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## **PARKER MAXEY'S EDITORIALS -- (1988)**

Editorials from The Missionary Revivalist  
Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

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January, 1988 Editorial  
**THE DELAYED HARVEST**

Jesus said, "Say not ye, there are yet four months and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).

Bumper crops are endangered when harvest is delayed. Either the crops lie in the fields and rot or devastating storms sweep the fields and destroy what might have been gathered in if delay in harvesting was not allowed. Although there is a division of work in farming ("One soweth, and another reapeth"--v. 37), there is unity in that the end product is one. Nevertheless, the lesson that this Scripture drives home is the danger of forever preparing for harvest but never getting into the great harvest field. Harvest is not four months away, it is NOW and we must get involved in it if we are to save our own souls and keep the church alive.

But many of our own people are not prepared to get out into the harvest. Across the years we conservative holiness people have concentrated our efforts on getting the church revived. Over and over again most of our churches have faithfully conducted at least two revival efforts a year, praying and trusting for a genuine Holy Ghost revival. Yet all the time no concentrated, systematic effort has been developed to see sinners saved. We have not consistently gone out into the great white harvest fields where there are teeming multitudes of souls lost and on their way to a devil's hell. By and large the program of conservative holiness churches over the years has appeared to develop a generation of "pew sitting" people who are mostly concerned about their own soul's welfare but who know little or nothing of real soul-winning.

What is the answer to this problem, this need, this stalemate? It is not in "humanizing" an evangelistic program--attempting to do spiritual work in the power of the flesh. Mobilizing, getting

people to evangelize the lost when they themselves are void of real spiritual life, will not get the job done. Those whose main thrust does not go beyond inviting people to church, who have no real burden or vision to get sinners saved and out of the sin business, cannot provide the answer.

The key to harvesting is obedience to the Great Commission. Jesus gave the Great Commission for two reasons: it is the only method that will save the Church and the only method that will reach the lost. And if we really believed this we would be doing more about it. The life of Christ in the church is being increasingly suppressed by the failure of His people--those who do have a vital up-to-date experience of salvation--to go out into their own world in search of the lost. Disobedience to the Great Commission is working death in the body of Christ and this largely answers the question of why there is always a continual need to revive the church.

When a sinner has been genuinely converted there is born within his heart a desire to see his friends and loved ones saved. This is none other than a divine "impulse" (call it what you will) from God Himself and to fail to respond to this through seeking the salvation of others by personal testimony for Jesus is to staunch the flow of the love of God within. When this is allowed to happen, personal testimony will dry up and soon bring backslidenness of heart and personal need for revival. John Wesley and his followers taught that personal experience cannot long be maintained without adequate expression in earnest endeavor to win others. Philip must find his Nathaniel, Andrew his Simon Peter. This is a normal God-given urge. Multitudes who have been definitely saved or reclaimed have grown lean and backslidden in heart because they have not understood that individual soul winning is a condition of remaining spiritually healthy.

We could well ask the question, where are we in this our day concerning the Great Commission Jesus gave? The question might well be directed to the preachers and those in the position of leadership. Have we stressed revival, revival with so little emphasis on soul-winning until we have developed an introverted people who are sitting on our church pews holding their spiritual pulse but knowing very little or nothing of real soul-winning?

Many of the readers of this paper know about Irene Hanley's conversion after several years of faithful effort of a personal soul-winner to win her to the Lord. After her conversion Sister Hanley sought to be baptized and before the Sunday of her set time for baptism came around she had won several others and they were baptized with her. The desire to see others saved is the natural result of being saved oneself. When an individual is genuinely saved no time should be lost in seeking out unsaved acquaintances and loved ones in an effort to see them saved. If this is the case, and it is, should not our ministry be geared to instructing, encouraging and seeing to it that new converts begin immediately to tell it to others in an effort to get them saved? It is a normal, God-given urge to witness to others when one is saved. In many cases instruction and encouragement at this point by the pastor or some mature Christian will get a new convert started in the right direction in his newly found victory. It is God's plan for those who are truly born-again of the Spirit that seeking the lost should be the responsibility and desire of everybody, everywhere, and all the time.

Those who enter into active witnessing for Christ as soon as they are saved will soon realize their need of a holy heart, a second definite work of grace within their heart, if they are to be effective witnesses for Him. When Jesus gave the Great Commission to His disciples He

commanded them to tarry for that power that would make them to be effective witnesses for Him. The experience of entire sanctification as a second work of grace should be preached and pressed upon the newly converted. Such a work of grace, however, is not merely for the individual to keep to himself for his own enjoyment and as a preparation for heaven, but also and primarily in this life as an equipment to carry out the Great Commission (Acts 1:8). J. A. Wood, in his book Perfect Love, in the chapter on "How To Keep Sanctified," said, "It is the nature of perfect love to long to go with God for the salvation of souls and if you do not go with God for the salvation of men, your love will cool into apathy and indifference and you will lose the evidence of entire sanctification all together."

To His Church Christ gave a task to communicate the Gospel to every person in the world in every generation. The early church set about this task. They meant business. They were filled with the Holy Spirit. In this our day we need to be constantly aware that there is a night coming when no man can work. That hour will soon be upon us. The need of the Church of Jesus Christ today is to see anew her God-given purpose, to experience afresh her God-given power and to begin to follow her God-given pattern. There is no time for playing church.

The Lord has given pastors to His Church so that, among other duties, they might train the members in soul winning, even to the point of going into the field with them and doing it by their side, or helping them to do it until they learn how and until there is a church full of skilled and successful soul winners. Thank God for our preachers that are preaching the divine message. Now we must bend every effort to use the divine methods set forth in the Word for evangelizing the lost. May God help us to school believers in genuine New Testament person-to-person evangelism.

Let us pray God to help us meet the challenge of our day and generation in this business of harvesting!

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February, 1988 Editorial  
"WHEN THOU VOWEST A VOW"

Vows and vow-making are mentioned a number of times in the Scriptures. "Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God" (Ps. 76:11) is proper and fitting in memory of His mercies and judgments. To vow or not is a matter of choice, but to discharge our vows is our mandatory duty. God keeps His promise to us. His people should not fail in theirs. He is their faithful God and deserves a faithful people.

"When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform" (Deut. 23:21-23).

"When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay" (Eccl. 5:4-5).

A vow is a solemn promise. As one can observe from the above Scriptures, the Biblical view of vows is that they must be voluntary in order to be binding. Once made and validated, they are to be sacredly kept. A Christian is an individual who is marked with a kind of fidelity that "swareth" to one's "own hurt, and changeth not" (Ps. 15:4). From the Biblical viewpoint there is no more accurate index to character than the carefulness with which one fulfills his VOWS.

The first instance of vow making in the Bible was Jacob's promise at Bethel to serve God and pay tithes. In the New Testament two cases are found in Acts 18:18; 21:23, both involving Paul.

In our society today human relationships are bound together by vows. Basic to society are civil vows, commercial vows, and marital vows. In the church world there are membership vows and ordination vows.

When vows are despised and disregarded, the fabric of society disintegrates. If our society is largely held together by fidelity to the vows of its citizens, how much more conscientiously should Christians keep their vows, who are prompted by Christian love, and undergirded with the sense of integrity. Church members who flagrantly violate their church vows, and preachers who forget their ordination vows, bring dishonor to Christ and His Church and a spiritual deadness to their own soul.

Vow-breaking is a far more serious matter than most would like to acknowledge. Vow-breaking is indirectly if not directly responsible for problems faced by individuals in their Christian life; for problems arising in the life of churches, for the lack of an effective evangelistic outreach; and for a disintegrating process in one's individual life.

