

cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16).

I. *The condition of the Church of the latter days.* Lukewarm; neither cold nor hot. Claiming to be rich in good, and having need of nothing. This is as they see themselves. Wretched, miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, as God sees them.

II. *What God would have them do to remedy their plight.* "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev. 3:18, 19). The spiritual obscured and minimized by the material.

III. *The inevitable if repentance and reformation are not effected.* "I will spue thee out of my mouth." The Church, the body of Christ, is a spiritual institution in the purpose of God. When it ceases to be such an institution, it must cease to function as a church, and a body that God can use will be substituted. The return of our Lord, the restoration of Israel and the ushering in of the kingdom age.

IV. *The suppliant Christ.* "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." If man

is no more than he now appears to be our Lord's knocking at his door for admission is condescension well-nigh unbelievable. In view of his creation in the image, and after the likeness of God, it is a revelation of his dignity and value in the sight of God, who alone knows his worth. It has been the eternal purpose of God to create a race of human beings worth redeeming with the precious blood of His own Son, the highest price that even God could pay. We may rest assured that no mistake has been made in this matter.

V. *The closed door.* Man is a self-determining being in the wisdom of God. If any man open the door. Man must open the door, or it will never be opened. Here again we see something of the dignity with which God has endowed man, within or without the confines of the Church. A universal call. Our Lord is paying to man the highest honor that even He can pay to any created being. Men are lost because of their refusal to be saved. The call is personal, individual, and demands a personal answer.

VI. *Christ in us, the hope of glory.* "I will come in to him and sup with him." He will be in us, and share with us the vicissitudes of this life. We are in danger of making too little of our present life. In our Lord's sight it is of such importance that He desires to

share it with us. Only as He indwells us is it possible for our present life to be what He would have it to be. We need Him in this life as surely as we will need Him in the life to come. It is only as He indwells us that we come to any marked appreciation of the importance of our present life and all that goes into its making. He does not count it a hardship to have His place in our seemingly poor lives.

VII. *The consummation of Christian life and experience, both here and hereafter.* "And he with me." His supping with us does not impoverish Him; while it marvelously enriches us. Some day we may understand that He too is enriched by filling His place in our lives here and now. Great as is this, greater still will be our privilege of supping with Him. Throughout eternity it will be our privilege to feast with Him on the riches of His grace. Blinded and stupefied by the effects of the fall, we have little appreciation of our danger, less of our privileges and but a faint conception of our real needs. It is only as Christ indwells us and we co-operate with Him in the accomplishment of His purposes that our real condition is made known to us. It is through His indwelling that we come to know that we were made for fellowship with Him, and to be participants with Him in His glory.

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# The PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

## That I Might Know Him

That I might know Him! Let this be life's aim,  
Still to explore the wealth stored in His name,  
With heaven-taught intelligence to trace  
The glories that light up His sinless face;  
That I might know His power day by day,  
Protecting, guiding in the upward way:  
That I might know His presence, calm and pure,  
Changeless midst changes, and midst losses sure:  
To dwell with Him in spirit, day and night;  
To walk with Him by faith, if not by sight;  
To work with Him, as He shall plan, not I;  
To cleave to Him, and let the world go by;  
To live on earth a life of selfless love;  
To set the mind and heart on things above:  
Till I shall see Him without vision dim,  
And know Him as I know I'm known of Him.  
—MAX I. REICH, in *Hebrew-Christian Alliance Quarterly*.

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## A Young Preacher's Mental Habits

By the EDITOR

A YOUNG licensed minister who has not yet set out into the work of a full-time ministry, although he certainly has been giving good account of himself in an active unofficial ministry, recently wrote me to ask a question about reading habits. He was stirred up to write by one of the questions in my editorial, "Taking Ourselves to Class Meeting." It was that question, "Have I read at least one good, full, solid book for each week of the past year?" There are some things in that letter that are too good to let die, so I pass them along for others to consider. I do this because there is an undertone of earnestness and sincerity in the young preacher's lines that one cannot fail to notice, and because his words are so full of practical suggestions for us all. His letter in part reads as follows:

"I have always more or less prided myself on the quantity of my reading, although I have tried always to read with the idea of retaining something of value in mind, and not just covering a certain number of pages. Yet I find it difficult to keep up with current magazines and books now and then as they interest me or I want to study them. I seldom read a newspaper—I try to get my knowledge of current affairs from *Time*, which I feel gives one a more rounded survey of world conditions. I read *Life* each week, because I find the articles and pictures describing various people or countries give me a much better understanding of other peoples. I read *The Reader's Digest*, and look through the *National Geographic*. The *Herald of Holiness* gives me a great deal of blessing and joy, and I read much of it each week. Then there are *The Young People's Journal*, *The Preacher's Magazine*, and occasionally the *Religious Digest*, besides of course daily Bible reading. I also subscribe for a photographic magazine in connection with my hobby.

"I have just read an interesting little book, 'Why Be Tired?' (1938) by Daniel W. Josselyn. The book is written primarily for the sedentary worker, and upon the premise that a tired man cannot do good work and therefore one should so live as to keep his energy pushing him constantly on, and not

be tired at the end of the day's work—that is, if one is tired, he cannot have been working efficiently. The author says that by rest and relaxation, proper eating, sufficient exercise of your body and emotions or glands, you can increase your energy, which will enable you to 'double your work and half your fatigue.'

"He stresses relaxation of body and nerves. 'Learn to keep your body relaxed even in the face of your hardest problems, your most difficult situations.' In thinking, he says we should keep our minds relaxed, as it is the unconscious part of the mind which does the thinking, and it does best when we are at ease mentally and physically. He says we should work with an easy rhythm of frequent rests, which will enable us to keep going at top speed and never tire. I remember that my father tried to take a nap after lunch every day—he had to do so because he was not physically strong. Yet he always seemed to have a lot of energy, if by energy we mean the will to work.

"The author says in connection with glandular energy—that is, the energy produced by the ductless glands which affect emotions—'No matter how great a man is, he cannot produce greatly without a great emotion. Every great poem, book, invention or legislation is a great emotion, and not always an indication of any other greatness.'

"Now the Christian spends a lot of time in prayer—not because he has to do so out of duty, but because he cannot help it—he wants to do it. I wonder if these periods of prayer should not be a great relaxation of spirit and mind in the presence of God? Or, on the other hand, should our praying be a mighty effort which tends to wear us out? It seems to me, looking at the effects of my own praying, that in addition to the strengthening of spirit which communion with God always brings, sending me out wanting to do things for God, it also relaxes my mind and nerves, and that this is one reason for the poise which every Christian should have. I do not know whether my conclusions are based on proper premises or not.

"A few months ago I enjoyed reading 'The Preacher and Prayer,' the book in the minister's course of study. I am going to try to reread this little book every few years. Several passages impressed themselves upon me, particularly the paragraph about 'Severe crucifixion of self.' It seems to me our dependence upon God and our likeness to Christ increase in direct ratio to the amount of our crucifixion of self, provided this is accompanied by an increasing communion and a 'turning toward God with perfect hearts.'

"As my time for reading is limited (although it certainly can be increased if I properly plan it), I have prayed much about what I should read. I have come to no final conclusions in this respect, but this problem of expediency is ever before me, and I desire that my reading may pass this test.

"Your article on the front page of the *Herald of Holiness*, 'O Lord, I Give to Thee,' has been of help to me. For years I have been a Christian and have

worked hard in the church, particularly in the N.Y. P.S. Yet there was no dynamic compulsion in my service or severe crucifixion of self in my devotion to God! Suddenly, a few months ago, God woke me up. He showed me I had been sitting about an office long enough—too long in fact—and that if I would make a complete surrender, this year would mean the opening of many doors in my life. And so, through the mercy of God, I was sanctified a little over two months ago, and it has meant the greatest change and joy that has ever come into my life. Already God has been opening some doors, but the bigger ones are ahead of me. I feel completely helpless in my own strength, but I believe God is going to fulfill His plan for me, although for me it means walking blindly, with only faith to sustain me.

"This letter is an imposition upon you, because I wanted only to ask you about reading and accomplishing much without continual strain and ten-

sion. However the balance of the letter has broken through a restraint as to length. But possibly it is essential as a background for a conclusion. I shall greatly appreciate any help you may give me, and I hasten to assure you that I shall not burden you with correspondence again soon.

"With kindest regards, and with a desire to do the whole will of God, I am, sincerely," . . . . .

This young man is evidently a reader of the PREACHER'S MAGAZINE, and will be surprised to see his words in these pages. As to helping him, I feel only that I can commend him. It seems to me he is on the right track. In fact I have used his words because they express what I would like to say on the general theme better than any words I can use. Poise, efficiency, expediency! What tremendous words! Let us all pray for a better application of their meaning in our lives that we may be more useful as servants of Jesus Christ. Amen and Amen!

## Thoughts on Holiness from the Old Writers

Olive M. Winchester

DEPRIVITY IN THE MORAL REASON

SCRIPTURE INDICATIONS OF A PERVERTED MORAL REASON

I N the study of depravity, we meet with discussions about depravity in the sensuous nature or the urges, drives and affections, and also we have advocates of the teaching that depravity is in the will. Now depravity is in the personal center of man and from that center affects certain parts more than others. We no longer divide man up into compartments, but view him as a whole. Yet a diseased condition may deplete certain phases of man's being more than others. We agree that the sensuous nature seems to have been the most affected, and do not agree with the fact that the volitional nature is immediately affected but indirectly—through the sensuous nature and the moral reason. While we feel that the sensuous nature is contaminated more than any other part, yet there is a decided perversion of the moral reason, and we now give ourselves to the study of this aspect of depravity.

In following up this line of thought we would choose as our basic text, "And their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. 1:21b). In addressing ourselves to this text, the first point to be considered is the meaning of the word *heart*. It would seem that we have reference here to the sensuous nature rather than the understanding, but when we examine Hebrew psychology in which line of thought the Apostle Paul had been trained, we find that while the heart is used to denote the seat of personal life and all the range of its manifestations, yet its particular application is to the understanding. If we note the text in its setting as we have it before us in this verse, we see that the stress is laid upon mental activities such as knowing and imagining which bears out the fact that the faculty referred to is the intellectual.

When we turn to the Scripture for parallel passages to bear out this point of a perverted moral reason, we find that it is a truth well substantiated. If it were not, then we could not postulate it, for we should never build doctrine on a single passage from the Word of God. A doctrine to be well established must have the support of different passages, and should be more or less reiterated in Scripture.

One of the woes that Isaiah pronounced on the people of his day was that they called evil good, and good evil; they put darkness for light and light for darkness (Isaiah 5:20). The understanding of the people had been so perverted that they not only had lost their sense of moral distinctions, but they had reversed them entirely. A sore plight was this. Then again in Isaiah, this time when he is denouncing idolatry and showing its folly, he pictures to us the scene where a man takes a piece of wood and uses part of it to warm himself therewith and then takes another portion and makes for himself an idol which he bows down and worships. A little thought would clearly reveal the folly of it all, but as the prophet tells us, "There is none that considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it; and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?"

Again when we come to the teaching of Jesus we see that from time to time He changed the method of His teaching. First He preached that the kingdom

of heaven was at hand, then with the Sermon on the Mount He taught; and with the parables we have the illustrative or analogical method. He tells why He made this last change; it was because so many had no understanding of spiritual things and would pervert the truth.

Further in this chapter of Romans from which we have chosen our text, we find it stated repeatedly that God gave them over to a reprobate mind. This is particularly emphasized in v. 28. The word used here is the purest intellectual term in the New Testament and was introduced by St. Paul. Denny in commenting on this passage says that it is a mind which is no mind and cannot discharge the functions of one, a mind in which the divine distinctions of right and wrong are confused and lost, so that God's condemnation can but fall on it at last.

While other passages might be cited, yet these are sufficient to show us that there is depravity in the moral reason, clearly set forth in the Word of God. The stain of sin in the being of man perverts our thinking.

#### MANIFESTATIONS OF A DEPRAVED MORAL REASON

In outlining the manifestations of a depraved moral reason, we must of necessity repeat some of the points that we have already mentioned. But we will approach them this time from a different angle, and I believe that we will also find other manifestations.

First we would say that one of the most general manifestations of depravity in the moral reason is the lack of an understanding of spiritual values. In writing to the Corinthians Paul tells them that to those that perish the preaching of the cross of Christ is foolishness and that the natural man receiveth not the things of God. This we see over and over again in life. The way of the cross is a way to be despised so the natural man looks upon it, he sees nothing to be desired; its glory never shines upon him until the Holy Spirit illuminates his understanding.

This lack of understanding of spiritual values is found in the regenerate man who has not found the fullness of divine light and understanding on spiritual problems. Jesus rebuked Peter because he did not comprehend that suffering is a part of Christian service saying unto him, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

Then with the lack of understanding of spiritual values there comes a deadening of the feeling. When we value anything highly we have a corresponding feeling response, but when we count anything of little worth, our feeling response is negligible. So the Apostle Paul speaking of the Gentiles who had not received Christ, says of them that their understanding is darkened, "being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph. 4: 17-19).

Following on we have the reprobate mind which we have mentioned quite distinctly before. This would seem to bring before us man in a helpless state and condition, not given over by God directly, but because he gave himself over and refused to retain God in his thoughts and let his imagination dwell on evil rather than good.

Finally comes one of the climactic points when the depravity of the moral reason affects the intuitive reason and also the logical may function truly while the moral reason is depraved. They can never function with the same precision, but they may abide in truth. Yet on the other hand there is a tendency for the depravity of the moral reason to spread its corruption over the intuitive and logical reason until we have the state and condition depicted to us by the psalmist, "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God." The truth of the existence of God comes to us through the intuitive reason primarily and is reinforced by both the logical and moral reason. When the intuitive and logical reason fails to apprehend this great fundamental truth of theology and doctrine, then the soul has passed out into entire darkness as far as his understanding is concerned, and the probabilities are that all doors of approach to his soul are closed.

Thus we see the Scripture teaching on the depravity of the moral reason given in brief and its manifestations in the life of man. This phase of depravity only adds to the already gruesome picture of the evil in the heart of man. It brings only evil and destruction in its wake. Happy is the man who has been purged from its contamination.

### Two Great Pastors

We think of Phillips Brooks as a great preacher, but those fortunate enough to be in his church knew him also as a great pastor. He said one time, "I wish that I could devote every hour of the day to calling on my people. I know of no happier or more helpful work that a pastor can do, and I call as much as I can. How is it possible for one to preach to his people if he does not know them, their doubts, sorrows and ambitions?"

Dr. J. H. Jowett, like Paul, possessed rare powers of sympathy, for which he paid a high price, literally wearing himself out in his ministry. He once said, "At first I could not conduct a funeral without tears. I could not read the burial service without my speech being choked; but now I have had so many funerals, have seen so many people in sorrow, I have seen so much suffering, that I can read the burial service without tears. Well, perhaps this is part of the gracious providence of God that the burden should be eased, but I don't want the ease if it be at the cost of losing the compassion with my fellowmen. I would rather have the tears, I would prefer the choking speech. I would prefer that my not-too-strong body should be tired out, drained out twice or thrice a week, if I might only keep my compassion with my fellowmen."—SELECTED.

## The Meaning of Inspiration

Donald H. Strong

THE Bible is the inspired Word of God. Its authenticity and historicity are principles fundamental to the Christian faith, and may for the present purpose be assumed as true. But the question which arises is, What do we mean by inspiration? For there are many theories of inspiration, and our attitude toward the Bible and toward the whole of Christianity will be very largely governed by the theory which we accept as to the nature and extent of inspiration.

