will never, never part,
'Til my Saviour's face I see.

"Precious Book, God's Word to me,
Revealer of immortality,
Guide me 'till reach life's goal;
Be a guest within my soul."

The Most Popular Book -- The Bible

There is no field in which the Bible does not excel. It is the most popular Book in the world. Whether judged by its theme, its content, its influence, its sale or popular usage, it is always in the lead.

Its Theme

The theme of the Bible is holiness, and there is not a chapter in it that does not teach or point to this great doctrine. It is holy in quality, eternal in its duration and its content is inexhaustible. There are shallows where a child can play and depths where a Titanic can sail -- and can sink. Its heights have never been scaled, its depths have never been fathomed and its breadth is still unmeasured.

For centuries the greatest minds of earth have been mining its ore, yet the veins have never been depleted, and the content of this wonderful Book concerns every phase of human life, offers a balm for every soul, an answer to every question and a solution to every problem.

"There's many a nugget hidden there,
Of silver and of gold.
There's many a jewel rich and rare,
The half has ne'er been told."

Its Influence

The Bible excels in its influence. There are seven wonders of the world, but the Bible is not among them; it is above them.

Just as the Grand Canyon of the Colorado in Arizona exceeds in width and depth, in beauty and grandeur, in length and splendor of color all others, and has been so since God by His omnipotent power scooped it out with His mighty hand, and there is no possibility that any other will equal its magnificence, in an infinitely and much greater way does the Bible excel in influence, power, wisdom and beauty all other books.

No other book has even approached the popularity of the Bible, and those men who have foolishly attempted to write a better book have lived to see their folly, and those who have dipped their pens in its fountain and patterned their books after it have found it the strongest part of their foundation.

"All that Homer had to say has been translated into only twenty languages, all that Shakespeare wrote into forty, Count Tolstoy's works into sixty, Thomas a' Kempis' Imitation of Christ into forty-five, John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress into one hundred and eighteen different languages, but the Bible or some portion of it has been translated into over a thousand different languages and dialects."

If the world stands, the words of this wonderful Book will soon be translated into every language and dialect known to man. The Bible never follows civilization; it precedes it; decay and degeneration will follow its removal from a nation.

It has wielded the widest influence; it has never been bad, but always good. See what the Bible has done in the countries of the world. It has checked the organizations of vice, inspired the building of homes, churches, schools and hospitals and is the foundation stone of every worth-while institution.

The Best-Seller

The Bible stands as a peer among the best-selling books of the world. Other books sell well for a while, then drop to second place, then third and finally most of them cease to sell at all. From the day the Bible left the press it has been the best-seller. In a recent year thirty-five million copies of the Bible were sold. Millions are printed every year and the demand is increasing.

No other book can be translated into so many languages and dialects with the assurance of a sale as the Bible. No other book can be divided into so many portions, printed, bound and placed on the market with no fear of being overstocked.

The Bible has been published in more sizes, binding, prices, than any other book, and every copy finds a buyer. A complete Bible can be purchased for twenty-five cents; on the other hand, an ancient copy of the Word of God sold a few years ago for nearly one hundred thousand dollars, and there are other copies not for sale at any price.

The Two Extremes

The largest Bible in the world was written by hand in 1922, and was the work of twelve thousand people; it is five feet two inches in height, three feet six inches in width and twelve goatskins were required to make the cover.

The smallest Bible is leather bound, one and three-fourths inches in height, and one and one-fourth inches in width. Either of these volumes would find a ready market if placed on sale, whereas any other book so published would be virtually a total loss.

The Bible is the only book in the world which a salesman can sell to a man for his own use when he already has from one to a dozen copies.

I wrote to a friend of mine, a Bible agent, and asked, "Did you ever sell a man a Bible who already had a copy?" He replied, "I sold a man a copy yesterday who said when he paid me, 'I don't know why I am buying this. I have eight copies of the Bible in my home now.'

Popular Usage

"The Bible excels in popular usage, it is read in all churches and temples in our country, it can be found on the table in almost every home, be it palace or hut, from the brown stone mansion of the rich, to the humble cabin of the plantation Negro. It is one of the few books found in the libraries of the Pullman train, and no battleship goes to war, and no great liner from a civilized country sails the deep that does not carry a copy of the Word of God."

It has circled the globe with the navigator, pierced the air with the aviator and accompanied the explorer on his trip to the pole. Soldiers have died with it upon their hearts and many starving travelers have clung to the Bible when, because of their weakness, they have had to discard his other earthly possessions.

It is the one Book concerning which men have almost universally agreed with Scott that it was the only Book when the shades of eternity were gathering about their cots. Men who have spent their days fighting the Bible have often used their last rapidly waning strength on their deathbeds to rue their folly and to recommend the Book.

It is the only Book used in the inauguration of the President of our country; it is used in taking the oath of virtually every worth-while office in the land; it is used every time a witness is sworn in court.

When the club of infidels of which he was a member called upon Lord Lyttleton to burn the Bible, he took the Book and approached the fire, then turned and laid it upon the stand, saying, "We will not burn this Book until we have found a better one." That better one, and a more popular one, has never been written.

The soldier who, single-handed, overcame his enemies and walks forth from the fight battle-scarred but victorious, is applauded for his success and decorated for his bravery'. So let us applaud and decorate this amazing Book-hero of ten thousand battles, attacked by infidels and skeptics for centuries, besieged openly by enemies on the one hand, and ambushed by wolves in sheeps' clothing on the other, yet standing today like a Gibraltar, the impregnable Rock on which our religion rests.

Book of our fathers! living still
In spite of skeptics' cruel knife,
Book of our fathers! holy Book!
We will be true to thee through life.

* * * * *

THE END