Vow-breaking is devastating to the individual. Saint and sinner alike make vows in times of sickness and suffering; when financial reverses come; when lives of loved ones are in danger; when their life is threatened; and the list could go on and on. A merciful and longsuffering God hears their cry in those moments of desperation and comes to their rescue. The emergency passes and people soon forget the vows they made and go on as if nothing had happened. Vows made under pressure as a rule are soon forgotten when the pressure of the moment passes. But the vow still stands. An unkept vow is devastating to the character of the individual.

Broken vows rob a Christian of victory. Vow making is a serious matter should not be entered into thoughtlessly or hurriedly. When we vow to God we must be careful to pay that vow. When we fail to do so we bring guilt upon our soul and thus lose our effectiveness as a victorious Christian. It is right to make vows but they should be made in reason.

When I was saved I vowed that I would stand against everything that was sinful, wrong or questionable. This included many, many things. Tobacco was forever out, as well as any and all alcoholic beverages, keeping my hair cut like a man should, the movies were forever banned as well as the TV. I would never be found where there was mixed swimming, nor eat in restaurants on Sundays, the wearing of jewelry, gossiping, rock music, pornography (common and hard core),

professional ball games, worldliness of all kinds would not be a part of my life. And the list has grown as God and His Word have brought new light to my soul.

Not only did I vow to be against some things, I vowed I would put into my Christian life those positive things that guarantee victorious living: a personal devotional life, testifying in public, witnessing to souls as opportunity arose, faithfulness in tithing my means and giving offerings, faithfulness in attending the means of grace, keeping membership vows taken when I joined a church, doing those things that are consistent with victorious Christian living. By the grace of God I have kept those vows.

Broken vows tie the hands of God. All of God's promises are yea and amen to them that believe but there are promises of God that are conditional upon our obedience to Him. When we vow to God we bring God into a contract with ourselves, i.e., we make solemn promises like Jacob of old. He vowed to serve God and pay his tithes and upon his keeping of these promises he could expect God to keep His promises. Something happens to our faith when we break our vows to God. We lose connection with Him and bring guilt on ourselves. The channel of our lives that the Holy Spirit has to work through becomes clogged and we become ineffective in our Christian life.

Vow-breaking is disruptive to the spiritual life of a church. It goes without saying that a church is no stronger spiritually than are its members. Without a constant revival atmosphere a church will not be a producing church. When a church fails to produce, that church is in trouble. Broken vows account for a major part of a church's failure.

Vow-breaking destroys an effective evangelistic thrust. To vow obedience to Christ will involve one in the Great Commission. The will of God leads without exception to the cross where one dies to everything, everybody, and himself included. For one to break his vow to follow Christ and Him only to the cross and from there into the full will of God will remove him spiritually from the body of Christ and His mission to a lost world.

Broken vows will cause one to disregard his obligation to others. Paul wrote: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also."

Vow-breaking begins a disintegrating process in one's life. A good example of this is to be found in the marriage relationship. Vows are exchanged, promises are made. Far too many marriages end in divorce, but how many marriages have inwardly disintegrated (oh yes, the couples are still living together) because the vows to love, comfort, honor and support one another have been set aside. Just so in one's walk with God. Outwardly the form is kept up but the real romance of a close walk with God does not exist. Vows have been broken.

Why do people break their vows with God?

Carelessness. We read in God's Word that it is the little foxes that spoil the vine, In our humanity we fail to realize the value of a close walk with the Lord and grow careless about those

little things that seem not so important, vows that we had once made in all sincerity, until our spiritual strength is weakened and we become faint and weary of the way.

Conformity. Peer pressure that some are constantly confronted with soon wears them down until they begin to question some of the stands they held to be of the Lord and finally give way to what seems not so important after all.

Carnality. The failure to pay the price to get a sanctified heart leaves one vulnerable to an inward enemy that ultimately brings defeat, broken vows and a backslidden heart condition.

Let us not forsake our vows that we have made to God!

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March, 1988 Editorial

#### THE NEED TO PREVAIL IN PRAYER

Human ingenuity and human methods and planning will not get the job done when it comes to spiritual matters or the work of God's Kingdom on earth. It is the person who practices prevailing prayer who wields power with God and with men. In Ephesians 6:18 we read, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

We could well ask ourselves some important questions: What do we mean by prevailing prayer? Why is prevailing prayer necessary? What experiences are we having these days in this business of prevailing prayer? Do we even have a desire to practice prevailing prayer? What can be accomplished by prevailing prayer? These are some questions among others that we must honestly face and answer.

What is prevailing prayer and why is it necessary? "To prevail" is to be victorious and triumphant and successful in the face of difficulty. "Prevailing prayer is prayer that pushes right through all difficulties and obstacles, drives back all the opposing forces of Satan, and secures the will of God. Its purpose is to accomplish God's will on earth." A good question to ask ourselves these days is this--how are we facing and endeavoring to solve problems and accomplish the work of the Lord? No one will deny that we are facing troublesome days of divisions and confusion and tension.

Prevailing prayer is necessary if we are to successfully oppose Satan and his subtle plan to defeat God's cause in our midst. We must ever be mindful that our real enemy is Satan and he knows how to disguise himself in such a way that we will be opposing a supposed enemy, fighting among ourselves, when all the time it is "old split hoof" himself who is at work. In Satan's beguiling and deceitfulness he opposes God's children in the following ways in which we need to be aware.

Satan's prime battleground is the human mind, and his subtle suggestions must be recognized and resisted. Good, well meaning people are subjects of Satan's attacks at this point.

Through this avenue Satan gets Christians to begin questioning one another until confidence is destroyed and divisions are spawned. We must learn to break through this subtle attack of Satan to divide God's people by prevailing prayer and refuse to let Satan gain a victory at this point. However, prevailing prayer is not the route that is usually taken. Far too often it is the gossip route and the spreading of false rumors. Far too much talk goes on without knowing all the facts. Men get together, compare notes, surmise evil, misjudge an absent brother, impugn motives; a mistrustful spirit springs up and the world looks on and "wonders." Serious, and many times prolonged prayer, is necessary to offset Satan's diabolical schemes. I wonder if we really believe this? If we believe this, do we practice it?

Men need to prevail in prayer over their own weakness to pray. How many can "stick" to prayer until they really prevail? Putting it in a more realistic way, how many are too spiritually weak to know how to pray with real soul travail? Have we left the place of prayer before we have prevailed, or have we abandoned the ministry of prevailing prayer for human ways and means of solving our problems? One of the evidences of a Spirit-filled person is a deep hunger to pray, a rejoicing in extra time to pray and an eagerness to sacrifice other things to pray more. Carnal people find a multitude of excuses for not prevailing in prayer.

Men need to learn to prevail over Satan. Satan fears the prayers of even the weakest saint. Satan would rather we be busy for God all day long than to pray for one hour. Spiritual victories are won through prevailing prayer. We suffer so many losses, divisions, misunderstandings, and are so powerless and fruitless because we are so casual in our prayer battle. Daniel hung on for twenty-one days. His answer was delayed by demon powers. What if he had stopped one day short? Daniel prayed until he prevailed over Satan and demon powers.

Men need to prevail before God. God certainly will test our earnestness and the depth of our desire. He certainly did the Greek woman whose daughter was suffering from demon possession (Matt. 15:21-28).

Do you suppose God is trying to teach us some things these days? Do you suppose that He may be trying to teach us how to prevail in prayer?

Wesley L. Duwel, in his book, *Touch the World through Prayer*, states that, "Prevailing prayer is prayer that pushes right through all difficulties and obstacles, drives back all the opposing forces of Satan, and secures the will of God. Its purpose is to accomplish God's will on earth. Prevailing prayer is prayer that not only takes the initiative but continues on the offensive for God until spiritual victory is won."