Before taking up the problem as to the exact nature of inspiration, a few prefatory suggestions may be made.

1. Inspiration is not revelation. Dr. Charles Hodge says that revelation is the act of communicating divine knowledge to the mind, while inspiration is the act of the same Spirit controlling those who make that knowledge known to others. Similarly, G. L. Robinson states that inspiration is an operation of God in which He makes known to men His being, His will and His purposes, and that it is therefore distinctly a mode of revelation.

2. Inspiration is more than illumination. Every Christian who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit is illumined but he may not be inspired. Spiritual illumination is subject to degrees, while inspiration is not, for it is in every case the breath of God expressing itself through human personality.

3. In speaking of the writers of the Scriptures being inspired by God we must remember that the object is the inspiration not of the men but of the books, and not of the writers but of the writings. David and Solomon and Peter were not everywhere and always inspired; for then they would have been infallible and inerrant, which we know was not the case.

4. It must be made clear that the Scripture for whose inspiration we shall contend is the original record—the actual documents as penned by the writers themselves, and not any translation or translations. Unless we make the extremely liberal concession that all copyists have been inspired, there can be no existing translation that is without human error in some degree.

5. It must be conceded that any theory of inspiration of Scripture includes the whole and every part of it. The Bible says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God," and Christ approved with the stamp of His divine authority every jot and tittle. In view of these two facts, what man is competent to separate the Bible to fit any theory of piecemeal inspiration?

The thesis of the present argument may now be stated briefly. The meaning of inspiration is that the words of the Bible are God-breathed—not the thoughts only but the *very words*. If they are not, then the Bible is not inspired at all, since it is composed only and solely of words. In 2 Timothy 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God,"

the word translated scripture is the Greek *graphie* which means writing or anything written. Writing is composed of words, and this passage points clearly to plenary verbal inspiration. This position was well stated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1893, in these words: "The Bible as we now have it in its various translations and revisions when freed from all errors and mistakes of translators, copyists and printers, is the very Word of God and consequently wholly without error." In defense of this position we shall resort not to argument or logic but first, to the testimony of recognized authorities on the subject and second, to the evidence found in the Bible itself.

Professor Hodge states, "The line can never rationally be drawn between the thoughts and words of Scripture. That we have an inspired Bible, and a verbally inspired one, we have the witness of God himself."

Professor Gaussen says, "The theory of a divine revelation in which you have the inspiration of thoughts without the inspiration of the language is so inevitably irrational that it cannot be sincere, and proves false even to those who propose it."

Canon Westcott says, "The slightest consideration will show that words are as essential to intellectual processes as they are to mutual intercourse. Thoughts are wedded to words as necessarily as soul to body. Without words the mysteries unveiled before the eyes of the seer would be confused shadows; with them they are made clear lessons for human life."

Dean Burgon has said, "You cannot dissect inspiration into substance and form. As for thoughts being inspired apart from words which give them expression, you might as well talk of a tune without notes, or a sum without figures. No such theory of inspiration is even intelligible."

We may go back if we wish to the testimony of the early Fathers. Justin writes, "We must not suppose that the language proceeds from the men that are inspired, but from the divine Word himself, who moves them."

Clement of Alexandria said, "The Jews and the Christians agree as to the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, but differ in interpretation. By our faith we believe that every scripture, since it is God-breathed, is profitable. If the words of the Lord are pure words, refined silver, tried seven times and the Holy Spirit has with all care dictated them accurately, it was on this account the Savior said that not one jot or tittle of them should pass away."

No view of verbal inspiration could be more rigid than that held by Augustine, who said, "The Scriptures are the letters of God, the voice of God and the writings of God and the writers record the words of God."

Professor Benjamin Warfield, in an article on the Westminster Doctrine of inspiration, summarizes



the position of the early Church when he says, "Despite the contrary assertion that has recently become tolerably current, essentially this doctrine of inspiration (verbal) has been the doctrine of the Church of all ages and of all names."

In the last analysis, it is the Bible itself of course which must settle the question of its inspiration and the extent of it, and to this we come now in the consideration of the proof. The Bible plainly teaches that its words are inspired and that it is the Word of God.

In 2 Samuel 23:2 David says; "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me and his word was upon my tongue."

In the first chapter of Jeremiah we read that the prophet said, "Ah, Lord God! behold I cannot speak, for I am a child. But the Lord saith unto me, Say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. . . Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth."

We know that Balaam was compelled to speak against his will, for he said, "Lo, I am come unto thee; have I now any power at all to say anything? The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak." While Balaam was not of course one of the writers of Scripture, still this passage is of value for it indicates that God could and did at times dictate the very words which men should speak.

In the five books of Moses there are no less than three hundred instances of such phrases as "Thus saith the Lord," "The Lord spake" and "The Lord hath spoken." The Prophet Isaiah states explicitly twenty times that his writings are the "words of the Lord." Nearly a hundred times Jeremiah declares, "The word of the Lord came unto me," or says he is proclaiming "the words of the Lord." Ezekiel says sixty times that his writings are the "words of God." And so we might go through book after book of the Scriptures. Every writer declares that he is recording the words of the Lord and not one says "This is the thought which the Lord gave me."

But we may go still farther. The most unique argument for the inspiration of the words of the Scripture is the relation which Christ bears to them. First of all, He himself was inspired in His very words. The first reference to His prophetic office says, "I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak. . . ." (Deut. 18:18). In His own words Jesus says, "As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" and "the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak." Also, "Whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 6:63 and 8:26, 28). In the second place, Jesus used the Scriptures as though they were inspired in their very words. In Matthew 22:31 He draws an argument from the tense of the verb to be. In verse 42 of the same chapter He proves His own deity by referring to the particular

use of the word *Lord*. And it was Jesus who said, "For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." In Matthew 4 Christ overcame the tempter by three times stating "It is written." In referring to this Adolphe Monod says, "I know of nothing in the whole history of humanity, nor even in the field of divine revelation, that proves more clearly than this the inspiration of the Scriptures. How can we explain that spiritual mystery, that wonderful reversing of the order of things, if for Jesus the words of Moses were not the words of God rather than those of men? How shall we explain it if Jesus were not fully aware that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?"

Sidney Collett suggests that God has made this physical universe a thing of perfection. The sting of a wasp is perfect in design, and a snowflake a study in art. Then he says, "Surely we shrink from so blasphemous a thought that the same Almighty Creator has been careless and indifferent about the details of His Word, which is to endure forever."

Probably the strongest objection offered against the theory of verbal inspiration is the idea that it makes of the Scripture writers mere machines, with no power of conscious choice. Even if this were true, as it is not, we might ask which is the more important, the free agency of a score or two of mortals or the divinity of their message. We can insist upon no idea of inspiration if it excludes the human element in the writing of Scripture. Wayland Hoyt said, "Inspiration is not a mechanical, crass, bald compulsion of the sacred writers, but rather a dynamic, divine influence over their freely acting faculties." It is limiting God to say that He cannot do this without turning human beings into automatons. Shall we say that He who created man as a free agent left Himself no opportunity to mold man's thoughts into forms expressive of His will without destroying that which He has made? On this subject Dr. James Gray, former Dean of Moody Bible Institute, says, "And indeed, wherein resides man's free agency, in his mind or in his mouth? Shall we say that he is free while God controls his thought but that he becomes a mere machine when that control extends to the expression of his thought?" Thus it is evident that verbal inspiration in its strictest sense does not involve mechanical dictation in any sense. It is clear that all of the writers about whom we know anything not only maintained but strikingly revealed their own individuality.

We have listened to the testimony of the early Church leaders, of the sacred writers themselves, and of Jesus Christ; we have heard the evidence of both scholarship and common sense, and the conclusion of them all must be that the only theory which we can intelligently accept is that of a full verbal inspiration of the very words of Scripture.

It must be admitted that there are difficulties in the way of any explanation of inspiration; but these difficulties are fast disappearing under the light of  
(Concluded on page nine)

## Laziness—False and Genuine

Mallalieu A. Wilson

ARE preachers lazy?" In several articles and discussions that have come to my attention in recent years, preachers themselves seem to have cheerfully accepted the verdict of guilty. In my opinion a more correct answer would be Andy's favorite expression, "Yes and no—mostly no!"

Even when preachers are guilty of laziness, many fail to see wherein their laziness really lies. Sometimes serious injury may come from taking too seriously the frequent exhortations against laziness if we have a false idea of what laziness is. What is laziness anyhow?

I

Some laymen seem to think that spending one's time at anything except physical labor is laziness. They admire a preacher who spends much of his time in strenuous physical labor. They consider him energetic. They despise as lazy one who rarely does any physical work—whether his lack of such activity is due to indisposition or to the necessity of spending his full time in study and pastoral work. Fortunately this attitude is not nearly so prevalent now as in former years.

Again, taking sufficient time for sleep is not laziness. Very dangerous and unscientific nonsense is often advocated on this point. Even Wesley, ordinarily so sensible, tried to make all his preachers rise at four a.m. because he himself had found no necessity for sleep after that hour. To deprive oneself of necessary sleep is one of the surest ways to undermine the health and precipitate a nervous breakdown.

Jesus, and perhaps some of the Middle Ages mystics, seemed to be able to substitute prayer for sleep. If we knew that secret, we too might sleep less in order to pray more. But since we do not have that secret, and since prayer is for most of us still "the hardest work in the world," as I have heard my brethren assert, it is dangerous to try to substitute even prayer for sleep.

A preacher may need more sleep than he needed when he was a laborer, for activities that are primarily mental require a longer time to recover from than physical activities. Also the quality of mental work depends more on the rested condition of mind and body than does the quality of physical work.

Under the driving of a relentless boss, a man may shovel concrete all day, though bleary-eyed from lack of sleep, and the concrete will set just as solidly as if he had been well-rested and enjoying the task. But a man who goes to his study bleary-eyed will work not only without pleasure but without success.

From many years' experience as a student and as a teacher, I found that it is far more important to come to a class with a well-rested brain than to come with a tediously prepared lesson. Again and again the student who stayed up all night to study has fallen on examination below the student that di-

vided his time more sensibly between study and sleep.

One hour of honest, concentrated study when well-refreshed may produce more results in creative effort than eight hours of yawning over books when too sleepy to think. Perhaps praying done under extreme fatigue conditions is not of very high quality either. When one is so worn that he goes to sleep almost as soon as he drops on his knees for prayer—as I confess I have done more than once—the probability is that he needs sleep more than he needs prayer at that particular time. He should try to pray when still freshly rested.

No general rule can be given as to the exact amount of time needed for sleep. A recent study of the sleeping habits of men successful enough to be listed in "Who's Who in America?" indicates an actual average of eight or nine hours daily. This is probably more than the average citizen gets, although perhaps not more than he needs.

It is not a question of how little sleep we can "get by" on. I have known students to go for years with not over four hours' sleep a night. But when they learned in studying psychology the effects of sleep on the nervous system and were persuaded to experiment with more sleep, they discovered a new physical and mental vigor that they had not known anyone could possess.

Even with one individual the amount needed may vary with the climate, age, and certain health conditions. Ordinarily a good rule would be always to sleep until you wake up naturally—that is, without being called or alarmed by a clock.

Scientific experiments have also demonstrated the fallacy of the idea that sleep after midnight is not so valuable as sleep before midnight. It is true that the first hours of sleep are the soundest, but today they are not believed to be necessarily any more beneficial than the later hours. And anyhow, the first hours of sleep are the soundest regardless of whether the sleep begins after midnight or before.

In these days preachers are usually engaged in their most strenuous or exciting work at night. To retire for sleep a few minutes after leaving a thrilling or a heart-breaking altar service or after a long, hazardous drive through traffic is for most of us to court certain insomnia. Many preachers find that any sleep before midnight is rarely possible. If they are still asleep the next morning when some manual laborer calls before going to his work, it does not mean they are lazy.

Other people whose work is nerve-racking and at night, such as dramatic and operatic performers, customarily sleep well up toward the noon hour. Such people are never accused of being lazy by any who understand. But preachers often find it necessary to rise early as well as to stay up late. In such case, they should not be ashamed to take a nap during the day.



## II

Again, calmness and lack of hurry do not necessarily indicate laziness. Sometimes I am rather disturbed by the frequent reports of "nervous breakdowns" among even our younger ministers. Probably it is not due to overwork, for medical men are rather unanimous that overwork never broke anyone down. It may be lack of sleep. It may be lack of adjustment in marital relations. It may be maladjustments in other lines.

But primarily, I wonder if it is not due to our conception of the ideal preacher as one who is always on a tension, rushing desperately here and there in haste to save some soul, settle somebody's personal problems, rebuke someone—before understanding the situation—or weep with someone else—when perhaps equally misinformed. The impression I have often carried away from assemblies and conventions is that this is what we are exhorted to be like.

Years ago, a friend of mine, a slow, easy-going boy, was praying at an altar for sanctification. He was praying along in a thoughtful but not too intense manner. A minister of the intense, fiery type stood it as long as he could and then began to exhort him in exasperation, "Git nervous, boy! Git nervous!"

I have often felt like giving similar advice to some preachers, but after all, is that exactly what we need? Some by getting nervous accomplish a great deal of good, but usually they undo all the good by their same nervousness. They remind me of the man who "leaped into the saddle and rode off furiously in all directions at once."

On the other hand, some of the most consistently successful pastors that I know, measured even in terms of increasing size of their membership and congregations, are men who always seem leisurely. They take time to sleep, they take time for recreation, they have time for friendship, they spend time with their families on restful pleasure trips. Yet they manage to make more calls, read more books, look after their church business more promptly, and give more time to district and general interests than the average preacher. And apparently they are growing in deeper devotion to Christ.

## III

There is one other thing that is often mistaken for laziness. Bad health conditions may sap a person's vitality and leave him weak and anemic. Infected teeth, infected tonsils or other focal infections poison the system as truly as drugs. All diseases seem to poison the body in a depressing way with the single exception of tuberculosis which seems to produce a stimulating poison that may cause its victims to put forth almost unbelievable exertions up till almost the hour of their death. There are people who are depressed with sickness from the hour of their birth. There are some that are born with relatively sluggish glandular systems.

Where lack of activity is due to diseased bodily organs, exertion of will power will not help much. What is needed is a cure of the physical cause,

whether through supernatural agency or natural means.

## IV

There is a real laziness which is a defect of personality that can be changed and should be changed. Someone has defined it as doing what we want to do rather than what we ought to do. This is a poor definition but a wonderfully enlightening suggestion. Laziness is seen in the way we delay work, put forth feeble effort in work, and too quickly drop work.

Even when a man is in good health and well rested, there is still a terrific temptation to neglect some phases of work that are less enjoyable than others. This is the preacher's temptation, and this is the only sense in which one can justly accuse very many preachers of laziness.

Just what is neglected depends on the personal likes of the preacher. I know some preachers—believe it or not—who really enjoy pastoral calling so much that they must fight against a temptation to stay out all day in that work.

Others like to study—or at least to read. Their temptation may be to neglect their calling or the business of the church.

Others dislike both calling and studying but are happy as long as they have church business to look after. A building program keeps them happy, but when the church has completed its physical plant they become restless and move on or else become contented just to putter around looking after a lot of largely unnecessary "business."

There are still others who are interested only in the "spiritual" work, by which they mean largely holding public services.

## V

All of these are tempted to "rationalize" their conduct, that is, find good reasons for doing what they do, when the real reason is that they just naturally like to do it that way. If men like to study, they may come to doubt whether visitation work is really necessary or even important. If they dislike to study, they may come to believe that too much study interferes with divine help in the ministry.

I have even known men who disliked to do anything but preach and have the thrill of altar services, decide that visitation, looking after church business, and study were all hindrances to their own spiritual condition.

Real laziness is a habit. How are habits of laziness or of industry formed? Investigations have shown that they are formed in just the opposite way from what we might expect. A habit of tackling all work, unpleasant as well as pleasant, with enthusiasm and persistency is found in those who have had work that they really enjoyed. They worked so hard at the pleasurable work that working became a habit.

On the other hand, people who have had to do work they disliked for a long time, usually form the habit of dawdling over all work and lack persistency even when they try something that they are initially interested in. An educational system which confines

students very largely to studies in which they are not even remotely interested and lets them get by with very half-hearted efforts at accomplishments may really make them lazy for life.

## VI

But what can a preacher do if he recognizes that he is more or less lazy? In the first place, unless a man finds the work of the ministry on the whole interests him intensely and challenges his best efforts, it would seem that probably he has mistaken his calling. I doubt if God has really called these sullen, reluctant men to the ministry who would far rather be doing something else.

One must continually remind himself that the less interesting part of his work must be done well if he is to have opportunity to continue the part he likes. By tying all his work together in this way, the interest he feels in one part will help to carry him through it all.

Of course as one works at an unpleasant task he will often discover interesting things about it, so that what was formerly drudgery becomes an inspiration. This process can be helped by deliberately looking for the values in drudgery work. Such values are always present in work that is really necessary.

A good general rule is to compress unpleasant tasks and perform them as rapidly, intensely and promptly as possible. Then one can give himself with good conscience and enthusiasm to the part of work that he likes without having formed the habit of procrastination, dilatoriness and half-heartedness in work.

One should not feel that he must spend all his time or even most of his time in the work he hates and put forth only feeble efforts in the activity in which he excels and which he prefers. There is in any occupation a minimum of efficiency and attention necessary to each part of one's work. Without that minimum of successful work in each line, a man will fail no matter how brilliant his performance in some other line. But in the ministry, as in teaching and other professions, distinguished success demands that a man shall be especially good in at least some one phase of his work.

After a man qualifies as a fair pulpit speaker, a fair pastoral visitor, a fair administrator, a fair devotional leader, and as a good, upright, consecrated man, he still needs to be outstanding in one or more of these points or to surpass the average in some other way, such as showing talent in musical leadership, if he is to have success.

A well-known law of habit formation is that laid down years ago by William James, the great Harvard psychologist. His first rule was "Always get as strong a start as possible." A preacher needs to constantly make fresh efforts to reorganize his activities on a more efficient basis, and remembering the rule above, he should take advantage of every special time of transition to make a strong, fresh start. This means not only when he enters the ministry for the first time, but also at the beginning of every new assembly year, after every rally and convention

when he has been freshly stirred, and on every other occasion that varies the routine, including such as special meetings.

Let's welcome, brethren, every exhortation that will encourage us to go home and make a fresh start and a more energetic effort to succeed for God. But let us be careful that we do not defeat our purpose by mistaken efforts at success. Remember that for efficient work we need bodies and nerves well-rested with sufficient sleep, fresh air, exercise, and recreation, and calmed by cultivation of poise and evenness of temper.

That we may not form a habit of trifling with all our work or procrastinating in all our duties, let's tackle our most unpleasant tasks and get them out of the way as quickly as possible, remembering all the while that even these unpleasant jobs are necessary parts of a glorious calling and seeking to find frequently even in these tasks of drudgery bits of genuine interest and joy.

## THE MEANING OF INSPIRATION

(Continued from page six)

modern scholarly research. But until every problem is solved and every argument silenced, we may say with Bishop Ryle, "Give me the plenary verbal theory with all its difficulties rather than the doubt. I accept the difficulties and humbly wait for their solution, but while I wait I am standing on a rock."

## The Joy of a Good Conscience

THOMAS A KEMPIS

A bad conscience is timid and uneasy. Keep a good conscience and you will always be happy.

A good conscience can bear much and is able to be very cheerful even in adversity.

You will enjoy a sweet peace if your heart does not condemn you.

The glory of the good is in their consciences and not in the mouth of man.

The joy of the righteous is of God and in God they rejoice in the truth.

He will be easily content and at rest whose conscience is pure.

You are not more holy because you are praised; neither are you more vile, because you are blamed.

For you are what you are, neither can you be made better by what others say than what God sees you to be.

If you take good heed to what in yourself you are inwardly you will not care so much what men say about you.

Man sees the face but God sees the heart.

Man considers the actions; God weighs the motives.

To walk inwardly with God, and to have the heart detached from earthly objects, is the state of a spiritual man.—In *The Wesleyan Methodist*.

## If I Were a Pastor

A. S. London

THE word "pastor" has an interesting note about it. It is significant. It is equivalent to a herdsman or shepherd, one who cares for the flock. It seems that of all the terms used in the Bible for the preacher, the word shepherd is the most beautiful. The word carries a content that can hardly be found in any of the terms clergyman, priest or bishop. Pastor and shepherd are synonymous.

If I were a pastor, I would see first that I was the right kind of a man. No man can wield the right kind of influence as a preacher who is not all that he professes to be. I preach what I am, and not what I merely pretend to be. I would be pure, clean in character and conduct, for as Emerson says, "I have the strength of ten because my heart is pure." I would live above the line of giving others a just cause for suspicion.

If I were a pastor I would strive to have a happy home, a congenial atmosphere and raise my family so as to be examples worthy for others to follow. I would not want fussing, gossiping, or backbiting to be known among us. I would gather my family around the family fireside at least once each day and have family worship. I believe this would be wholesome for my home, and the homes of those about us. I would be kind, tender, gentle, patient, and live at home what I profess at church.

If I were a pastor, I would want my home kept clean, my children neat, my own attire presentable. I would not lounge around until a late hour in the morning and be unrepresentable if a caller should happen our way at nine o'clock. I would strive to have my children adorn the doctrine I preach, and my wife be an example of true womanhood.

If I were a pastor, I would leave the family at quite an early hour and retire to my study. Here I would study, read good books, meditate and pray. I would cleanse my own life of all prejudices, littleness and narrowness. I would come out of my study around the noon hour, greet my family with a pleasant smile and cause them to be glad of my presence. I would not be a grouch, a complainer, a faultfinder. I would be as kind to my wife as I would be to other women. I would be as patient with my own children as I would be with other children.

If I were a pastor I would give my afternoons to visiting. I would look first after the sick, the distressed, the poor, the needy, the discouraged. I would not have cliques, and make so many calls at a certain home until the neighbors would begin to whisper about it. I would steer clear of going to the same place so many times during the week until my influence at home and abroad would be hindered for good. I would love little children, respect all pure womanhood and meet all classes, business men, schoolteachers, doctors, lawyers and common laborers, and cause them to feel that I was an honest citizen of the community where I lived.

If I were a pastor I would know every unchurched home in my territory. If I lived in a small city I would know every family, take an interest in the public welfare of my town, and not hold myself aloof from the people.

If I were a pastor I would have frequent visits with my Sunday school superintendent and teachers. I would have a great Sunday school rally once each year, attend every convention, leadership training courses, of every denomination, that it was possible for me to do so. I would arrange a canvass of my church territory twice each year, and find the name and address of every unchurched person in my jurisdiction. I would prepare for at least two good revivals each year, with conventions, week-end meetings arranged at convenient seasons. I would treat my evangelist as I would desire to be treated. I would have a comfortable place for him to stay, pay him well for his services, and build a psychology before his arrival of confidence, expectancy and blessing.

If I were a pastor I would strive to be a leader of the moral and religious forces of my community. Slavery was abolished in this country under the influence of preachers. The cause of temperance has always been led by ministers. The pulpit should lead in every movement for the uplift of humanity.

If I were a pastor I would be a friend to every young man and woman in my community. I would never scold, or take the pulpit as a place to reprimand them for their weaknesses and faults. I would preach a positive message of salvation from all sin for all ages and classes. I would take an active interest in young people, talk with them, go with them, visit them in their homes, their workshops, their schools, and love them with a compassionate love. Love begets love. Interest begets interest. I know of a pastor who has three thousand in his membership. He knows them all by name and success or failure never comes to any of these members but that the pastor knows about it at once.

If I were a pastor, I would be a good shepherd of the lost sheep. In every congregation there are those who have strayed off. "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it?" In this parable, Jesus portrays a most remarkable interest on the part of the shepherd concerning the lost sheep. He continued his search for the lost one until He found it. And when He found it, He rejoiced. Sympathetic interest, loving care and sacrificial service are shown.

The shepherd looms large in the history of the Jewish minds. He was a man of importance. David was a shepherd boy when he slew Goliath. Abraham had his flocks and herds. Amos was following the herd when he heard his call from God. The twelve sons of Jacob were shepherds. Moses

was tending the flock at the back side of the desert when he was called of God to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage. Jesus is the chief Shepherd and every true pastor is an undershepherd. We are exhorted to "feed the flock of God."

If I were a pastor, I would not club, or beat, my flock. I would strive to give them wholesome food, I would realize that some are weak, others are sick, poor and unable to keep up with the herd. The pastor is to take heed over the flock of which he is overseer. I would give milk for the babies and meat for the strong. I would break the bread of life to the hungry and lead them to fountains of living waters.

Sheep are the most defenseless of all animals. They are not fleet of foot, they run but little, and are

an easy prey. They need the defense and protection that a good shepherd can give them. It is so with the Church of God. There are many weak Christians. The good pastor giveth his life for his sheep. They do not need to be fed on current events, political creeds, or social reforms. They must have the Bread of Life.

The true pastor drives away false teachers, and constantly is on guard to banish false doctrines. There are wolves to devour the young, and often come in sheep's clothing. Sin and sorrow are found in every congregation. I must have the Great Shepherd's heart, or my work will become distasteful and grinding. I must look well to my own soul.

What a responsibility to be called to the "oversight of the flock of God."

## If I Were an Evangelist

James P. McGraw

IF I were an evangelist I would continually strive to practice the art of looking at things from the other person's viewpoint. Such a practice can help more toward maintaining a happy relationship between pastor and evangelist than any other. It fosters friendship, breeds brotherhood, helps harmony, compels confidence, and solves problems in every realm of life. A noted columnist, commenting on the cause of a tense diplomatic relationship between two great nations, blamed the whole trouble on the apparent failure of the leaders to put themselves in the other's place and understand one another's problems. Ministerial brethren should exemplify the ideals taught by the apostle; "In honour preferring one another." If I were an evangelist, I would rather give better treatment than I received, than to come out at the big end of the horn with the pastor thinking I had not helped him as much as I could have with a little greater effort.

If I were an evangelist, I would give at least one month of every year to Home Missions. The temptation for the successful evangelist who is much in demand among the stronger and larger churches is to devote his slate entirely to them to the neglect of smaller and weaker churches who, God knows, need him ten times as much. I would struggle to avoid this tendency by offering my services to my District Superintendent for at least one Home Mission campaign each year for the purpose of organizing a new church, and scheduling each year at least two weak churches that I know cannot give me the support I ordinarily receive, but need revivals none the less. Just as it is right for the pastors to look after the sick, the poor, and the weak of their flocks, I would remember that as an evangelist I should care for the small churches and hard places without showing favor to those which are better established numerically, spiritually and financially.

Some evangelists might not find this attitude possible for them because of financial obligations which

make it necessary for them to set a minimum price for their time and avoid any place that may not be able to afford such a price. If I were an evangelist, I would fight to keep myself and my family free of unnecessary financial entanglements which would so involve me that I could not get along on whatever God would give me anywhere He led me, be it a big city first church or a backwoods brush arbor.

If I were an evangelist, I would learn to omit all unnecessary and irrelevant material from my sermons, and boil them down to an average of thirty minutes. The crowds might gather to hear Gipsy Smith preach an hour, but if I were an evangelist they would tire within about half that time. There are not many Gipsy Smiths. One little girl liked her own preacher better than the visiting bishop, and her mother asked her to explain why. She said, "Our preacher says 'finally' and he stops, but the bishop says 'lastly' and he lasts." If I "last" too long I might have a similar experience to the Scotch minister who always found it difficult to bring his messages to the close. A passerby met one of the parishioners coming out of the church a few minutes after twelve one Sunday morning, and curiously asked, "Is the preacher done?" The reply was, "Aye, he is done but he wouldna' stop!" If I were an evangelist, the crowds might be smaller as the revival drew to a close, but it would be for some other reason than that they were worn out by my long-winded sermons.

If I were an evangelist, I would devise some method of keeping my correspondence answered, and my schedule orderly. I would avoid the necessity of writing back to change a date with some pastor two or three times because of conflicts due to my carelessness in promising to be in two places at once.

If I were an evangelist, I would make an effort to cement the friendship and esteem between the pastor and his flock. To commend the church for

faithfulness or some other virtue will cause the pastor to appreciate his people more, and to boost the pastor in every way possible will create a greater spirit of co-operation and appreciation on the part of the people.

If I were an evangelist, I would "bear down" more in these trying days than ever before. Rather than to assume a critical attitude toward the indifference among church people, I would try to understand that this condition is likely the fulfillment of the prophecies relating to the end of this age, as Jesus foretold, "because iniquity did abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Students tell us we are in the midst of the "falling away" that

will precede the second coming of Christ. Truly now is the time to cry aloud and spate not.

If I were an evangelist I would preach, pray, and perspire in a tremendous effort to evangelize the lost before night comes when no man can work. I would not be guilty of the crime of coasting along. I would take more interest in youth. I would work every conceivable effort to get a hearing so that I might preach a positive gospel of the religion of Jesus Christ, which answers the supreme questions of life, gives peace in a world of turmoil, blots out the sins of the past, eradicates carnality, prepares the way that leads through the valley of the shadow of death.

## The Funeral Service

E. E. Wordsworth

ONE of the important duties of a minister is to officiate at funerals; especially is this true of the pastor. The character of this service will contribute to the good influence of the pastor and the gospel message, or weaken and in some measure hinder the cause of Christ. An appropriate comforting service is upbuilding, while the opposite may do immeasurable harm. We venture out of our thirty years of experience in the ministry to offer some suggestions.

If sickness is known to be present in any family of his charge it is the clergyman's duty to visit such homes to offer his spiritual ministry to them. He should be so familiar with his Bible that he can quote appropriate promises, or turn and read them if the patient's condition justifies such procedure. Never pray lengthily nor loudly, but in subdued tones, in the sickroom. I knew a minister who prayed loudly for five minutes or more at the bedside of a dying saint who was then suffering extreme physical agonies. He was exceedingly unwise. Learn to greatly abbreviate your prayer. A minute is long enough ordinarily.

When the minister is quite sure that death is ensuing he should carefully note the comforting words of the dying. Sometimes, in preparation for death and the funeral service, he should write them out. In my earlier ministry I did not do this, but in the later ministry I have seen the great advantage of it. What a great comfort at the funeral service for the minister to be able to repeat these consoling words of the deceased!

The funeral service should be well planned. Every detail must be known and arranged. We usually prepare three or four service orders on slips of paper. I give one to the undertaker. One to the singers and I have one myself. We frequently follow this order:

1. Song. (An appropriate song by the special singer or singers.)
2. Brief opening prayer. (Two or three sentences.)
3. Scripture lesson. (Carefully selected.)