How can we be justified in doing anything more until we have prevailed in prayer?

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April, 1988 Editorial  
THE RESURRECTION BODY

One of the great truths revealed in God's Word is the truth concerning the resurrection of the body. A whole chapter in the Bible is devoted to this subject (I Cor. 15). In this chapter Paul raises two questions: "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" (I Cor. 15:35). He then proceeds to answer these questions in this great "resurrection chapter."

Prior to dealing with the resurrection of our body, however, Paul establishes the fact that the foundation of our hope in a resurrection is laid in the fact of Christ's own bodily resurrection. With the death of Christ the hopes of His disciples also died. When the abused, tortured and crucified Jesus expired on the Cross, the faith of the disciples suffered a total eclipse. They had heard His matchless words; they had seen His marvelous works; they had felt His spirit of infinite compassion and tenderness, of absolute justice, righteousness, holiness. He was their King and they expected to see Him at any time take the reins of government, cast out the ruling power of that day, ascend the throne of David and restore His Kingdom here on earth.

It is true that He was coming into His kingdom, but it was by the strait gate of death and the narrow way of the tomb. He had talked to His followers about the coming of His kingdom and glory, but then He was crucified and they could not grasp the meaning of this shameful death. They forgot that He had said that He would rise again. But, Hallelujah! He did rise as He had said. He laid down His life, and He took it again. The grave could not hold the Prince of life. He broke its bars. He scattered its darkness. He conquered its terrors. He robbed it of its victory. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor. 15:55).

Jesus was all the time endeavoring to establish faith in the hearts of His disciples. The foundation of their faith was not fully laid by His life, His miracles, His words, but it was made complete by His resurrection from the dead. Peter, with overflowing gratitude and joy, wrote, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Peter 1:3, R.V.).

And now, because of His death and resurrection, we have hope of our own resurrection: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (I Cor. 15:50, 51).

What will our resurrection body be like? We turn to this fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians for our answer:

It will be identical to the body we lived in on earth (v. 37, 38). The Scripture makes this plain. If wheat is sown, it is wheat that comes up. Likewise with barley or any other planting. After His resurrection our Lord's body was the same in that it was recognizable, although it was no longer weak and subject to limitations. It was a glorious body subject to new laws. We quote from an article written by Dr. Spiros Zodhiates: "When we speak of the body we do not necessarily mean the reconstitution of the constituent parts of our present body, but the reforming of a reconstituted body in a personality. We as individuals, as personalities, will be resurrected and not just the cells that make up our bodies. When Mary Magdalene and the disciples saw Christ they

recognized Him. He was exactly the same person He was before." Thus it will be with us, our brothers and sisters in Christ, our loved ones who have gone on before us, and the saints of all ages when we meet one another in our resurrected bodies.

It will be a "fourth dimension" body. God will give us this resurrected body fitted to live in a new environment. Once you accept God as the Creator, you will have no difficulty in believing Him capable of reconstituting your body as He pleases, possibly again out of nothing if the necessity arises. Scripture teaches that He is going to give us a new body, which will resemble and be recognizable as having the same characteristics as the old. Yet it will be basically different because it will not be subject to the restrictive material laws of the present universe. Christ was able to enter the room after His resurrection without the restrictions of physical resistance-the capabilities of fourth dimension living.

It will be an incorruptible body. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption" (v. 42). The racial consequences of sin on the human body are decay, corruption, disease and death. But thanks be to God, the resurrected body will have no elements of corruption. Disease nor death will have no power over it. Multitudes in this life have known nothing but physical suffering and torture. Paul, the man who bore the thorn in his flesh, looked forward to that third work of God's divine grace, the resurrection and glorification of his body. He writes: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:10, 11).

It will be a glorious body. "It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory" (v. 43). To the Christian Paul writes concerning the body: "Who shall change our vile body [this present physical body], that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). Our present body has been dishonored by sin, bringing disease, decay and death, but all this is to be changed when we receive our new body. In it we will serve the Lord in holiness through all eternity. To say the least, it will be glorious beyond our present conception.

It will be a body raised in power. "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power" (v. 43). Our present body needs constant care, rest, sleep, food, recreation, and even then it becomes weak, and continues getting weaker and weaker and finally, as the years pass by, expires in death. But one day this poor, weak, failing and ailing body is going to be raised in power. In our new body we shall never know any such thing as fatigue or exhaustion, or pain.

It will be raised a spiritual body, not a natural body (vv. 44-49). It will not be mortal, but immortal. Everything about our present body is earthly; everything about our new body will be heavenly. Our present body is composed of dust; our new body will have no element of dust in it.

It could be a resurrected body brought forth to suffer damnation throughout an endless eternity. It is not only the redeemed who are to rise from the dead. Sinners will also rise. All will have new and different bodies. "Marvel not at this," said Christ, "for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice." This includes the redeemed and the sinners, but He goes on to say, "And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn. 5:28, 29). Then there will be no further opportunity for repentance. Your eternal destiny will have been sealed once and for all at that time.

Brethren, seeing that all these things are thus going to be, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness?" (II Pet. 3:11b).

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May, 1988 Editorial  
LET GO AND LET GOD

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:19).

We have often sung the little chorus:

Let go and let God have His wonderful way;  
Let go and let God have His way.  
Your burdens will vanish, your night turn today;  
Let go and let God have His way.

If we can learn to let God have His way we will have learned one of the greatest secrets of spiritual success. It is a way God's people must learn. Living a Christian life is, for the most part, a learning process. Paul stated in Philippians 4:11, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

When God said that He would supply all our need He meant ALL. This includes all we will ever need materially, physically, spiritually and eternally. However, God will have a tried and true people and this takes some doings!

In Exodus chapters 18 and 17 we find the children of Israel, after their deliverance from Egypt, on the march through the wilderness headed for the promised land of Canaan.

He brought them out that He might bring them in/" They were a people on the march. "Forward with God" was the order of the day. Let's note a few parallels we can draw between God's part in their success and God's part in leading us on to success.

In the first place, they were journeying "according to the command of the Lord," as shown in verse 1 of chapter 17. These people were fresh out of slavery and had not fully learned the fact that where God guides He will provide.

We notice in the context of this Scripture that God purposely allowed these people to become desperately in need of Divine help. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out/For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Romans 11:33, 34).

Second, God engineered them into a place of desperation. He did this for two reasons: In verse 4 of chapter 16 His reason was: "That I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law

or no." In verse 12 we find another reason: "And ye shall know that I am the Lord your God." The children of Israel were weak in faith and repeatedly fell into grievous errors. They were prone to blame Moses and Aaron for their condition and look to them for deliverance instead of looking to God.

Third, God's people were constantly trying to find a source of help in the natural things around them and in their own ingenuity instead of looking for a manifestation of the SUPERNATURAL POWER of God.

We had better beware, reader, in this our day. Subtle forces are closing in on us. A shift is taking place in the radical holiness movements of this day. We are facing dangers in two opposite directions. Are we going to fight to retain the form, the outer shell of vital holiness and ignore the glory of an indwelt Holy Ghost in our hearts, or, fighting to maintain the heart of true holiness will we ignore the outer trappings and manifestations that accompany and testify to the indwelling of a Divine Person? There is danger in either direction.

Let us beware of selling out for something less than the indwelt glory of God, A glove can be worn until it takes the shape of the hand. It can continue to keep that shape whether or not the hand remains in the glove or not. Sad when the form of godliness remains (the outer shell) but the glory is gone! May we never contend for the form of godliness without the glory.