4. Sermon. (Never more than fifteen minutes—frequently ten.)

5. Obituary. (I always interview the family before the funeral and get all necessary information. I type it and have it ready to read.)

6. Closing prayer. (This is when I mention the bereaved family and I always try to know all their names so that I can recall them.)

7. Closing song. Special singers.

If the service is held in conjunction with some fraternity it is customary at this moment to turn the service over to them. However it is always advisable to have a common and complete understanding with the officiating lodge member before the service. It is the very height of discourtesy for a minister to say a word that would reflect on this organization at this service. Personal convictions must be silenced.

The above order of service is only suggestive. It is variable according to circumstances. But always have a definite plan for the occasion. Under no circumstances extend the service beyond thirty or forty minutes. Twenty minutes is better frequently. Of course for an illustrious person it is justifiable to lengthen the service somewhat but even then within proper bounds.

I usually follow this order in my sermon. First, I preach the message from my text and make no reference at all to the deceased. At the close of this brief message I sum up my remarks about the loved one in the casket and close with the most touching thing I know. I do not make any effort to make people weep but rather to assuage grief. But if I know anything of the character, personal history, family connections, church relationship, and the circumstances of the death of the deceased, I make brief mention of it at this point. It is much better in my judgment to follow the order suggested. I have noted that many preachers of other denominations do this.

The minister should understand that he has full charge of the religious service and that alone. The

undertaker has charge of all other matters. The service must always begin on time and the minister should be present at least a few moments ahead of time. It is almost unpardonable to be late.

The minister must be dignified and solemn, subdued and sympathetic, but natural and in earnest. He should exercise self-control. His duty is to calm and quiet grief. Oratorical display is entirely out of place.

The subject matter of the funeral sermon should usually be drawn from the Holy Scriptures. Remarks about the deceased are expected but the minister must use extreme caution, especially in case of strangers. Silence is sometimes golden.

At the cemetery the minister should precede the body to the place of interment and, standing at the foot of the grave, after the casket has been lowered, he should read, in a clear voice, the Service for Burial of the Dead. No additional remarks should be made. Singing is sometimes permissible, but not at all necessary. Sometimes the minister uses flowers, or earth, during the committal service; in some sections the undertaker will do this while the service is read or spoken. Always have an understanding with the undertaker and conform to common practices. Remember that funeral etiquette is important.

I believe every minister needs a funeral manual. The best I have seen is Arthur H. De Long's "Pastor's Ideal Funeral Book." I have one and have used it for years. Our Publishing House can get it for you (price, \$1.00). It is filled with helpful material and suggestions. I have known some ministers to use only the Bible. Well, frankly, I must say that we all need all the help we can get for such occasions.

At the close of the service the minister should speak a parting word of personal sympathy to the members of the bereaved family before leaving the cemetery.

Do not try to run a revival service during a funeral service. Solomon said, "There is a time for all things." I saw a minister try it. It was inappropriate and a colossal failure. Be kind, tender and Christlike.

### Helps to Holiness

- A clear experience in justification.
- A quick obedience to the known will of God.
- A faithful reading of the Word.
- A vital prayer life.
- A "conscience" about "little things."
- A self-denial for Jesus' sake.
- A care that the conversation has an end in spiritual welfare.
- A pursuit of reading which deals with holiness and the baptism with the Holy Spirit.
- A testimony which looks toward the fulfillment of the promise.
- A thirst that carries the promise with it (Matt. 5: 6).
- An attendance upon the means of grace.—*The Free Methodist.*

## Too Busy

William T. Wendell

(1 Kings 20:40)

WHAT joy he had in the Lord! How zealously he searched the Scriptures! His knowledge of them was exceptional. How active he was in his local church! He was one of the leading laymen of it, filling various prominent and responsible positions with devotion. He gave not only his energy, but his money to the kingdom with liberality. He could have sung in deed and in truth:

*"I'm on a shining pathway  
Adown life's shortening years."*

Christ was to him a "living, bright reality."

But as time went on I could note that some of the glory was departing from his life; there seemed to be a mysterious letting down in his experience. His testimonies did not have the old-time triumphant ring. And then one night I discovered one of the reasons. I heard him confess that he was so busy that he did not take time to be alone daily with God, frankly admitting that he had lost the overcoming joy out of his life by failing thus to enter into his closet. Hearing his lamentable words I suppose I recalled the statement of D. L. Moody, "The professing Christian who is so busy that he does not have time each day to wait upon God in prayer and Bible study is busier than God intended him to be."

But at this period he still attended prayermeeting faithfully. The time came, however, when he no longer was present at that midweek gathering. The reason (or excuse) he offered for that absence was that he was still "too busy."

Yet he continued to come unfailingly to the Sunday services, and was very active in an external way in the small congregation to which he belonged.

But now it has been many months since he has been inside the church. If words and conduct are some of the "fruits" by which we "shall know them" who are in or out of Christ, this former "burning and shining light" is a spiritual cinder; for whom, unless he gets back to the Lord, "the blackness of darkness is reserved forever." Some day death will be calling on that man. Then he will not be "too busy" to heed: What horror he is manufacturing now for that hour!

In an address to preachers a few weeks ago, the speaker said, "Forty is the danger line for preachers. By this time the preacher has probably decided that he knows fairly well how to do his work, and he will not grow any more. He will be tempted to hash over his preaching material and discover nothing new. The best way for him to save himself is to adopt a new course of study and hold himself to it as rigidly as he did when he was an undergraduate. And by some such means he will not only become intensive, but he will also broaden out. And it may be he can save himself from the inroads of dry rot and premature deterioration." How old are you?



## GENERAL CHURCH PROGRAM

### The W.F.M.S. Silver Anniversary

C. Warren Jones, Foreign Missions Secretary

IT seems most fitting that the good women of our beloved Zion should celebrate their twenty-fifth anniversary as a missionary society. No one will deny that they have rendered faithful service and accomplished the purpose for which the W.F.M.S. was organized. That purpose was and ever has been to educate our people as to the great need of a heathen world; inspire to greater sacrifice and heroic effort in carrying out the Great Commission and gather funds and thus help the church to save a lost world.

For twenty-five years the W.F.M.S. have pursued their task. They have been faithful in season and out of season. They have prayed and fasted, sent forth the printed page and given devotedly of their means to support the foreign work. They have exercised faith, labored and toiled and have refused to be defeated. Economic depressions and recessions have failed to dampen their ardor. Their love for souls and implicit faith in a great God have been beautiful to behold. They have done a great work and done it well.

They are not closing up their work. Rather, they are just beginning. They are about to say goodby to one period of time to enter a new day. They boast not of what they have done. They praise God for past victories and rush on to undertake greater tasks; to gather more sheaves to lay at the Master's feet.

In this their Silver Anniversary they look to the future. They have caught the vision. They see what can be accomplished. They see the need of strengthening our Bible Training Schools. In this they are right. No greater need exists on our foreign fields. We must train our young men and women and send them forth as firebrands to spread this glorious gospel.

Our W.F.M.S. have undertaken a great task. It was not forced upon them. They begged for the privilege of sponsoring the Thanksgiving Offering and adding to the amount usually received an extra \$25,000. This means an offering during the month of November of \$70,000. It is understood that all over and above \$45,000 is to be placed in a special fund to be used only to further the work of our Bible Training Schools.

#### REASONS FOR THE SPECIAL OFFERING

We shall confine ourselves to three reasons of the many that might be given:

*First*, that we may educate and train the natives so that they may be efficient and successful workers, carrying the gospel to their own people.

*Second*, for the sake of millions who have as yet never heard a gospel message.

*Third*, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who gave all to purchase salvation for all men.

#### ATTENTION, PASTORS

We owe it to our good women of the Church of the Nazarene to give them 100 per cent co-operation in this great undertaking. Their purpose is to glorify God and extend His kingdom and thus hasten the day when holiness shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea. After all, their task is the task of the whole church. The goal they have set can be reached and one and all can have a part in what we trust will be an epoch marking event in the history of the Church of the Nazarene.

### N. Y. P. S.

S. T. Ludwig

### The Evangelistic Tense

EVANGELISM in all of its phases is one of the keynotes of the N.Y.P.S. The General Council desires to make this a constant matter of importance in the local society program.

There are several ways of emphasizing this matter. We urge the full participation of the N.Y.P.S. in every revival program sponsored by the local church. In these revival meetings the young people can do much to advertise, personally invite people and support these meetings in every way.

But evangelism in its full meaning extends into post-revival effort. Here lies a field of work which can keep the young people busy the rest of the year. New converts need to be helped and encouraged. Prayer and Bible study groups can be maintained. Sunday school attendance can be increased. In fact the work and service of the N.Y.P.S. can be such as to support the whole church program. Every effort should be made to keep the tone of the society deeply spiritual and progressive.

Many of our societies have engaged in a "church survey" of young people during the month of October. Others, perhaps, plan to do so during some month in the future. What shall be the pastor's attitude in this regard? To simply make records and classify them is not enough. You can render a very great service if you insist that your young people continue the work of visiting and reaching these young people who are not regular attendants in the N.Y.P.S. service. Through constant vigilance and persevering effort in the months ahead you—pastor friend—can help your N.Y.P.S. to live in the evangelistic tense.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Basil Miller

#### Giving by Faith

"I'll give \$25 to this revival. It has been worth that much to me. I'll promise by faith," said a good woman in an Oakland, California, revival. God had been pouring out His Spirit in a marvelous manner, but finances had been difficult.

When this sister made her pledge the entire audience was stunned, because they realized she would have to do washings to raise the money.

She was poverty-stricken, but she walked by faith.

"Mother, how on earth will you get \$25 for the meeting?" her daughter asked on the way home.

"I don't know, but God is in it, and He will supply the money."

Early the next morning the lady was on her way to town when she found a pocketbook lying in the street. She picked it up and inside were two large diamonds, but no money.

"What are you going to do, Mother?" the daughter asked.

"Watch the papers," came the quiet reply which faith prompted.

The next evening paper carried an offer for a reward to the person who found a purse bearing two diamonds.

The lady went to the address the following day, which proved to be that of the bonding and insurance company.

When she returned the diamonds, they handed her a fifty-dollar bill. She began to cry and when they asked her the reason she said:

"I promised \$25 to a revival in our church, and I thank God he supplied the money."

"Yes, and He gave you a twenty-five extra," said the insurance agent.

"When I made the pledge, I felt that God would have me trust Him for the money. My faith was restful in His presence and I was sure He would supply," she testified that night.

Give by faith and God will give back to you!

#### Receiving and Giving

"Here, sister, you take this five and use it for whatever you need," said Dr. H. C. Morrison to a woman sitting on a cold Louisville, Kentucky, street. She was in evident need, her feet wrapped in burlap sacks to keep them warm.

"Sir, I thank you from the depths of my heart. May God bless you."

The famous preacher was on his way to the editorial office of the *Pentecostal Herald* when a stranger stopped him on the street and handed him a five-dollar bill to use in God's work. The doctor decided to give it to the first needy person he met, and the lady of the street got it.

Walking a few blocks farther another person met the preacher and before they separated he also gave Dr. Morrison a five-dollar bill.

"Give it," again God's voice seemed to say. And the doctor passed it out to another person in need.

A third time the experience of receiving was repeated. But this time the preacher put the five in his pocket.

It was the last he received. Said the preacher:

"The supply lasted as long as I gave it away, but I dammed up the source of the money when I put the third bill in my pocket."

"Give and it shall be given you . . ." expresses the Bible standard of giving and receiving.

#### Thank God, I'm Ready

The southern evangelist Jack Frost was converted from a terrible life of sin while a railroad brakeman. God had been good to him, lifting him out of circumstances that from the moral standpoint were almost unbelievable.

He had not been a Christian long until God put him to the test. Let him tell the story:

"I was riding on the engine, and started to jump off when like a stroke of lightning my glove caught on an iron projection. I was hanging just below the engine wheels, dragging from my glove. I looked up and immediately over me came the drive shaft, pounding toward my unprotected head.

"My life flashed before me in panorama. The sins before my conversion were blood-covered. I thanked God that he had blotted out my past, and made me ready for my heavenly home.

"I watched that drive shaft (taking only a second to make the revolution), but my soul was happy in my Savior, though death came instantly.

"The engineer saw my plight and set the brakes. Poised right over my head that drive shaft came to a standstill, as though the hand of God laid hold of it.

"There was no fear, for perfect love casteth out fear. My one thought was, *Thank God, I'm ready!*"

#### An Unsatisfied Traveler

The famous illustration of *looking afar* for pleasure and *finding* it in one's back door is Conwell's lecture, "Acres of Diamonds." He tells the story of a Persian who saw an exquisite diamond, sold all his estates and searched the world for a match. Broken and discouraged he returned to his native land, and discovered the diamond had been found on his own estate.

To modernize this story, a young man living in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, decided to find a job. He started out in search of employment and determined not to return home until he had found it. He went through the states, down South, up North, out West and then worked his way to the Philippine Islands, and then retraced his steps to America. He searched long and diligently the States returning home, and once more was disappointed.

Worn and tired, having spent all he had, he came back to Pittsfield, and found a job in an oil station just two blocks from his home!

The common things of life bring more satisfaction, if God is in them, than the unreachable one. Little affairs, if done in the name of Christ, afford greater joy than reaching after the heights and never attaining them. If you would know soul rest, find it in common duties that lie around your doorstep, which you can accomplish in Jesus' name.

God uses what a man possesses, and multiplies its power. God's question is, *What is that in thine hand?*

He asked the widow, *What do you have in your house?*

#### Riding the Rapids

"Hold on, men, we'll make it through the rapids, for God promised, 'The waters shall not overflow thee,'" said Roger Winans to his Aguaruna Indian helpers as he was rafting three hundred miles down the fast-flowing stream that joined the Amazon at Iquitos, Ecuador.

The missionary built a raft of balsa wood and on it placed his goods in preparation to coming to the States. When they got to the rapids the natives despaired of mak-

ing it through. They wanted to turn back, but the missionary knew he must meet the steamer that was to take him and his wife down the Amazon River to the ocean.

"The rapids were high, higher than I had ever seen them before. The spring rains in the mountains had been heavy, a couple of hundred inches a year or more, and as a consequence the river flowing past our mission station was a raging torrent. It was time for us to leave in order to catch our steamer for America."

"But, missionary," began one of the Indian raftsmen, "we'll be wrecked in the rapids. They'll tear us apart and we'll all drown."

"Casting about for a promise on which I could ride the rapids, God gave me one. The Spirit softly whispered, so it seemed, 'The waters, they shall not overflow thee.' Then I commanded:

"Cut the shorelines; God will take us through!"

"The rapids tore at the light balsa wood; the waters swamped us. God carried us through whirlpools. We were shot from side to side of the stream. We ducked and dodged, poled and twisted to get away from the falls. When others lost hope I threw my promise back to the waters, 'They shall not overflow thee.'

"We rode that promise safely through."

Whether shooting the Amazonian rapids, or riding the waves of life, stand on a promise and God will carry you through.

#### A Song Book Goes to Prison

"Brother Miller, will you give me a song book?" asked Mother Auld, the friend of seamen and prisoners.

"You may have one with the blessings of this church and my prayers behind it," I said, handing her a copy of *Waves of Glory*, the property of the First Church of the Nazarene, San Diego, California, which I then pastored.

"Write your name in it, and your blessings," the sainted woman suggested. "I want it for one of my dear boys, who is in San Quentin on a murder charge. He is to hang shortly unless God intervenes. Pray for him."

I thought little of the incident until years later when the family asked me during my present Pasadena pastorate to conduct Mother Auld's funeral. She had lived those years the friend of forsaken men, sailors, soldiers and prisoners.

"You knew her so well when she was active in her beloved work, and we feel she would want you to say the last words over her," they said.

During the funeral service I related the song book incident, as she told it to me.

"I sent the book [she said] to my San Quentin boy just before he was hanged. When he opened the package in prison, he read an old gospel song, 'There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood,' and fell on his knees seeking Christ's blood to flow over his poor soul in cleansing mercy. He came up shouting God's redeeming glory.

"The days he spent alive were devoted to telling the other boys about his saving Christ. A revival broke out in that penitentiary, and before it closed 150 prisoners had been gloriously brought to Jesus. Among them were thirteen life-termers or men who had already been condemned to the gallows.

"My boy walked triumphantly up the gallows with God's glory singing in his heart. His last words were a testimony that as soon as the door was sprung his soul would leap through the golden gates.

"The San Diego chief of police where the crime had been committed, could not believe that so hardened a criminal as 'my sailor boy' could have been so radically converted. He traveled hundreds of miles to talk with the man, and came away saying, 'This is a miracle of God's power. Nothing else could have made such a change in any life.'"

I stood by that grave after repeating the committal words—dust to dust, ashes to ashes—but I could never finish, for I saw the immortal work of Mother Auld, the friend of sinners, go on through eternity.

Preachers came from that noble woman's work with sailors. Sixteen blue-backed sailor boys bowed at our altars in the San Diego church one night, and I saw one lad throw up his head and cry, "Yes, Lord, I'll preach the gospel!"

Her body lies under the Californian sky; her grave nestles at the mountain's feet; but her influence wings through the years triumphant.

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## BOOK CHATS



By P. H. Lunn

HERE is a volume of sermons by that well known evangelist and prolific writer, William E. Biederwolf. Thirteen messages in all and every one with an attention-arresting title. The book gets its name from the caption of the first sermon—THE WORLD'S SATURDAY NIGHT (Zondervan—1.00). Other sermons are "Lame in Both Feet or The Cripple of Lodebar," "Three Men in a Tree," "Why Our Prayers Are Not Answered," "What, This World Needs," "Short Beds and Narrow Covers," and so on. These are timely messages expressed in forceful English and replete with illustrations.

WITH THE TWELVE by Carl A. Glover (Cokesbury—\$2.00) is a fascinating study of the training by Jesus of His disciples through six stages of their development. This is followed by an individual sketch of each disciple. The twelve men are portrayed in terms of their relationship to Jesus. The author reviews the method by which Christ, through His teaching, miracles, the cross and resurrection, transformed the men who in turn launched the Christian Church. One is impressed with the thorough-going preparation entailed in the writing of a book of this kind. It is quite exhaustive without being ponderous and unnecessarily detailed. This is a worth while book for serious study.

With pleasure we announce another volume from the pen of our own Leewin B. Williams formerly pastor of our church in Washington, D. C. FINANCING THE KINGDOM (Eerdmans—1.50), is a handbook of methods and suggestions for pastors, church officials and treasurers on the most efficient means of raising money and of keeping records thereof. The author has given years of study to this important matter and from the standpoint of research and experience is entitled to speak with a note of authority. The nine chapters are as follows: "The Church and Money Methods," "Conditions that Help the Finances," "Now Concerning the Collection," "Other Methods of Church Financing," "Church Accounting," "Plans for Securing Funds," "Church Management," "Church Board Meetings," "Illustrations."

This last chapter of "Illustrations" lists fifty-two telling illustrations that will help any pastor in presenting and selling his financial program. It seems to the Book Man that this volume should be in every church from the smallest to the largest in our denomination.

## THE PREACHER'S WORKSHOP

An exchange of methods, plans and seasonal suggestions. If you have discovered an idea that has proved successful in your church, send it in.

Roy E. Swim

### Daily Thanksgiving

ONE of his scholars once asked Rabbi ben Jochai, "Why did not the Lord furnish enough manna to Israel for a year, all at one time?"

The great teacher said, "I will answer you with a parable. Once there was a king who had a son, to whom he gave a yearly allowance. It soon happened that the day on which the allowance was due was the only day in the year when the father saw the son. So the king changed his plan and gave his son day by day that which sufficed for the day. Now the son visited the father every morning, realizing his continual need of his father's love, companionship, and giving."

So God deals a daily supply that supplication, communion, thanksgiving may be daily.—SELECTED.

### We Give Thanks

For the sturdy oaks and the stately pines,  
For the lead and the coal from the deep,  
For the silver ore of a thousandfold,  
For the diamond bright and the yellow gold,  
For the river boat and the flying train,  
For the fleecy sail of the rolling main,  
For the velvet sponge and the glossy pearl,  
For the flag of peace which we now unfurl,  
From the gulf and the lakes to the ocean's banks,  
Lord God of Hosts, we give Thee thanks!  
—EDWARD JONES.

### America and Peace

This world can never reach peace by threats and force. If this is to be the blind leadership of men, nothing, can save the world from a catastrophe to civilization.

No nation has alone built this civilization. We all live by heritages which have been enriched by every nation and every century. And to save this civilization there must be a changed attitude of men. Our country, standing apart, can make a contribution of transcendent service in holding aloft the banner of moral relationships.

If we are to hold that banner of morals aloft the people of America should express unhesitatingly their indignation against wrong and persecution. They should extend aid to the suffering.

We should not be isolationists in promoting peace by the methods of peace. We should not be isolationists in proposals to join in the most healing of all processes of peace—economic co-operation to restore prosperity.

But surely all reason, all history, all our own experience show that wrongs cannot be righted and durable peace cannot be imposed on nations by force, threats, economic pressures or war. I want America to stand against that principle if it is the last nation under that banner. I want it to stand there because it is the hope of preserving liberty on this continent.

That is America's greatest service to mankind.—HERBERT HOOVER in Chicago speech.

### Honoring the God of Force

"We wish to hear no more about brotherhood . . . because relationships between states are relations of force and these relations of force are the determining elements of their policy.

"We must arm. The watchword is this: More cannon, more ships, more airplanes, at whatever cost, with whatever means, even if it should mean wiping out all that is called civil life. When one is strong one is dear to one's friends and feared by one's enemies. Since prehistoric times one shout has come down on the waves of the centuries and the series of generations, 'Woe to the weak!'"  
—BENITO MUSSOLINI in March 26, 1939, speech.

### Patns or Persons?

"Act so as to use humanity, whether in your own person, or in the person of another, always as an end, never as merely a means."—IMMANUEL KANT.

### Man's Loneliness

No generation has been so afflicted with the sense of the meaninglessness of life as our own. We are tormented by the demons of fear, loneliness and boredom. Because we have neglected worship, or do not know how to use it; we wonder whether life is worth while or not.

Our loneliness is not of isolation but of insulation. We are living locked-up lives, preferring to build walls rather than bridges. Nowhere is that loneliness more appalling than in the crowded solitudes of a great city. Never were human bodies so jostled; never were

human souls so alone. . . . Today we are frustrated, confused, adrift, unhappy, acutely alone because we do not know how to seek and find in God the meaning and music of life.—JOSEPH FORT NEWTON.

### Peace in the Midst of Trouble

The message of General Chiang Kai-shek to the International Missionary Council meeting in Madras struck a strong note of faith and courage. "There lies upon us and, we presume, upon you also, a great weight of care which religion alone can teach us to bear worthily.

Our religion teaches us that sin is immeasurably a greater evil than suffering. . . . Our people are being purified and uplifted by their present trials. . . . War is brutal, but it will ever be powerless to rob us of the transcendent peace of men who are at peace with themselves."

### Out of Tune

"Too many of us will not turn on the dial of life. We are not in tune with the Creator."—George Washington Carver.

### What Does Christ Mean to You?

A group of young people were asked this question. "What do you really believe about Christ?" Of the answers one was particularly significant. It was as follows:

"In the first place, I believe that Christ can make a difference in a person's life.

"Then, I believe that everybody needs Him.

"And I believe that His present existence must be taken into account, and that means prayer."—Primitive Methodist Journal.

### The Gospel

The gospel is not good advice; it is good news. It is not authority; it is a vision. Its activities, its passion, its endurance, are expressions, aspects, fruits of an inner vitality which has its source far from the outer circumference, inward, lonely and aloft. The effects are like branches and leaves, which proceed from an inner sap.—The British Weekly.

### Where to Begin

The story is told of a young man coming to see Dr. Joseph Parker about his call to preach.

"God has called me to be a preacher, I am sure of it," said the young man in Dr. Joseph Parker's vestry.

"Good," answered the old preacher. "Then get on with it."

"But where?" rejoined the young fellow. "Where am I to preach?"

Dr. Parker walked to his open window, looked out over the city streets, with their teeming masses of men, and



said, "There are the people! Go and preach to them."—*The Pentecostal Herald.*

#### More Than a Thimbleful

"Never offer men a thimbleful of gospel. Do not offer them merely joy, or merely safety. Tell them how Christ came to give men a more abundant life than they have, a life abundant in love, and therefore abundant in salvation for themselves and large in enterprise for the redemption of the world."—HENRY DRUMMOND.

#### Present Tense of Cleansing

Holiness is not some immutable state which we attain by a desperate venture of faith once for all; it is rather a condition of soul which requires for its maintenance the continual observance of the conditions by which we enter into it. The following quotation from the writings of Thomas Cook of England is to the point:

"Do you teach the possibility of an absolute death of sin?" asked an undergraduate during a mission which I held in Oxford some years ago. "No," was my reply, "we teach the possibility of a conditional death of sin." "What is the difference, may I ask, between a conditional death of sin and an absolute death?" he further inquired. My answer was as follows: "Suppose there were no windows in this building and it were full of darkness, how are we to get rid of all darkness? A strong light is brought in, and when the light fills the building the darkness is excluded. But the darkness is excluded only so long as the light remains. If we remove the light the darkness returns. What the light is to the dark room the Holy Spirit is to the heart of the believer. When He fills the heart with the light of His own indwelling presence all sin is excluded, but that condition is maintained only so long as the Holy Spirit continues to possess the heart. By one act the room becomes instantly lighted, but if it be continued in a state of illumination the presence of the light must be continued. So to retain the Holy Spirit's presence within us, and the purity which the radiating power of His own blessed presence produces, requires a continual walking in the light, and the continual acting of the same faith by which we first received it."—REV. R. H. HAMILTON in *The Free Methodist*.

#### Enduring Work

"If we work upon marble it will perish; if we work upon brass time will efface it; if we rear temples they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon immortal minds and for immortal souls, and imbue them with the just fear of God and love for our fellowmen, we engrave upon these tablets something which will brighten through all eternity."—HENRY WARD BEECHER.

#### For the Bulletin

"My house shall be filled with music, with song, with praise and prayer and the burdens of life shall be lifted from all who enter there."

"Small skill is gained by those who cling to ease;

The able sailor hails from stormy seas."

"A man's true wealth is the good he does in the world."—*Bulletin Detroit First Church.*

#### The Bible

It is the treasure store of all wisdom, the foundation of all education.

Following its loving Savior, churches live, building on its deathless precepts, they stand monumental, the lighthouses of the world.

Its historic annals reveal more than all the other records of ancient days.

It traces unerringly the origin, growth and fall of mighty empires.

In its biographies we have the deepest psychology and philosophy.

Its law is the foundation of all laws. Its science, respected in every age, is always in advance of every generation.

It is the supreme textbook of life and the authoritative pedagogical book of all times.

Governments live only as they follow its paths of justice and right.

Before its matchless wisdom wise men of all ages bow as they from the East did before the great Teacher, the Son of God.

Forever the inspiration of motherhood, the most wonderful mothers of earth are found where its message of love is proclaimed and accepted.

Glorifying home life, it is the great Book for all parents; it reveals the eternal home, and the Everlasting Father, and Jesus as the way thereto.

To the old and the young, to the sick and the well, to the poor, the friendless and the sinner, it comes to each with comfort and healing and hope from the Holy Ghost.

Containing the most reliable history and science, the most wonderful poetry and the most successful business advice, itself a vast encyclopedia of knowledge, it is yet more than all these, it is the Book of God and, pre-eminently the Book of all ages; it comes from the very heart and hand of God and, best and greatest and kindest of all, it tells of the redeeming blood of Jesus, Savior of all accepting Him.—Dr. JOSEPH HARMON in *The Wesleyan Methodist*.

#### Two Hundred Years Ago

Two hundred years ago a church in Illinois passed the following resolution: "Resolved that Mrs. Justia Rider and Miss Phoebe Harris be expelled from the Church because they favor

Sunday schools, which are not mentioned in the Bible and because they have harbored a missionary."—*Nazarene Neighbor, Lima, Ohio.*

#### The Cradles are Full

Dr. Daniel Steele once told the following incident: "In a church of which I was pastor the desire was publicly expressed for a revival in which many sinners should be converted. A wise woman who sorrowed over the lack of spiritual development in the members of that church arose and said, 'What should we do with the converts? We have no place for them; the cradles are all full!'"

#### Do You Suppose?

DO YOU SUPPOSE:

Everyone you meet recognizes that you are a Christian?

Your pastor or Sunday school teacher always thinks of you when he or she is enumerating those they can count on to be present on Sunday?

Your neighbors believe you are a real good Christian?

You will face someone at the judgment who will point to you and say, "He is the reason I am not a Christian. He never invited me to Christ."

You make Christianity attractive by the way you display it?

You have done your best for Christ today?—*Your Nazarene Neighbor, Lima, Ohio.*

#### One Lesson for Me

I pastored a church once that had a Sunday school that kept along in a consistent attendance but made no startling gains. And I knew it was going just about as high as it could go. But a pastor followed me who pushed the attendance twenty-five per cent above the previous mark . . . and kept it there, and then higher!

Since then when I have been tempted to settle down to the conviction that the Sunday school was doing as well as it possibly could under the existing conditions, I have thought of what my successor did that time. And then I have honestly questioned myself as to what that same man might do if he followed me again. And then I try to get up and give such help and encouragement and excitement to my Sunday school superintendent to cause our school to pull ahead of its previous standing.

Yes, that is the moral I extracted from that experience. When you know the school never will do any better, go at it to make it bigger and better just as someone else would do who refused to be defeated by conditions. Beat yourself before your successor beats you! It is much more pleasant.—L. B. in *Michigan District Bulletin.*

## HOMILETICAL

### A PREACHING PROGRAM FOR NOVEMBER, 1939

J. GLENN GOULD

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1939

MORNING SERVICE

Reflectors of Christ

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—2 Cor. 3:1-4:7.

TEXT—*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18).*

1. This text forms the conclusion of a passage that sets forth in striking contrast the superiority of the new covenant of grace and mercy over all that had preceded it.