There is another real danger that faces the people of God in their zeal to maintain deep spirituality. That is the fact that they can become overly concerned with their little segment of churchanity until they become bigoted in their outlook, separated and isolated from the rest of Christianity and miss the whole purpose of their existence and place in the Kingdom of God on earth. God did not raise up a holy people for them to build up a little kingdom of their own on earth but to be a channel through which He can build His church.

Fourth, God's people were given to murmuring. They were too ready to put the blame on others when things seemingly went wrong or they fell short of what was expected of them. Our greatest ministry in this world is to bring glory to God in our lives and in order to do this we must raise our trust beyond the things we see and can reason our way through and expect Him to do the things that confound the enemy and prove to a gainsaying world that our God is a God of miracles.

They manifested a lack of total abandonment to God. "And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died at the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, where we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full: for ye have brought us forth into this Wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

It was a fact back at that time that the Israelites were definitely in need of food. God was leading the people and He knew just when and where they would be facing this need just as He knows the things you and I will be needing as we walk life's pathway.

Like Esau, they were ready to sell their birthright for a mess of meat. Are you, reader, selling your birthright in the kingdom of God and your blood-bought inheritance in the Land of Endless Day for the trifling things of earth?

In the fifth place the children of Israel gave way to unbelief and a proneness to exaggerate their condition. In that frame of mind it was hard to generate faith to believe God could anything for them. Despondency set in and the people were about to return to "Egypt" and give up the struggle of a life of abandonment to God's complete will. This leads to another thing that we need to mention:

A sixth characteristic of the people that we find in evidence today was their readiness to grumble and complain. Instead of rejoicing in past victories and believing that God was able and willing to make them overcomers in the present situation, they were easily discouraged and ready to turn back. How quickly they had forgotten the mighty miracles that God had wrought in their midst.

How many times when faced with a new trial or difficulty have we been tempted to forget what God has already done and feel that the solution to the entire situation was dependent on our own strength or ability?

A seventh, and final, thing we want to notice is the fact that "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." If we fail to abandon ourselves entirely to God and "love not our lives unto death," we will not experience the intervention of Divine Power that God wants to manifest in our midst. Notice the language in verse four of our lesson: "Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you: and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no."

God was seeking to build the faith of His people in Him by proving to them that the same God who wrought mighty miracles in bringing em out of Egyptian bondage was still their God and the same power was available to help them in their journey toward the Land of Canaan.

I say, Praise God! The same God that can deliver us from sin and sanctify us wholly is able to see us through all the difficulties today if we will wholly follow HIM! In writing about the experiences of the Israelites when God brought them out of Egyptian bondage Paul wrote in I Corinthians 10:5, 11, "But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness .... Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

May God help us in this, our day, to "Let go and let God have His way!"

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June, 1988 Editorial  
SANCTIFY THEM

The sanctification of God's people is for a twofold purpose-spiritual unity and effective witnessing. It is for this that Jesus prayed in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel.

The central purpose of Jesus' coming into the world and dying on the cross was for the sanctification of the church. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" Eph. 5:25, 26. "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" Heb. 13:12. All other elements in redemption, such as confession, restitution, forgiveness, regeneration, adoption, etc., are incidental and but steps to this one thing--the sanctification of the church. It is for this one thing that Jesus prayed, "sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" John 17:17.

Let us notice, briefly the two inseparable elements in sanctification as taught in the Bible and especially as revealed in this prayer of Jesus. These are, as we have already mentioned, spiritual unity and effective witnessing; the negative and the positive aspects of God's grace; the cleansing, purging, unifying, empowering on the one hand and, on the other hand, the outward expression or the outflow of this to others; purity issuing in holiness on one hand and perfect love expressed in fellowship on the other. For further Bible study along this line read also the 12th chapter of Romans, the 12th chapter of I Corinthians and Ephesians chapter 5.

Sanctification involves spiritual unity. Jesus' concern and prayer was for the unity of the church and it was for this purpose He gave Himself (John 17). But unity involves fellowship and fellowship involves cleansing, for God cannot wink at sin. The Holy Ghost does not fellowship sin. Sin in the heart of man must be done away with. Thus all scripture finds its proper place in teaching death to sin, to the end one might have fellowship with a holy God. The doctrine of imputation alone is inadequate to satisfy either the heart of God or man, or answer the prayer of Jesus for His church. If there is no holy man there can be no fellowship with a Holy God. This is the reason God gave His Only Begotten Son. He has made a sacrifice sufficient to cleanse man from all sin and make him a holy man fit for divine fellowship in this unholy world. But these passages mentioned also involve a corporate oneness with all the members (Romans 12; I Cor. 12). In the recorded prayer of Jesus in John 17, as far as this passage alone reads, Jesus had no complaint to register in regard to His disciples. His commendation of them was unqualified. His prayer and concern was in respect to the tremendous responsibility which He left with them, the evangelization of the world. But the disciples did possess elements within themselves that were barriers to unity and fellowship and an effective witness. Their self-centeredness in place of God-centeredness had surfaced so many times--place seeking, fear, unbelief, spiritual lethargy, pride, bigotry. Inbred sin with all its traits was rendering unity and fellowship impossible. They were yet carnal.

We need to understand that man in his fallen, sinful condition is utterly helpless to gain fellowship with God or unity of spirit unless God would come to his rescue, and this He did in giving His Son and in Jesus' willingness to "suffer outside the camp that he might sanctify the people with his own blood." Fellowship can only exist in the atmosphere of holiness, for God is holy, and it depends upon a proper relationship between God and man, but if God is unwilling to accept us, our advances would be fruitless; but just as truly, if God finds man unresponsive or willful, no situation can exist where fellowship and unity could abound in holiness.

I repeat, Jesus' death on the cross gained us this glorious privilege and His prayer was for the sanctification of His followers. To stop short in our seeking for oneness with God and the

corporate body, the church, is to miss the very thing Christ prayed for and died for. This will take nothing less than the new birth experience and the cleansing of the soul from the carnal mind--a death-to-self experience. It can be had by a simple faith in the merits of Christ's shed blood (Heb. 13:12) only when the carnal self is confessed and subjected to death and the essential self entirely abandoned to God and His will. Christ provided sanctification for the church to the end it might be made one in holy fellowship. Unless an experience of sanctification has gained this for you, you do not yet possess the sanctification Jesus prayed for.

Sanctification also involves effective witnessing. "Sanctify them through thy word..., that the world may believe." "That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one..., that the world may know that thou hast sent me."

Involved in the prayer of Jesus for the sanctification of His disciples was the ministry of carrying the gospel to the world. Before the crucifixion the disciples had been converted but had received no commission or endowment of power to fulfill the commission. It was after the resurrection when Jesus dispelled the wonderment of the disciples at the crucifixion that He gave to them their great commission and admonished them to tarry until they had received the endowment of power in the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. They accepted the commission, tarried, prayed and consecrated themselves to the task of witnessing to the world as their life work. They renounced the idea of living to themselves in any form--a death to the self-life. They tarried and believed for this baptism of the Spirit. They understood this baptism was to be given for their cleansing and empowering to fulfill the commission. They tarried to the end of personal cleansing and effective witnessing. Pentecost was the answer to Jesus' prayer in John 17. This baptism with the Holy Ghost united "The Upper Room 120" in heart and purpose. They became obsessed with one consuming passion, they went everywhere (as The Spirit directed) in effective witnessing. To have left the world without "an effective witness" would have meant oblivion to the great redemptive plan. No wonder Jesus prayed as He did!