1. The starting point in this contrast is found in verse 6, where the Apostle Paul declares himself to be a minister of the new testament rather than the old. The meaning of this expression is clarified somewhat if the word "covenant" be substituted for "testament." God's dealings with His people have been from time immemorial on the basis of a covenant relationship. He made His covenant with Adam, and later with Noah. His dealings with Abraham were on a similar basis. The covenant which stands forth most conspicuously in the Old Testament dispensation is that with Moses, amounting practically to a Magna Charta which determined for all the subsequent years the basis of the political and religious life of His people. But now, in the suffering and death of His Son, God has entered upon a redemptive engagement with men that can be described only as a new covenant, and one far more precious than any heretofore revealed. The contrast the apostle draws is between the covenant of Moses on the one hand, and this new covenant sealed by the atoning blood of Jesus on the other; and he declares the new covenant to be of the spirit rather than the letter. For, says he, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

2. Now, the Mosaic covenant did possess a glory that is not to be despised. The apostle refers to it as "the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones"; by which he means that as the matter worked out in practice, while the old covenant could condemn sin, it could not save from sin. Nevertheless it was revealed amid a demonstration of divine glory such as Israel had never before beheld. For forty days Moses tarried in the presence of God, receiving from His hand the terms of this new testament; and when He returned to the camp of Israel, his face shone with a holy radiance so bright that the Children of Israel could not look upon it. And we are told that Moses wore a veil on his face to hide the dazzling splendor of God's glory that shone from his countenance.

3. The most significant thing about this experience, and the thought which Saint Paul is endeavoring most to emphasize, is that this glory on the face of Moses was a passing, and not a permanent thing. The real purpose which was served by the veil on Moses' face, asserts the inspired apostle, was not to conceal the glory itself, but to conceal the fact that that glory was already fading away. The Revised Version brings this out clearly in its rendering of the original account in Exodus 34. It is true the Jews believed it a permanent glory, and not a passing thing; and that would and did lead them to look upon the covenant of Moses, of which

the glory in Moses' face was but an attestation, as an end in itself and not, as God intended it should be, "a school-master to bring them to Christ." Consequently "the veil is upon their hearts!" Their minds are darkened by the prejudice that is born of misunderstanding. The only hope for such a deceived heart is that it will turn to the Lord.

4. It is just here, asserts the apostle, that the superiority of the new covenant is to be found. That was passing; but this, revealed in Christ, made possible to us by His shed blood, and ministered to us by the blessed Holy Spirit, abides forever with a glory that is ever increasing rather than ever passing away. The Revised Version brings out this glorious truth with crystal clarity: "But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit."

II. There is a tone of immediacy about this assurance that is all-important for us.

1. The experience Paul describes in these words is to be enjoyed here and now, in this present world. The tense employed by the writer places within the reach of us all the privileges of the new covenant. "We . . . beholding . . . are changed." It is a present tense experience, one which the apostle is himself enjoying; and his assumption is that all of the new Israel of God have access to this same grace. In 2 Cor. 4:2 the apostle records his conduct in the presence of this revelation. "We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but . . . commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." He declares, "we have this treasure in earthen vessels," these frail temples moreover, that "God hath shined in our hearts," and that of clay. These expressions all speak of a marvelous revelation of the grace and glory of God committed to men who are living on the earth. The experience is one for this present world.

2. The apostle's language implies, moreover, a clear spiritual vision. It is a clear view of the face of Jesus Christ. No longer do the clouds and shadows and darkness of sin and selfishness and malice hide that lovely face. It becomes our privilege to view His countenance with our faces unveiled. It is also a clear vision of men and things. Sin distorts the relationship between things and persons until the judgment is warped and the normal sense of proportion fails to function. Jesus once healed a blind man by giving him two touches of that healing hand. After the first touch it is stated that the recipient of Christ's mercy saw "men as trees walking." That is, they loomed up entirely too large. And there is many a child of God who falls into bondage to men and their opinions because of a similar distortion of vision. Christ has a second touch, however, that will enable one to see all things clearly.

3. But the apostle implies an equally clear, undistorted reflection of the face of Christ. Just as the moon gathers up the rays of the sun and reflects them to a world otherwise shrouded in darkness, so must the followers of Christ reflect His image to a world sitting in moral darkness and the shadow of death. Men have lost sight of the face of our Lord today; but they are scanning the faces of His followers, hoping they may discern something of His lineaments there. And Christ expects that we shall reflect "as a mirror the glory of the Lord."

4. Above all, it is a growing and increasingly blessed relationship. It is this quality that the apostle is at most pains to assert. Herein lies the chief distinction of the new covenant as contrasted with the old. That was but the shadow of good things to come and so was illuminated with a passing glory. But this is the very image of those things and is marked by a glory that is constantly increasing. We behold His glory with faces unveiled, and are changed from glory to



glory by the Spirit of God. This is rightly called "the glory that excelleth."

### III. But what, in a word is this "glory that excelleth"?

1. It is a glorious relationship. From strangers and foreigners Christ has made us the sons of God by gracious adoption. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and 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."

2. It is, furthermore, a glorious deliverance. From the load of sin that crushed us to earth we have been set free by forgiveness. From the depraved instincts and tendencies of our carnal natures we have been cleansed by the precious blood of Christ. In the stead of pollution and condemnation, we are privileged to enjoy purity and freedom.

3. It is, finally, a glorious prospect; as someone has said, "the glory of going on." It is the glory of traveling a road that leads into an increasing Christlikeness, until His blessed face is reflected with the absolute minimum of distortion. Here is enough of grace and glory to satisfy every longing of my poor heart. I am resolved to enjoy it to the full.

#### EVENING SERVICE

##### The Pathway to God

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Isaiah 55.

TEXT—*Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon (Isa. 55:6, 7).*

1. There is a beautiful incident recorded in the ninth chapter of 2 Samuel that affords a perfect picture of a sinner redeemed. King David, at last secure upon his throne, recalls the men whose loyalty made possible this victory. Of all the men with whom he had been associated during the days when he was a fugitive, there was no one to whom his heart was so closely knit as Jonathan, the son of King Saul. It was at great personal sacrifice that Jonathan had espoused the cause of David; for he himself was the logical heir to the throne. It is a magnificent commentary on the character of this man that, despite the fact that by the plan of God, David was the heir to the throne that was logically his, he nevertheless gave his heart to David. Now, after Jonathan's untimely death, David recalls the debt he owed to him, and through him, to the house of Saul. The king inquired, therefore, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" It was then brought to his attention that Jonathan had a son, named Mephibosheth; a poor, wretched fellow, lame in both feet. There was little of the glory of his grandfather, Saul, lingering in this broken hulk of humanity. However that mattered not at all with David. He commanded him to be brought from his miserable home in Lodebar and be given a home in Jerusalem, where he "did eat continually at the king's table." It was a marvelous transformation for Mephibosheth; and so far as he was concerned, it was entirely undeserved. It came to him, not for his own sake, but for the sake of his father Jonathan. It was a lovely story in itself; but its greatest significance lies in the manner in which it typifies the mercy of God to a lost and helpless world.

### II. God is dealing with a helpless, crippled, rebel world, deserving rather of hell than of heaven.

1. God does not spare language in His Word in describing the moral chaos and degradation wrought in human life by sin. He describes the heart of man as "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." He declares the moral state of the sinner to be one of wounds, bruises and putrify-

ing sores. He makes it clear that we are a lost race, hell-bent and hell-bound. But the tragedy of sin lies in the fact that God fashioned for us something far nobler than this. It was His purpose that we should live in the King's presence and be children of the royal household. It is from this holy purpose on the part of the Father that we have departed. Such a departure is clearly implied by His exhortation to "Return unto the Lord."

2. Now, the grand truth of the gospel is this: that what has been forfeited through sin may be recovered through grace. It is more than a mere salvage of the broken hulks of humanity, blasted and all but damned forever. God undertakes to remake us, to regenerate, to recreate us anew in the image of God. He offers us a place at the King's table, and purposes that we shall be "kings and priests unto God." "He is able," declared the writer to the Hebrews, "to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him" (Christ). From the "uttermost" to the uttermost is God's gracious plan.

3. This blessed boon is offered us, not for our own sake, but for Jesus' sake. There is little about us that would suggest royal blood and birth. The original purpose of God has been so obscured by sin, and that obscurity in us has become so marked that one with less power and compassion than God would have pronounced us hopeless. But for the sake of His Son who died to save us, He invites from our Lodebar to His own table. What marvelous forbearance and mercy are thus revealed!

4. And we ourselves alone can hinder the consummation of this redemptive plan. Jesus relates the story of the men invited to the marriage feast who all with one consent began to make excuse. All of the king's kindness was defeated by the unwillingness of those he would have as his guests. And so may we defeat God's best purpose, a purpose hallowed by the shed blood of Jesus, by our own wilfulness.

### III. It is some such appeal God is making in the language of Isaiah in this text, "Seek ye the Lord."

1. God is a seeking God. He pursues men and overtakes them. He lays siege to these hearts and endeavors to win them. As Bunyan conceived it, man is a city called "Mansoul" and Prince Immanuel has us beleaguered with His righteous forces; while within us is one Prince Diabolus, determined we shall not capitulate. Saint Paul declares that Christ's pursuit of him ended eventually in his arrest; from which hour he was "the prisoner of the Lord." Through the cross of our Lord, and by the active ministry of the Holy Spirit, God is seeking men.

2. But men must seek God. God has turned to men in mercy; now must men turn to God in contrition. Aroused to a sense of danger and need, a man must cry out, "What shall I do to be saved?" What escape is offered me? A man thus moved is bound to find God. When seeker meets Seeker, salvation results.

3. But to seek God is not to engage in an endless searching, a dust-raising performance, to no purpose. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" asks one of the characters in the Book of Job. It must be admitted that there are some roads down which men seek, but which do not lead to Him. But there is a way that leads unerringly to His presence.

a. To seek is to forsake. The sinner must forsake his way—his habits of life that have debauched and cursed and damned him. The unrighteous man—outwardly erect, but inwardly groveling—must forsake his thoughts. Our ways are so different from God's ways that there must come to pass within us a revolution. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount revealed most graphically the great gulf fixed between the ways of God and the ways of man. Therefore, a man must forsake his own ways. It is more than merely accepting Christ to become a Christian. Christ will not enter a

heart that has not forsaken sin and the ways of worldliness and wilfulness.

b. But to seek is to return. Here is true repentance, not only from sin, but toward God. A man must hate sin, not only because it is intrinsically evil, but also because it is an offense against God himself. David prayed in that repentant 51st Psalm, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." The pathway of repentance is the road that returns a man to God.

4. Then God engages Himself to grant mercy and pardon. "He will have mercy," declares the prophet. "He will abundantly pardon." Literally, God will "multiply to pardon." He will throw all the resources of His gracious personality into the accomplishment of a genuine forgiveness for the sinner.

### IV. But there is a fearful danger hinted here, too.

1. It is plainly intimated that God may not always be found; will not always be near. He had better be sought while there is some hope of finding Him.

2. But why should this be true? There are a number of reasons.

a. The disposition to return to God cannot be invoked at will. It is wrought in a man by the Holy Ghost. A man must return to God in the day of the Spirit's awakening.

b. Moreover, there is a relentless hardening process going on in the soul. Just as age hardens our physical tissues, so does age harden the set of our souls. We may reach the place eventually where we lack capacity for repentance.

c. There comes a time in many lives when God says of them, "Ephraim is joined to his idols: let him alone." It is fearful to think about; but the whole record of religious biography, as well as the repeated warning of God's Word, indicate that this is a real danger.

God is forever crying, "Now! Now! Now is the accepted time!" And men are forever replying, "Tomorrow! Tomorrow! Tomorrow I will repent and find mercy!" May God give us ears to hear the challenge of this truth and be saved.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1939

#### MORNING SERVICE

##### The Secret of Power

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Acts 1:1-14.

TEXT—*Shamgar slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad, and delivered Israel" (Judges 3:31). But the children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle" (Psalm 78:9).*

1. The incidents set forth in these texts, and the characters of the persons involved, are shrouded in the greatest obscurity. One verse alone records the achievements of Shamgar; while there is no agreement among Bible scholars as to the exact occasion of the perfidy of Ephraim. Yet the dust of thirty centuries is not sufficient to cloud the striking contrast between these two records.

1. It should be noted that the basic difference between them is not one of methods, but of men. Indeed from the natural point of view one would suppose that victory would have been on the side of numbers and material equipment. Shamgar was lone-handed, armed only with an ox goad; while the children of Ephraim were more numerous and well armed. But it was Shamgar who, contrary to all expectation, was the victor; and the children of Ephraim, despite their numbers and equipment, fled from the field.

2. These contrasting incidents are an illustration of the fact stated by the Prophet Zechariah that victories are won "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Superior equipment and strength of num-

bers cannot substitute for the spirit that makes a man a victor. This has been proved repeatedly in the history of the armies of the living God. Gideon's three hundred men were more than a match for a vast horde of Midianites. One with God shall chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight.

3. What was it that made Shamgar a victor, despite his lack of suitable weapons, the lack of which turned the children of Ephraim into cowards? It was that inner quality of soul called spiritual power. What Shamgar lacked in his hand he possessed in his heart. And the superior equipment of the sons of Ephraim could not atone for the lack of this inner spiritual discipline.

### II. God's Word has much to say about the power of the spirit.

1. It should be noted, in the interest of clear understanding, that there are two words for power used by the New Testament writers. One of them means authority or privilege and is used by Saint John in the first chapter of his Gospel, "As many as received him [Christ], to them gave he power to become the sons of God." Acceptance of Christ conferred certain blessed privileges upon them, and among others the privilege of sonship through gracious adoption. The other term translated "power" means force or effectiveness. Jesus used it in His last promise before His ascension, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me." Christ here is speaking of a new dynamic or energy which is to move in and upon men who received the Holy Ghost in His fullness. Now, both of these terms are descriptive of Christian experience, and it is the privilege of all men to know the grace and blessing which they signify. It is the latter meaning, however, that is set forth in these contrasting scriptures of our text.

2. The Spirit's power resides in personality. It is true, Saint Paul declares that "your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost." But the term "body" is used thus in an accommodated sense. The human spirit resides in a physical body; but the Holy Spirit resides in a human spirit. The Spirit of God and the spirit of man are so interfused and commingled as to seem, if not actually to be, one spirit. Thus completely would God possess our human personalities.

a. Personality is a discovery of this modern age; but God has understood its laws from the beginning. The important thing about a man, as God regards him, is his personality. I heard Dr. T. Z. Koo, eminent Chinese Christian, say that the first great revelation which the gospel made to him was that of the worth of the individual. All his life he had thought of himself as one item in a vast aggregation of mankind, so inconsequential that his death or survival could mean very little. But the gospel taught him that he was a man possessing spiritual potentialities of the very highest worth; a man for whom Christ died and over whose life God was yearning. The gospel thus gave him a new sense of his personal worth.

b. It is this personality that God proposes to sanctify and fill with His Spirit. He wants to possess our intelligence and understanding; our memory and will; in order that every expression of our inner life shall be glorifying to Him. Not our body, as a blind unthinking agent, but our spirit wholly yielded to the Spirit of God; our choices and ambitions and ideals dictated by His blessed will; this is God's desire for us.

c. It is amazing what God can do with ordinary men who are possessed by His Spirit. Shamgar and his ox goad seemed to offer few possibilities; but in God's hand they became mighty. Gideon, reduced to three hundred men armed only with torches and pitchers and a leather-lunged shout of victory, overcame the Midianites. Peter, rough and clumsy fisherman that he was, in God's hand became a mighty

apostle. Paul, blinded and prejudiced by his rabbinical training, was transformed in an instant and made a vessel meet for the Master's use. These men were what they were only by the power of the Spirit resident within them.