Now we, as followers of Christ, are involved in this same prayer and concern of our Lord: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word ' John 17:20. We as Christians have the same commission, the same admonition and the same promise. Everyone has the great responsibility to win as many souls as possible to Christ whether we preach, pray, write, print, teach, farm, travel, or take care of children.

The great lack of the church today is the realizing conviction that this commission to evangelize the world is given to each born-again Christian as his life-work and the conviction of the necessity of this endowment of power upon every individual and a persistent waiting upon God for it. I fear lest many satisfy themselves with a hope of eternal life for themselves apart from a witnessing ministry. I fear lest it become an accepted belief and practice among us that we can possess and cultivate holiness apart from an effective witness. When we separate the one from the other we lose both. How many never get beyond themselves to the striving for the salvation in others? But is not this involved in the sanctification Jesus prayed for us to receive?

Before you lay this article aside, reader, ask yourself--is this prayer of Jesus being fulfilled in me? This past semester I conducted a class in personal evangelism in our Bible School. The class was asked to keep a diary of their "personal witnessing" record for the semester and submit

it as part of the course requirement. Very few reported any real witnessing at all and fewer yet reported a witnessing ministry of any consistency. But now wait a minute--how would the membership of the church where you attend rate at this point? How do you rate?

For the lack of cleansing and power, the ministry and laity are weak. The ministry is weak because the church is weak and the church is weak because the ministry is weak.

"Sanctify them" to the end they may get beyond self, out to a lost world. To comprehend what Jesus meant when He prayed "sanctify them" will take a mighty awakening Holy Ghost revival. God grant it to us!

(Editor's note: The above is a reprint of the February, 1974 Editorial of The Missionary Revivalist.)

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July, 1988 Editorial

#### THE FAITH THAT PLEASURES GOD

" . . Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" Hebrews 11:6.

The faith that pleases God is established upon a solid historical foundation. It is not faith in one's faith but faith built on the historical acts of God through Christ. It is not founded upon fantasy but upon fact. It is not some mystical, transitory or drug-induced experience that will suddenly evaporate. It is enduring, dependable, settling and satisfying; not merely a head belief but a heart trust in what the historic Christ has done for me.

The Bible does not leave us in the dark about our origin, duty and destiny. It tells us plainly of the origin of man created in the image of God. Man didn't just evolve. It tells us plainly of the fall of man into sin. The story of man--his creation, fall away from God, God's plan to restore him back to Himself, Jesus' coming, His dying on the cross to provide redemption for sinful mankind is not mere allegory. Rather, these are all provable, historical facts. We therefore can and must rest our faith on the solid foundation of One who said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead," and, behold, I am alive for evermore" (Rev. 1:18).

The faith that pleases God is conditional. The condition of Christian faith is "the preaching of Christ." In other words, true faith is conditioned on clear preaching and understanding about Jesus Christ. Paul wrote:

So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17). A. T. Robertson in his Word Pictures in the New Testament gives this verse a more accurate translation from the Greek New Testament: "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing [dia rematos Christou] by the word about Christ." To hear is necessarily to believe. In Romans 10:4 we learn that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Even in the Old Testament (the

law) the very "end" or object was the preaching or revealing of Christ. Thank God that the conditions upon which faith operates have been clearly set forth.

The faith that pleases God is both the gift of God and the act of man. Since the condition of Christian faith is the preaching of Christ, then in this sense faith is a gift from God: its basis is "the word of Christ." But faith is not alone the gift of God, it is also the act of man. God does not believe for us. Man must face the fact that he has been given the power to choose--one of the most awesome gifts God ever gave to man. This power to choose involves him in a personal responsibility. In that respect man's salvation is conditioned on his personal act to trust his all in Christ, a Christ who has been presented to him as the ground of his salvation.

On man's part there are prerequisites to his ability to trust in Christ. We understand as evangelicals that these prerequisites include a radical repentance and a determined forsaking of all sin, with a willingness to undo all that we have sinfully done as much as it is within our power. This does not mean that we have altered the Biblical teaching that we are saved by faith alone. It is simply emphasizing the fact that true saving faith can only spring from a heart which has experienced a genuine repentance and turning from sin. Our faith rests in Christ alone. It is not faith in our faith nor in our effort to believe that saves us; only faith in Christ. It is Christ to start with; it is Christ and only Christ. Paul stated it when he said, "For me to live is Christ." If we put the emphasis anywhere else or stop short of Christ ("Christ in you the hope of glory") we have missed the key to our existence and to victory in Him.

The faith that pleases God produces righteousness. "The just shall live by faith," which appears in four places in the Bible (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38), can be more precisely translated, "He who through faith is righteous shall live." In these words we have Paul's statement of the theme of the Epistle to the Romans, which is the content of the gospel as Paul understands it. By "righteousness" Paul means both "justification" and "sanctification." Paul is here talking about a righteousness that God has and that He wants to bestow on us. The emphasis is on righteousness--a faith that produces a righteous life. Genuine faith will enable a man to live right. He will treat God right, his wife right, his children right, his neighbors right. He will be honest in his business dealings. He will be ethical in his practices.

In the book of Romans Paul brings out the contrast between the Pharisaical "law righteousness" and the Biblical "faith righteousness." In verse 5 of chapter 10 the apostle writes: "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live [shall obtain life in its deepest sense, both here and hereafter] by them. In Leviticus 18:5 we have the principle of righteousness by the law expressed: the man who practices the precepts of the law will thereby attain to life. Paul makes it clear in his writings that this obedience to God's law included the "word of faith," yet the vast majority of the Jews under the old covenant tried to twist God's way into a system of works righteousness. The result was disastrous: without faith the fulfillment of the righteous deeds of the law became impossible, and man's legalistic "law righteousness" became a substitute for God's way of righteousness through faith.

"Faith righteousness" rests in the living Christ dwelling within one's heart by faith: If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised

him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:6-10). Faith righteousness is a far cry from a legalistic, rule keeping program that is void of real spiritual life. Faith righteousness is none other than Christ Himself, through the ministry of the blessed Holy Spirit, living His holy life within our being--cleansing, filling, and thrilling us with divine life and producing holiness of heart and life in thought, word and act.

Unbelief (the lack of faith) is inexcusable. God's sure word of promise, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13), is without exception. When we measure up to all the prerequisites of faith but fail to trust in Christ alone for salvation we still remain in our sins. There is a chain of events that lead to Christ and the links of the chain are self-evident. You can read it in Romans 10:14-15. For those who fail to please God, the chain breaks at the point of faith. They are without excuse.

The Bible clearly teaches that there is and will always be a remnant that have attained to that faith that pleases God. Let us pray that we will be among those who exercise and cherish that faith. Without it we cannot please God, and with it we can enter into His very presence and never die.

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#### August, 1988 Editorial TAPPING INTO THE RESOURCES OF GOD

What would happen if we could actually get the sluice gates of our little channels open to the great ocean of God's resources and let them flow in at full tide? It is possible but not probable that such could or will happen-not probable because we will not make use of the means to make it actual. God has handed to humanity a revival contract and He will not withdraw it, but there are conditions and costs to be reckoned with on man's part and herein lies the reason for the failure of the contract to be consummated. For a Scriptural background for what we want to present in this editorial you should read James 4:1-10 and Ephesians 2:1-6. One portion out of these Scriptures is quite convicting: "Ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

The revival condition as revealed in God's Word is very familiar to all of us. It is found in 2 Chronicles 7:14. This verse should be read in connection with the context. Failure to follow step by step the conditions that God has laid down puts us on our own to work out what we think ought to be brought to pass and that always spells failure when it comes to kingdom work.