### III. What, we may well ask, is this spiritual power?

1. It is a power that delivers from defilement and cleanses the heart from every sinful propensity. Every carnal obsession, every hateful disposition, every lustful desire, every malicious tendency in the soul can be cleansed away. Too many have offered apology for the flaws in their characters or dispositions by describing them as "my weakness" or "my temper." Near the city of Haverhill, Mass., is the birthplace of the poet Whittier. Just off the spacious kitchen of the old home is the bedroom of the poet's mother, its floor elevated some three steps above the level of the kitchen floor. An attendant explains that there is a huge rock beneath the house at that point; and since the rock could not be moved, the room was built over it. So many have built their structure of character over and around some blemish of soul that could be blasted out by the power of God; but, unwilling to take the heroic way, they have apologized for and accommodated themselves to their weakness. But the power of the Spirit is a dynamite that can eradicate that blemish and enable one to build a character symmetrical and full of grace.

2. The power of the Spirit is, moreover, a divine energy, a dynamic, enabling to victory. He can not only deliver; He can maintain the soul thus delivered in a daily walk in harmony with the will of God. The old hymn:

"How tedious and tasteless the hours  
When Jesus no longer I see!"

has been changed to a song of glorious triumph.

### IV. But the power of the Spirit is rigidly conditioned. Its laws must be faithfully observed.

1. It cannot be received except on God's terms. God requires, first of all, a humble confession of need—and acknowledgment of uncleanness of heart. God's gift is not for self-sufficient souls. There must be, in the second place, a complete and final commitment of all to the will of God. Every trace of stubbornness and rebellious disposition must yield before the will of God until nothing remains within the heart but a complete and final "Amen." There must be, finally, a faith that appropriates the grace of holiness. Without a disposition to take God at His word and risk everything on His promise, there can be no potent contact with the cleansing, enabling power of God. It is of absolute importance that one wait humbly before God until the blessed Spirit comes in sanctifying power. Dr. A. C. Dixon observes that the power of Niagara serves a multitude of purposes. It warms homes and cooks breakfasts in Toronto. It propels street cars in Buffalo and illuminates a hundred cities within its radius. And over in Auburn, N. Y., at the state prison it electrocutes criminals who are under sentence of death. But all of this power is occasioned by the fact that the Niagara Gorge is many scores of feet lower than the brink of the Falls. It is the humility of the Gorge, so to speak, in getting down low that makes power possible. And for the man who will humble himself and wait for the Spirit's coming there is an experience of power that will illuminate and warm the soul, propel it in its life for God, sustain it with food convenient, and put to death the criminal within, the carnal mind.

2. And, finally, it can be maintained only by a faithful observance of its condition. It requires the same devotion to retain the Spirit that it required to obtain the Spirit. Have you received this delivering, enabling grace? "It is for us all today."

### EVENING SERVICE

#### Do You Know Christ?

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—John 1:19-34.

TEXT—*There standeth one among you, whom ye know not* (John 1:26).

1. The scene where these words were spoken was the Jordan valley, where John the Baptist had challenged the attention of all Palestine by his dynamic, prophetic ministry. There was something about this uncouth son of the desert that turned back the hands of the clock to the days of Elijah. In an age marked chiefly by its timorous lack of conviction and its pitiful absences of authority and morality, the preaching of the Baptist was arousing, if not actually alarming. While the common people thronged him and found grace and healing in his words, the authorities in Jerusalem found in him a potential menace and endeavored discreetly to analyze the true inspiration of his message. But with absolute impartiality and magnificent courage he denounced the sins of men of both high and low degree, and called both alike to repentance.

1. Not the least noteworthy feature of John's ministry lay in the self-denying spirit by which he was actuated. As a matter of fact, he was called of God to a ministry of apparent failure. It was given him to draw the multitudes to his preaching, only to see those same multitudes fall away and go after his great Successor, Jesus of Nazareth. But this was God's purpose from the first. John was the forerunner, come to announce the approach of the Messiah; and when that task was finished, his work was well-nigh done. The spirit of the man stands forth with crystal clarity when, reminded that Jesus and His disciples were baptizing more followers than he had, he replied, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

2. His great task was to identify and designate the Messiah and prepare the way before Him. For one who reads the first chapter of John's Gospel there can be no doubt as to his faithfulness to this responsibility. "Behold the Lamb of God!" he cried. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!" But nowhere does he display greater discernment than in the language of this text; for here John announces the Greater-than-he with the words: "There standeth one among you, whom ye know not." In their midst stood the long-awaited One, but their eyes were so blind that they did not recognize Him. For centuries they had anticipated this hour, only to miss it when it came.

3. The world never recognizes its great men; and by the same blindness it failed to recognize its Lord. In any age the men who bulk large in the eyes of their contemporaries are not, as a rule, the men that history recognizes as the great men of the age. Today there are names screamed at us from every newspaper headline and blared at us from our radio; the names of men who hold in their hands the issue of peace and war for half of the peoples of the world. But when the history of these days is written in sober and discriminating afterthought, most of them will be reduced to the level of demagogues; while greatness will be found to have resided in men who today are being crucified. It was even so with Jesus. His day and generation, led by Caiaphas, Herod, and Pontius Pilate, crucified Him; but today their names are a byword and a hissing, while His is the "name high over all."

II. There is a timeless quality in the words of the Baptist that renders them as challenging today as when he spoke them in Judea.

1. One would think that, with such identification as John gave, Christ would have been gladly received. What a shame that it was not so! His word, freighted with grace and mercy, was an offense. The enemies of our Lord were forever distorting His clearest teachings into different and offensive meanings and seeking to employ them to bring condemnation

upon Him. His deeds of compassion, prompted by a heart that suffered in truest sympathy with the sorrows of men, were a constant source of bickering and strife. And eventually His enemies accomplished their fondest purpose: they hounded Him to a Roman cross where He bled His life away. This was the attitude of the first century toward the greatest One who ever lived.

2. But today there standeth One among us. The cross did not take Jesus out of the stream of human history. Rather it put Him at the very center and heart of it. In the midst of this tangled skein of modern things—warfare, poverty, pestilence, famine, man's inhumanity to man—stands Jesus, the silent Observer of the whole disordered scene. He looks today upon marching men and the implements of war assembled for carnage. He sees the bleeding hearts of mothers and wives, robbed of their dearest and best by idiotic leaders, drunk with power and self-esteem. In the midst of our personal lives, with their ambitions, appetites, disappointments, sorrows and fears—Christ is present. We may never acknowledge and bow the knee to Him, but we cannot escape. We may deny Him a place in our hearts, but we cannot prevent Him knocking at our door.

### III. Yes, Christ is present today, but men know Him not.

1. Ours is an age of much talk about Jesus, but little loyalty to Him. He never before had so many biographers and interpreters as now; and sometimes we are almost forced to believe that in no age has He been so completely ignored as in this. Renan has written of Him as an idealist ahead of His age. Papini has found Him a perfect Roman Catholic Savior. G. Stanley Hall has applied the laws of abnormal psychology to Him; in an effort to understand the amazing structure of His mind. But all alike have failed to apprehend the true significance of this amazing Man.

2. Men may live all their days and never know Him—"though he be not far from every one of us." They may enjoy the reflected benefits of His life, yet never once recognize Him. The Master spoke of one man who was "not far from the kingdom of God." But to be nearby is not enough. A man must get into the kingdom, and into saving touch with the Lord of the kingdom, if he would experience the redeeming power of the kingdom message.

### IV. But the tragedy of this ignorance of the Greatest-of-all lies in the fact that it is so unnecessary; men may know Him if they will.

1. A man has capacity for God; the power to apprehend Him and take Him into the life. Indeed, as Augustine has said, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God; and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee." It is this that gives dignity and worth to life; that makes it a thing too precious to be snuffed out into extinction. It is this that God describes as eternity set in the heart; the power to know God through Christ, and live a life of obedience to and harmony with Him.

2. But moreover, Christ is a seeking Savior. He came to earth "to seek and to save that which was lost." What a seeker was Jesus! He threw convention and prejudice overboard and went directly through Samaria to find a woman of Sychar. He made a journey by boat across the Sea of Galilee to find a fierce demoniac and heal him. He saved His disciples from their sins and was forever saving them from themselves down to the very shadow of the cross. Even yet, by the blessed Spirit, He is seeking men; you and me; yearning over us with an infinite longing.

3. The secret of knowing Him is to be found in receiving Him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not," declares John, "but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." This method is so divine and yet so simple that many a man misses it entirely; and to his eternal sorrow.

4. There is this final truth: that they may close their eyes

to His presence here, but one fearful day they will see Him. It is the day of His coming; and "every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him." We have not pierced Him with spikes and spear and crown of thorns; but we have pierced Him through with many sorrows—the sorrows inflicted by our rejection of Him. God, give us eyes and heart for the Son of God.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1939

### MORNING SERVICE

#### What Shall I Render Unto God?

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Psalm 116.

TEXT—*What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.* (Psalm 116:12-14).

1. There is no clearer mark of the influence of our Christian faith upon our national customs than the institution of Thanksgiving Day. In these days of ingratitude, when men have largely forgotten the divine source of every good and perfect gift, it is a salutary thing that we be reminded that from God proceedeth these mercies. As men and women gather in places of worship this morning, their hearts are moved to gratitude and praise; and as they gather in churches and around laden tables next Thursday, there should be a sacrifice of praise offered up to the infinite Giver.

1. There are, first of all, the creature comforts of our lives—blessings we are apt to accept as a matter of course or as the fruitage of our own labor. Our homes, with all their conveniences; our raiment; the food by which we live; all these are the gift of a loving and merciful God. He does not cease to give when we forget to praise, but continues to open His hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.

2. There are, moreover, the blessings of friendship and fellowship—among the most precious things in life. Friendship is a most gracious and hallowed relationship, more intimate sometimes than those relationships that are sanctified by the marital bond. It is a shame to confess it, though it is true; there are husbands and wives who are not friends, in the truest sense. What a precious thing it is, then, to have friends, and to enjoy the understanding fellowship that is born of friendship!

3. There is, furthermore, the ministry of God's grace in our lives. It has assumed a multitude of forms and reaches us through divers channels. God's prevalent grace has withstood us. His providential grace has protected. His saving grace has transformed us. His sanctifying grace has made our hearts the temples of His Spirit. His sustaining grace has upheld us even until now. Surely there is no mercy comparable to the grace of God!

4. There are, in addition, those benefits that come to us in disguise; angels that we entertain unawares. We did not invite them; and when they came, we were loath to admit them. They were unwelcome strangers at our doors, received only under the pressure of an unavoidable circumstance. But they remained to bless us with their ministry of help and healing. We wept for sorrow at their coming, and wept again for sorrow at their leaving, so precious did their presence become.

5. Now, moved by gratitude, the psalmist inquires, and we should inquire with him, what can we render unto God in return for His goodness? What can I do for God for what He has done for me?

a. There is little enough that we actually do for God. Dr. George Eliot, for many years editor of the *Methodist Review*, tells of a church he was appointed to serve in the city of Baltimore. There was a group of people in that church that met once a week to talk over what God had done for them.



One week, however, the pastor proposed that in this service they should not mention what God had done for them, but should, rather, tell what they had done for God. The result was that the meeting ended without testimony. I fear that situation exists in counterpart quite generally throughout the Church.

b. But, on the other hand, there is little that we actually can do for Him. While there are gracious possibilities of service for the soul who lives in the center of the will of God, as channels for His flowing and instruments for His using; yet in the last analysis, our best service must seem to His infinite vision unprofitable.

**II. Now, David found a novel and striking answer to this vital question. "I will take the cup of salvation," he cries.**

1. What a paradoxical thing this is! "What shall I render? I will take." In return for the mercy and goodness of God, I will take more mercy and more goodness. As a token of my gratitude to Him for the cup of salvation, I will drink more deeply still of that blessed cup. How strange that is! And yet, how like God—the God of all grace—it is!

2. But the psalmist does not at all think in terms of further benefits. It is "the cup of salvation" that he will take. I have received life and health, home and loved ones, food and raiment at His hands. But now I will take His supreme gift—the cup of salvation—even Christ. For there is a note of prophecy about this and many other of the Psalms. David also is among the prophets. And the cup of salvation is no other than Christ our Lord. God does not care for our fullsome expressions of gratitude for creature comforts if we reject His Son.

**III. Moreover, declares the psalmist, "I will call upon the name of the Lord."**

That is worship, and worship of the sort God deeply craves and we sorely need. It may be a prayer. Prayer is perhaps the most worshipful attitude the soul can assume; and especially the prayer of adoration, when a man lingers in the presence of God, not to get anything from Him, but for sheer love of Him. It may be praise, wherein the full heart overflows with gratitude to the great Giver. How like thoughtless children we are, receiving bountifully, but never stopping to say so much as a passing "Thank you" to our infinite Benefactor. It may be testimony, wherein we tell abroad the wonder of God's grace as we have come to know it. God's bounty is not dispensed in a corner; and we who receive it should be bold to bless Him for it in the great congregation. It may be meditation, wherein the soul sits in solitude and reflects on the manner and measure of the blessing of the Lord. Meditation is one of the lost arts, and our rushing, crowded world is far from a congenial place for the practice of it. It would greatly enrich us if we could only recover this vital exercise. Or, again, our worship may be the cup of cold water given in Jesus' name; some loving service, ministered alike to friend and enemy, that reflects the spirit of the Master. All of this is implicit, I believe, in the psalmist's declaration.

It is tragic that we understand so little the meaning of worship. We give such scant place to reverence in our places of worship. We know so little of the meaning of Habakkuk's words, "The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." In results our devotion is so lean and our characters so sparsely furnished with grace. We must have a revival of wonder and worship.

**IV. But David carried the matter one step farther with the words, "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people."**

1. "My vows." We all have them. In times of affliction and adversity we have made promises to God, only to forget them straightway the danger is removed. But God never

forgets them and He expects us to keep them. Indeed the human side of a walk with God is a keeping of vows. We have entered upon covenant relations with the Almighty, and we dare not fail Him.

2. "I will pay." Nothing else will satisfy God and ease a troubled conscience but a forthright resolution such as that. At any cost of treasure and humiliation, I will pay my vows.

3. "In the presence of all his people." And why should our performance of our vows be thus public? Faithlessness is no secret—why should repentance be?

4. And I will do it "now." The matter has been too long delayed. I have dealt with God in terms of tomorrow long enough. I will perform my vows now. And so impressed was the psalmist with the importance of this that he came back to it in the closing words of the psalm (verses 18, 19), "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem." And most fittingly, with the matter thus determined, he concluded his psalm with a shout of victory; "Praise the Lord!"

#### EVENING SERVICE

##### The Court of Last Appeal

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—John 9:1-25.

TEXT—*He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see (John 9:25).*

1. There is scarcely a chapter in the Gospels that bears on its face such conclusive evidence of its truth as does this one. The narrative flows along with amazing ease and every situation depicted in the story seems highly probable.

Perhaps the most striking element in it is the picture of human depravity it presents in the attitude of the unbelieving Pharisees. One would have difficulty in believing, were it not for this evidence, that men could be so evasive of truth so perfectly obvious.

1. Christ had performed a remarkable healing. Here was a man who had been blind from birth. He was a man of mature years, a member of a well-known family. There was probably no man attending the local synagogue who was a more familiar sight than he. Then one blessed day Jesus came along. Moved with compassion, He made a bit of clay moistened with spittle, anointed the blind man's eyes, and told him to go to the pool of Siloam and wash. He obeyed, and his eyes were opened forthwith. Here was the miracle.