God operates through law and order. He does so in the natural world. Water boils at a given temperature at sea level. It never varies. There are laws that operate in the spiritual world. One of the greatest forces or powers on earth is prayer. We append a few quotes here:

"We do not drift into prayer, we climb into it with the utmost putting forth of will and perseverance." --Helen B. Montgomery

"True prayer puts its finger on some promise of God and pleads His faithfulness to His own Word." --Norman B. Harrison

"There is nothing in life so urgent or important that we should lessen the time to pray." --E. M. Bounds

"Prayer is work, prayer works, prayer leads to work." --W. W. White

God promises to work if we pray -- "Ye have not because ye ask not ... ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss." There are at least four basic laws governing prayer that we need to heed.

The most basic law governing prayer is the Law of the Atonement. The atonement is the foundation of the Christian life and thus the ministry of prayer. We cannot enter the presence of God on our own merit. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way..." (Heb. 10:19, 20). We must come to God in the Name of Jesus. It is a sobering thing to draw near to God. Israel trembled at the Holy Mount. The sinner flees from the presence of God. "The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isaiah 33:14). We pray on the ground of the atonement, but prayer goes deeper. There is a law of Position when it comes to prayer. It is a child's position. A child can come and go from his father's presence at will. The Bible states that the "prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Effectual prayer springs forth from the "new creation." "The Old Man," no matter how religious, cannot pray (Rom. 8:7. There must be a crucifixion (Rom. 6:6), a death, a burial (Rom. 6:5), a resurrection (Eph. 2:4, 5), an ascension ("And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" Eph. 2:6).

The position is not as a beggar but as Heir of God and Joint Heir with Christ. Effectual prayer is not a feigned humility, not denominational rivalry, not a lust for power or for praise. Praying is not seeking God's approval or His power to bring about our plans or desires or to preserve man's organization on earth. Praying that springs from right position has a peculiar procedure. It changes from begging to appropriating that which God has purposed and planned we should have and experience. Too often, I'm afraid, we battle for our own interests and to see that things come out the way we think they should until we get into "biting, devouring one another" situations.

A third law of prayer is the Law of God's Will. When I was lying in a hospital bed (I was in my late teens) and was given up to die with tuberculosis, I had would-be comforters come and tell me that if I had sufficient faith I wouldn't have to lie there and die. I could get up and get out of there. Great comforters they were. Too many times we are told, "Where there is sufficient faith the sick will be healed, for doesn't the Bible say 'the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up'?" (James 5:15). The Bible does say that, but dear reader, there is danger in building a doctrine on one isolated text or passage of Scripture. It would be far more accurate to turn the statement around and say, "God must and will heal where there is sufficient faith."

"Faith," however, is dangerous when it takes a higher position than God's Sovereign will. It can actually become lawless, self-willed, devilish. Where does faith to be healed (or faith, as a matter of fact to accomplish anything for God and His cause) come from, if not from the Sovereign Will of God? Jesus, while here in the flesh, taught us that He could do nothing of Himself, only the will of His Father that sent Him. Paul thrice prayed to be delivered from his "thorn" in the flesh. He manifested no "self-sufficiency" apart from God's Sovereign will. We read in I John 5:14, 15, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." However, we are to be governed in our praying by the "law of God's will"! How wonderful to have it this way and to trust ourselves into the hands of a Sovereign, omniscient God who knows what is best for us in the light of our immortal souls. We can rest in Him when we cannot understand "all the way that He may lead us to that blessed Holy Land."

There is what we might term "prayer's firm ground and prayer's uncertain ground." We know with no uncertainty God's will is to save sinners and sanctify believers and preserve the saints in their faith. The healing of our bodies, our deliverance from suffering, sorrow and the abuse that comes from wickedness can only be subjected to a providential and Sovereign will of a faithful Creator. Prayer's uncertain ground is in relationship to our finiteness and limited knowledge. When by simple faith we desire and believe God to work His perfect will, He will do that which He knows is for our eternal good as He places us in the context of His universal providence--what He considers good for us in the context of eternity and infinity of which He only is the master.

There is one more law we need to mention and that is the "law of the Spirit's Inspiration." For this we turn to Romans 8:26, 27, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

The blessed Holy Spirit inspires the prayer. We need to learn to wait on Him, acknowledge our infirmity, our incapacity, and learn to follow the Spirit's guidance.

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September, 1988 Editorial  
CONTENDING BUT NOT CONTENTIOUS

"Earnestly contend for the faith" --that is what Jude felt under divine compulsion to exhort the "be loved" about.

A study into this passage (Jude 3) will reveal that "the faith" is both subjective and objective. Subjectively it refers to "the faith" which Christians believe--faith which is believed, not faith by which we believe.

As holiness people we have always accepted and believed the Bible from cover to cover that it IS THE WORD OF GOD. The Bible not only contains the Word of God, we believe it is all the inspired Word of God, and we adamantly contend for this. There can be no compromise with us at this point.

But there is also an objective side of "the faith." This includes the moral life which is the expression of it. "The faith, Christian religion as a whole, is committed to Christians to be defended not only by sound doctrine but also by the life they live." (Beacon Commentary, Vol. 10, p. 432)

The Holy Spirit will lead every sincere heart who will wholeheartedly reach out with a resolute desire into an understanding of His Word and to the practical application of it to his life both inward and outward.

Whatever we receive from God comes to us by faith. It is by faith we are "born again," become a new creature in Christ Jesus. The old life of sin passes away and the individual lives a new life. Volitionally he is all out one hundred percent to live a holy life. He no longer lives in sin. He no longer willfully commits sin. He loves the way of righteousness, accepts the simplicity and modesty of outward appearance as God gives him strength. He bears the marks of a Christian within and without. "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him" (I John 2:29). We must and do contend for this truth.

It is by faith a regenerated person is cleansed from the carnal mind -- that sin nature he was born with, was not responsible for its existence in his heart, and though suppressed by the new life received in the "new-birth" experience has a tendency to exert itself--those inner stirrings of malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, hatred, strife, evil speaking, surmisings, emulations, pride, jealousy, and on and on, the whole nest of carnal traits. We contend that a regenerated soul can be delivered from the carnal nature instantaneously by faith when that nature has been made manifest in him, confessed and his heart opened without reservation to the mind and will of God. We contend that this experience (THE SECOND BLESSING) is essential both in this life in order to equip us to carry out the great commission (Acts 1:8) and, finally, to enter a holy Heaven.

We conclude, then, that "to earnestly contend for the faith" is twofold: to accept and defend the entire body of God's revealed truth (the Bible in its entirety) and also, to accept and defend ALL that the gospel of Jesus Christ has been designed to do in and through every individual--the Spirit's ministry through the merits of Christ's shed blood to save, sanctify, and evangelize a lost world. This is "the faith" in its entirety we must earnestly contend for. The right balance must be kept.

David Bryant in his book, *In The Gap*, talks about the great gap that stands between God and lost humanity, the gap caused by sin. Although that gap has been spanned provisionally by Christ's death upon the cross, there are multitudes that have not even heard of the great plan of salvation and that it is God's plan to span that gap by His disciples through the means of evangelism. Then he talks about "Boxes Of Pea-Sized Christianity," and that these boxes keep us from a discipleship and an evangelism that is big enough to fill a world-sized Gap--that keep us from contending in the market places of the world for "the faith that was once delivered unto the

saints." He talks about boxes of many shapes and sizes and then he gives examples of what he means. We quote here:

"There is a pea-sized box called Convert Christianity--life in Christ gets no bigger than making it safely inside the Kingdom. Or there's Character Christianity--life in Christ gets no bigger than pulling one's own spiritual act together. Not far behind this follows Consumption Christianity which boxes up life in Christ into meeting one's own personal needs and that's all.

"When life in Christ is no bigger than the warm, secure fellowship I have each week with my good Christian buddies, I'm in the box of Cloister Christianity. Or, when life in Christ is no bigger for me than getting nicely settled in a good paying job after graduation, then I'm trapped in Career Christianity. Many of us are groping around in the box of Church Christianity"--our life in Christ is confined within the walls of our own local church.

There is another pea-sized Christianity that plagues us so-called conservative holiness people of this day. We can name it Pharisaical Christianity. This brand is more interested in rules and regulations than the winning of a lost world to Christ. It is Christianity out of balance. Because of this, God turned away from His own people and turned to the Gentiles to fulfill His plan for evangelizing the world.

The disciples were given a command to carry out the Great Commission (Acts 1:2). They were given a second command to tarry in Jerusalem for THE promise of The Father--the mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost. They understood that it was this baptism that was to enable them to carry out the command of the Great Commission. They prayed, they tarried, the mighty baptism of The Holy Spirit fell on them, their hearts were purified and they got on the go.

This is what we must contend for in this our day. We must not get hung up on a "pea-sized Christianity."

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October, 1988 Editorial  
DETECTING FAMILY LIKENESSES

Do you belong to the family of God? How do you measure whether or not people belong to the "in" crowd or the "out" crowd? By what measure do you determine who are and who are not the people of God? Is your judgment based on outward appearance? This can be a false measure. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Sam. 16:7). It is the condition of a man's heart that makes him what he is. Jesus warned, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness (Matt. 23:27). Again we read in Romans 2:28, 29: "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." All God's children are marked by:

1. A family likeness. All who are born into the family of God are characterized by an unmistakable family likeness. It is an irrevocable law that like begets like. The sons of God, whether Archangels, Angels, Seraphim, Cherubim or members of the human race, all bear the same moral likeness. Although the natural features of the family of God vary as greatly as their number, in one particular they are all alike. It is not uniformity in particulars but unity in spirit, in that they love holiness. They are clothed in robes of imparted righteousness. The children of God are all characterized by holiness in its various stages, from the newborn babe in Christ to the matured saint ripe for heaven. A sin-loving son of God is a contradiction.

2. A family affection. "Behold how they love one another" is a marked characteristic of the members of the household of God. Jesus made evident the superiority of spiritual kinship when He deliberately set His disciples above all the members of His mother's family, herself included: "He who doeth the will of my Father, the same is my mother, and sister, and brother." Natural affection is designed for the needs of the present life, but love as the fruit of the Spirit abides forever, and will be so purified as to delight only in the presence of the pure and to abhor the society of the vile and to acquiesce without murmur in the sentence, "Depart, ye cursed." Such is the answer to the sentimentalists who insist that the punishment of an incorrigible sinner in hell would destroy the joys of heaven for the father, mother, brother, sister, husband or wife. Our kindred and our former selves are to be resisted as enemies to our highest well-being when they obstruct our fellowship with Him who has redeemed us with His own blood.

True fellowship springs from an inner heart condition and comes to those and is experienced by those who are dwelling in the fight with God and all others who are walking in the Light of God. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."

3. A peculiar language. There is a peculiar language that all members of the household of God speak that cannot be counterfeited successfully. All the saints on earth and in heaven have the same heart-throb of spiritual life because they are all vitally connected with the heart of the Lord Jesus. It is a language of the heart and not a dry intellect. A true child of God possesses a language of the heart that is detected and rejoiced in by others who possess the same inner spirit of joy. It crosses denomination lines, theological differences, and marks each possessor as a true child of God. Men may fail in the test of exact dogmatic statements, but unite in the recognition of the burning love of the new-born experience.

4. A family secret. There is a secret known only to the members of the family of God. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." "To him that overcometh I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it." There is an inward knowledge that comes to the heart of every member of the household of God that defies expression. Who can adequately tell what the heart feels and knows? This secret is the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit, an agent utterly unknown to the unbelieving world because it "seeth him not, neither knoweth him." It is His office to "shed abroad the love of God in our hearts," filling and flooding with joy unspeakable.

Besides this and beyond it is that conscious awareness of the leadership of the Holy Spirit in his life from day to day. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

5. A joyfulness. A joyfulness marks those who have been born of the Spirit and who are being led of the Spirit. There is a fountain of joy like an artesian well springing up in their hearts (Rom. 14:17). There is a peace that passeth understanding that runs through their hearts like a river of sweet waters. All tormenting fear has been cast out--fear of the consequences of death; fear of future ill, for he knows that "all things work together for good to them that love God." The will of God is the inspiration and gladness of the heart. No one outside of the family of regenerate souls has any ground for rejoicing nor right to be happy. The felicities of the sons of God are as serene and lasting as God, their author. Under His moral government guilt can never be happy. the sinless angels above, and the spirits of the just made perfect, sojourning in the antechamber of heaven, and the forgiven sinner below, can be truly filled with joy.

6. An inheritance. The inheritance that belongs to the members of the family of God is of great consideration. Peter assures us: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you [all persevering believers], who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

We note that this inheritance is undefiled. No stain of crime is on the heritage of one begotten of the Holy Ghost. It is also incorruptible! God is their inheritance and only when God falls into decrepitude and decay will the inheritance of His children come to an end. But this cannot be, for Peter assures us that it "fadeth not away."

Jesus, our Elder Brother, has obtained the inheritance, and is holding it as our trustee. "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ!" In the meantime we are not left without bond nor title nor proof of heirship. "In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13).

7. A Royalty. Last but not least, this family of God is a royal family. The earthly members are princes in exile. Their royal glory is eclipsed. The glorification of Jesus is both the pledge and the pattern of our future glorification. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called [constituted] the sons of God." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Study the description of the transfigured Jesus with His face shining as the sun and His raiment white as the light (Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:14-16) and that is the description of our future state and blessedness.

(Note: The above is gleaned from Jesus Exultant, by Daniel Steele, pp. 41-62.)

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November, 1988 Editorial  
AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY

There are many things in life that we crass as important, but they are not absolutely necessary. We may be genuinely saved and believe either like Arminius or Calvin. We might have

been baptized by sprinkling, pouring or immersion. We may keep the commandments of God in a church that is self-governed or run by bishops.

However, if we are to make it finally to Heaven, one thing is necessary --we must have a holy heart! Whatever creed we may subscribe to, whatever form of church government we may adopt, it still remains an unalterable truth, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). This, then, is the one thing absolutely necessary. There can be no substitute for holiness.

Right here we run into the startling 'excepts' of Jesus. By this word "except" Jesus meant: "Unless," "under no other conditions," "with no possible exception." He then goes on to say, "... Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk. 13:3); "Except ye be converted.., ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3); "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:55); "... Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20).

Holiness of heart is laid upon the foundation of a genuine and thorough repentance and forsaking of sin, with faith in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross to forgive and bring spiritual life to the heart. To sum it all up, Jesus is saying, under no other condition and with no possible exception, unless a child of God has been made pure in the very centrality of his being, unless the very life of Christ is indwelling him and shining through him, he shall in no case enter into heaven. The Pharisees majored on the kind of clothes they wore and the many prayers they prayed. They were not outwardly wicked. They spent their lives to promote their cause. Jesus said of them, "... Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness .... Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matt. 23:27, 33).

Wealth may add to your importance in the eyes of your fellowmen, but if you are holy, though you are as poor as Lazarus, angels will, when you die, carry you to the Paradise of God. Though you may be as rich as Dives, and may roll in luxury while you live, and when you die be buried with splendor, and have pronounced over your decaying body the highest eulogiums by hireling preachers, yet if you are unholy, your eternal portion will be without the Heavenly City. Though you possess all the outward trimmings of the Bible standards of holy living (and God knows how we need to measure up to these) but have not experienced the eradication of the carnal nature from your heart once you have been made aware of its presence, you will spend your eternity among the damned.

He must be holy who would associate with a holy God, and holy angels, and with spirits of just men made perfect. All who surround God's throne are arrayed in white robes, which wealth cannot buy. Why do you not, then, make that of the first importance to you to all eternity? Do you take so much pains to secure the trappings of this world and the gold that perisheth, and so little pains to secure the gold tried in the fire, which will make you rich forever?

If holiness is your one necessity, then you should make all your business bend to the great object of making you personally holy. You should see to it every bargain you make, whether it adds to your profit or your loss, does not detract from the uprightness of character. Whether the

times are hard or easy--whether the crops fail or are abundant, you may still be laying up treasures in Heaven. To this end you should make every business subservient.

If you need to be holy more than you need to be learned, then you should make all your studies and all your reading tend to the direction of making you more devout, and humble and faithful. John Wesley was a man of varied learning. But in his early religious experience he resolved that he would be "a man of one Book." He did not mean by that he would read no other--but that he would study nothing but what would help him better to understand and explain and illustrate the Holy Scriptures. This should be the course of everyone who would be holy. When you find that the effect is to make you less prayerful and less conscientious, lay it aside forever, however entertaining it might otherwise be. You can grow in the knowledge of truth, and at the same time grow in grace. There is plenty of reading to employ all the time you can devote to it that will be a help instead of a hindrance to you in the divine life. Let such have not merely your preference, but also your exclusive attention.

If you would be holy, you should make use of every means of grace to keep yourself in the love of God and resolutely avoid everything that might come to you through your eye gate or ear gate that would turn your mind from purity of heart and life. If you purpose to be holy and keep holy take heed what you say, what you think, what you look upon and what you lend your ears to listen to. Jude exhorted us, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (v. 21). The Apostle Peter exhorted along the same line when he wrote: "... Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (II Peter 1:5-9).

Though a preacher may draw crowds, and receive a large salary, yet if he is not with Christ in promoting holiness, he is against Him.

"But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life" (Rom. 6:22).

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December, 1988 Editorial  
THE COMING OF CHRIST

With the Christmas season once again "just around the corner" our minds are carried back to the "first" coming of Christ into the world of men as a babe.

Current events that are now taking place, the depraved moral condition of the world, the increase of Satanism, the approach of what appears to be the end of man's "sixth" day since Adam's creation, plus sensational publications dealing with the subject of the imminence of the

Rapture all point to the lateness of the hour in which we live and as a result have turned man's attention more than usual to the "second" coming of Christ.

Malachi 2:17-3:6 speaks primarily of Christ's first coming and His Forerunner. It is here we have the announcement of the messenger (John the Baptist) and the Messiah. "Whom ye seek" (v. 1) could refer to the fact that the people wanted a Messiah who would give them temporal blessings (which subsequently proved factual). His coming, however, was to purify or punish rather than to give prosperity to a disobedient people.

We read here about the "Refiner's Fire." "When the ore is cast into the glowing crucible, it seems as if it were to be destroyed and could it reason, it would, like Christians when put into the furnace of afflictions, infer that the result and design must be destruction. But when the process is ended, that which went in cold, sordid, and impure, comes forth bright, glowing, and unalloyed. And the refiner is beautifully represented as coming and sitting down beside the crucible, that the fire may not be too hot, or the process left incomplete. He bends in patient love over the furnace, until, when he looks down on the liquid metal, he can see his own image perfectly reflected there; then the process is completed, and the fire removed." (Thomas More, Haggai and Malachi, p. 152).

From this passage of Scripture we who are living in the days of His "second coming" can learn some valuable lessons.

1. The things that we face today -- shaken confidences, the development of schisms within the church body and the pressures that come as a result, seem to suggest that there is a hopeless destruction going on when, in the providences of a Sovereign God, it is a sifting time. God's program is to work in the heart of individuals that grace will bring them through to a triumphant end. No group of professed Christians or local church or denomination can bring a soul to final victory. It is the work of the Spirit in sanctifying grace alone that can guarantee this.

2. It is not enough to desire the coming of Christ. We must be ready or it will be an outpouring of wrath. Readiness by no means is synonymous with idleness concerning the advancement of the Kingdom of God among the multitudes of this day. The Apostle Paul pressed hard for the advancement of the Kingdom of Heaven during his days on earth, but lived for that day when he would be raptured "out from among the dead." Whether dead or alive, this is the one event we must not miss! We read in Rev. 19:7, 8: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

3. God's purpose is not to consume (v. 6) but to refine! Who can comprehend the process of a Sovereign God in the refining process of His saints? Christ came to make reconciliation between God and man. It was man that shut God out. It was God that made the first move to close the "gap." It is Christlike to do so. We are all familiar with Edwin Markham's words:

He drew a circle that shut me out--  
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.

But love and I had the wit to win;  
We drew a circle that took him in.

Attitudes and relationships between the professed holiness people of this day are under extreme testing. Who are you shutting out of your fellowship?

4. "Whom ye seek!" What kind of a God do we seek to worship? To keep a proper balance in life has always been one of man's chief problems. There is a narcissism that has crept into both the secular and religious realms. Our concept of worship has been distorted by subjectivism. In the place of the exaltation of a Sovereign, Infinite, Holy God, self-love, excessive interest in one's own appearance, comfort, importance and ties, the loss of a proper balance between the "externals" of the Christian life as fruits of grace and requirements for grace have clouded the issues of the day. The grace of God, especially the sanctifying grace, produces in the person both internally and externally fruits of holy living. Such does not come in the crisis experiences of salvation, but comes progressively as one walks in fellowship with the indwelt Spirit of grace. Once, however, the gift of God has been revealed the fruits produced by the grace of God become requirements for the ongoing of a victorious life in the Spirit.

The work of sanctification in the heart and life of an individual is both instantaneous and ongoing. This is a divine work and only God knows, in His infinite wisdom, how to sit as the Refiner of our life to cleanse out the carnal element in the heart and then how to develop the heart and life in righteousness and true holiness.

5. Afflictions are God's refinings (v. 3). It is important that we keep in right balance process and crisis in the matter of the working of God's grace in one's heart. A sinner is brought through a process of fight and Holy Ghost conviction to the crisis of the new birth. The new birth is an instantaneous experience wrought by the grace of God in response to the faith of the seeker. Normally there will be a process of bringing the child of God up to a second crisis--that of cleansing from inbred sin. Beyond that is the work of the Spirit in the maturing process normally, called progressive sanctification. Often times the Spirit leads the saint through afflictions, trials and testings that leave him wondering, "Why is this happening to me?." God in His infinite tenderness, mercy and wisdom is working for our good, but He works not in the context of time, but eternity and infinity of which He only is the master and not what we think is good for us as we view only the here and now. God will do that which He knows is for our eternal good as He places us in the context of His universal providence. Many times Christians when put into the furnace of afflictions are tempted to think that they are designed for destruction but The Refiner is pictured as sitting down beside the crucible that the fire may not be too hot, nor the process left incomplete.

6. We need not fear in a time of wickedness. God doesn't change. The perseverance of the saints is guaranteed, not by their unchangeable love to God, but by His unchangeable love to them (v. 6).

Praise God, reader, it is possible to be settled in our heart by God's sanctifying grace that we will be true to Him and that He will not fail to lead us through life, keeping our hearts prepared to meet Him when He comes again!

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THE END