2. The one concern of these Pharisees, however, was to minimize the wonder of this healing in the hope thereby of discrediting the Man who had wrought it. The fact that the healing was performed on the Sabbath gave them their only point of assault. "This man is not of God," they said, "for he keepeth not the sabbath day." Others of the Pharisees were not so sure, saying, "Can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" On the principle that any port will do in a storm, the former point of view prevailed, and Christ was branded a sinner.

3. But the man who had been healed demolished that argument with a few deft strokes. "Why herein is a marvelous thing," he said, "that ye know not whence he is, and yet he hath opened my eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." There was no answer to such reasoning, and the Pharisees could only revile him.

4. But appeal was finally taken to the highest tribunal known among worldly minded men—the court of experience.

"I do not know the name of my benefactor," declared the healed man. "I do not know how he hath accomplished my healing. Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not. One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Here was a substantial, incontrovertible fact. A man blind from birth could now see, and one Jesus had wrought this change. There was no escaping this definite bit of experience; no appeal beyond this court.

**II. Can a man have definite knowledge of divine things? Is it possible to say with conviction, "One thing I know"?**

1. There is a terrible uncertainty prevailing among modern men. Indeed the very spirit of modernity is one of cynicism and doubt. Dr. Clarence Edward Macartney has published a book of sermons, entitled, "Sermons from Life." They are based upon actual life situations that have come to light in the course of his pastoral ministry. In many instances they represent a tragic loss of faith and hope. Such titles as "If I Had Only Known Then What I Know Now," "Every Man Has His Own Ladder Down to Hell," "If I Had My Life to Live Over Again," and "I Believe I Am Going to Hell"—these titles tell the tragic story of uncertainty that is driving men to despair.

Every pastor has had to meet that same uncertainty in the lives of men who are blasted by misfortune, disillusioned and cynical. We meet it again in homes where death has entered and the bereaved ones are tempted to question the goodness of God and the life everlasting. I had a letter from a woman who had watched her mother die in a coma without opening her eyes to give one last sign of recognition. Pouring out the anguish of her soul, she said, "I had so hoped for some evidence of an immortal vision, some lighting of the countenance or expression of rapture, to prove to me there is a beyond. In the absence of such a sign, I am left without hope." I replied that our faith in a future life does not rest for its validation upon such deathbed experiences, but upon the sure word of promise. But her letter gave a new insight into the prevailing uncertainty in the minds of men.

2. But faith is still possible to any soul who will honestly obey God and put Him to the test. Jesus challenged every thinking man in His words, "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know." There is a knowledge more settled and sure than the laws of the science of mathematics, or the postulates of the modern sciences. It cannot be attained by study and reflection; nor can the speculations of philosophy offer the sure word we crave. Jesus said that the man who places his will alongside of, and absolutely in accord with, the will of God, will know. He opens his heart to a revelation of God that cannot be experienced otherwise.

Indeed, the method Jesus announces is in perfect harmony with the experimental method of modern science. Science rests upon observation and experience. And a man can find assurance and absolute certainty by this same method. Will to do God's will and you shall know.

**III. But there is one great tragedy in human life, and we must recognize that fact if we hope for healing.**

1. Sin is a universal fact. It cannot be rationalized or minimized. It is blighting and debasing and blasting and damning men throughout the world today just as tragically as ever. And not the least appalling aspect of sin is the moral and spiritual blindness it involves. The man blind from birth was suffering a relatively rare physical affliction. But the blindness of sin is universal, save as men have been able to find deliverance through Christ. Our easy complacency toward sin, our condoning attitude that robs it of its horror, is absolutely without rational justification. It is still the tap root of every force that robs men of health and hope and heaven.

2. If men are ever to find deliverance from this fierce destroyer, they must feel its horror and enormity and confess

its guilt. "I was blind," declared the man born blind. Someone has said that the five most difficult words in our language to pronounce are these: "I was in the wrong." But they must be said from the heart if deliverance is to be found. David's cry—"I have sinned"—must echo through the corridors of the repentant soul.

**IV. Then comes the healing, saving touch.**

1. "Jesus passed by." How full of quiet significance is that word! There is hope and inspiration in the assurance that the Savior is at hand. And He is still passing by. Stanley Jones found Him walking the Indian road. Livingstone traversed the African jungles with Him. Moody found Him in the Main Street of the world. And today He is within easy call.

2. Moreover He is still moved with compassion, is still touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Christ is yearning over the nations today, gripped though they are in a new passion of hatred and strife, just as He yearned over Jerusalem and Capernaum and Nazareth in the days of His flesh. He longs to give the healing touch today to the man blinded by sin, as He opened the eyes of the man born blind. The one need is not a greater drain on the power and mercy of Christ than the other.

3. Christ must have, furthermore, a willing subject obedient to His word. The man born blind was eager enough for healing to accept any ministry and obey any command the Savior offered him. Obedience and simple faith in the benevolent Stranger brought him deliverance. The same method will achieve the same results for the man in the grip of sin's blindness.

4. The result is an experience of salvation from the darkness and death of sin and a complete transformation of heart. The Savior's touch makes a man a new creature instantly. It is an experience that cannot be gainsaid. Whatever question may be raised, the fact remains, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." Such assurance is available to every man here and now. Have we made it ours?

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1939

MORNING SERVICE

Spiritual Discernment

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—1 Cor. 2.

TEXT—*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God (1 Cor. 2:12).*

1. This word of apostolic testimony, for such it is, stands in the midst of the most eloquent and interesting passages that ever flowed from the pen of Saint Paul.

1. It is addressed to the church at Corinth, a vine of Paul's own planting. Here in Corinth the apostle had spent eighteen of the best months of his life hewing out a kingdom. Under the blessing of God there had been a gracious turning to the Lord, many of the converts coming out of raw paganism.

a. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that some abuses and excesses arose in the church when the guiding hand of the apostle was removed. There were some in the church who began to deny the resurrection; while others, not yet fully recovered from their lifelong habits of intemperance, were guilty of perverting the sacrament of the Lord's Supper into a time of revelry and feasting. A reading of this first Corinthian letter will reveal with what a firm hand the apostle dealt with these abuses.

b. An equally serious and weakening effect was produced by a spirit of division that arose in the church. There were groups who gathered in spirit about their favorite Christian leader—Paul, Peter, Apollos—while others rejected all these human leaders in favor of Christ himself. It was



a tragic and debilitating condition and the apostle dealt with it in no uncertain terms.

2. These conditions among the Corinthian believers we must indeed regret. Yet the teaching which the inspired apostle gives in his effort to correct must always occasion our thanksgiving. The result is that we have that marvelous treatise on the Lord's Supper in chapter 11, the hymn of love in chapter 13, and the discussion of the resurrection in chapter 15. The literature of our Christian faith has thus been immeasurably enriched.

3. As the apostle deals with these truths, he makes some things very clear indeed.

a. There is a realm of truth beyond the power of the natural man to perceive. Neither his instincts nor his searching admit him into this realm. So long as he remains an unregenerate man, though he be surrounded on every side by a world of spiritual reality, he must be dead to its appeal and out of all correspondence with its life.

b. But it is made equally clear that God can so quicken men as to make them alive to this spiritual realm. A man can be born into the realm of spirit just as he has been born into the realm of flesh, his whole being made alive to and keenly aware of the nearness of God and the great facts of spiritual life.

c. It is clear, moreover, that Saint Paul professed to have been thus quickened. "We have received . . . the spirit which of God, . . . that we may know." Once his eyes were holden and his soul untouched by these things. But a moment of transformation has come; a moment when his eyes were opened, his ears unstopped, and his whole spirit attuned to the voice of God. And the quickening which he received is within the grasp of every other man. In consequence he declares we "Know the things that are freely given to us of God."

**II. Now, what are those things? And what is this knowledge that eludes man's normal powers of learning, but is laid wide open to the approach of faith?**

1. The apostle's treatment of this theme is particularly appropriate in view of the constitution of the Corinthian church.

a. On the one hand were Jews, who sought after a sign. It was a national characteristic that they should be looking for some convincing demonstration. It was this same cavilling disposition to question and raise meaningless objection that Jesus had to contend with when He ministered in Palestine. His reply was to the effect that the only sign they could expect was that of His death and rising again after three days.

b. On the other hand were Greeks, whose devotion was largely to human wisdom and understanding. There is a sense in which the Greeks were the fathers of that spirit of modernity that has been endeavoring for long centuries to make the human self-sufficient. It is today as full of pride and self-esteem as ever and does not hesitate to lift itself up against God. But in the sight of God such wisdom is folly. It needs to be chastened into repentance and a humble submission to the will of God.

2. But the revelation of the truth as it is in Jesus is in a realm apart from either of these conceptions.

a. It is rooted deeply into the soil of earth in the fact of Jesus' life on earth; His crucifixion and death; His burial and resurrection. There is no possibility of making God's truth so transcendent that it rises above these terrible, yet glorious, facts. Men stumbled at them, and still stumble. Men of Jewish mind find in the cross a token of defeat, not victory. Men of Grecian temperament stand ready to brand the cross and the tomb as events devoid of significance for us.

b. But, declares the apostle, to them who have heard and obeyed God's call, submitting their own ideas and temperaments to the discipline of the gospel, Christ has become the power of God and the wisdom of God. The man who seeks

for power finds it in the power of Christ's resurrection. The man who seeks for wisdom finds it in the redemptive plan and purpose of God brought to actual conclusion in the cross of Christ.

3. This glorious revelation has not only a past and present, but also a future tense. It is true, "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. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." Here is assurance for every future moment of life. It embraces the life that now is and that which is to come.

**III. Now, God can put His Spirit, the spirit of understanding, within men.**

There are three classes of men, as the apostle conceives the matter: there are natural men, carnal men, and spiritual men.

1. The natural man is the unregenerate man. He "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him." The language of the kingdom is a foreign tongue to him. The ideals of the kingdom have not meaning for him. He is alive in body and alert in mind, but dead in spirit.

2. The carnal man is one possessing vision, but a vision that is distorted and obscured by the passions of his own depraved heart. As Saint Paul analyzes their condition, they are unable to digest the strong meat of the Word, and are torn in spirit by bickerings and strife. Thus their spiritual energies are largely neutralized by the double-minded and divided condition of their hearts.

3. Only the spiritual man, in Paul's judgment, is qualified to receive and understand the things of the Spirit. "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit" (the things He hath prepared for us). The words of this text confirm further this teaching: "We have received the spirit, which is of God." "The things we speak . . . the Holy Ghost teacheth." "He that is spiritual judgeth all things."

There is an interesting contrast in 1 Cor. 2:11, which lends color to the apostle's argument. A man appreciates and understands the things that pertain to human life because he is a man. If a man were a cow, green grass would mean everything to him. But being a man, he has an appreciation for truth, beauty and goodness. Similarly if a man would understand the things of God, he must be quickened by the Spirit of God. Here, then, is the spirit by which we know the things that are freely given to us of God. This is spiritual discernment.

**IV. And now, the question. Have we received this quickening?**

We may be more sure of heaven than of earth. We may have a keener ear for God's voice than for man's. We may so live that our whole personality is open toward and attuned to heaven. Let us purpose, by God's grace, to be spiritual.

#### EVENING SERVICE

##### Pain that Heals

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—2 Cor. 7.

TEXT—The pain God is allowed to guide ends in a saving repentance never to be regretted, whereas the world's pain ends in death (2 Cor. 7:10, Moffat).

1. The great Christian apostle is here addressing himself to one of the most difficult situations he had to face in all his extraordinary career. The church at Corinth was the result of Saint Paul's apostolic labors. He it was who preached the first gospel message in that pagan city and rallied to his standard those who accepted the truth. Some came from the local Jewish community. But by far the greater number were converted out of raw heathenism and became

followers of the great Galilean. It was a notable achievement for the apostle, but involved serious hazards and brought to his soul many a grief and heartache.

1. The city of Corinth itself was a difficult place in which to preach the gospel and hope for large results. It was a veritable sinkhole of iniquity and moral decay due to its cosmopolitan population and the debasing influence of a decadent paganism. Indeed, the infamy of Corinth was a matter of common report throughout the Roman empire. Debauchery and sin were so naturally associated with the name of Corinth that a new verb—"to corinthianize"—had been coined as a synonym for the verb "to play the wanton."

2. It is no occasion for surprise that a church in such a city and made up of people but lately recovered from such wretched practices should be rather easily seduced back into the old ways of sin. Such, indeed, was the case. A spirit of division had disturbed the unity of God's people and had divided them into warring groups devoted to some human leader rather than to Christ. Some of the Christian company were bringing action against fellow Christians in the heathen law courts, thus bringing reproach upon the cause of Christ before the heathen. Moreover the exercise of spiritual gifts had degenerated into fanaticism and bedlam until many of their services were marked by confusion worse confounded. Their women had forgotten their customary modesty and were thus bringing reproach upon the name of the Lord. Even the Holy Communion had become frequently a scene of drunken revelry. It seemed that the preaching of the great apostle had been utterly in vain.

3. When Saint Paul heard of this situation, he dealt with it with the utmost vigor. He addressed himself directly to each of the evils that had arisen and called for repentance in no uncertain terms: "I will come to you shortly," he warns, "if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?"

4. It was a vigorous, straightforward handling of a difficult situation, but it bore a gracious fruitage. His faithful chiding of them and his prayers for them brought them to repentance. They had never heard the great apostle speak quite so pointedly before, and they were pricked in their hearts. Their sorrow induced a genuine spirit of repentance, and they put away the evil thing from their lives. He was not sure, when he wrote them this bitter reproof, that the pain he inflicted upon them would bear such a harvest. He realized that it might only drive them deeper into their excesses. But God used the pain he caused them and made it bear the fruit of eternal life. "Godly sorrow," or, as Moffat has rendered it with rare insight, "the pain God is allowed to guide ends in a saving repentance never to be regretted."

**II. There is a lamentable lack of understanding of the true nature of repentance today, even among those who frequently use the word.**

1. Some things we call repentance are absolutely misnamed. There is, for instance, the sorrow and shame of the man who is caught in his iniquity. A young man of loose habits, unwilling to be warned, awakens from a drunken debauch to find he is in jail. He is filled with remorse, but not at all because of the reckless living that has eventuated in his arrest. Rather, his remorse is occasioned only by the fact that his drunken spree has ended in this shameful fashion. There is, again, the sorrow of the man who smarts under the disapproval of his fellows for his shameful life. I saw an intoxicated man come to an altar one night and pray most earnestly for deliverance from strong drink. But when he discovered that a Christian life meant deliverance from every other evil and unclean habit, he protested vigorously. He could use tobacco and still be decent, he thought; but he could not drink intoxicating liquor and retain his decency. It was

not the approval of God he sought, but the approval of his fellowmen. His sorrow did not bring him to repentance. I met a man one day who was suffering fearfully from arthritis, due entirely to sinful indulgence. His was a painful situation; but never once in our conversation did he indicate any sincere repentance for the sinful life that had brought him to this place. He was remorseful over the consequences of his sin, but not at all for the sin that was the underlying reason for it all.

2. Now, this is what Saint Paul means by "the sorrow of the world." And he declares that it "worketh death." It only goads men on to indulge more heavily in the thing that has already brought them to the brink of hell. There is no salvation in such remorse. It does not accomplish any moral transformation. It affords no pathway to God.

**III. Now what is the way of true repentance?**

1. It begins in a "godly sorrow." Moffat has brought out an infinite wealth of meaning in that expression by this translation: "A pain God is allowed to guide ends in a saving repentance never to be regretted." If only God is permitted to direct the pain of remorse that fills the soul, as a skillful surgeon holds and directs his scalpel, He will use it to lance the festering sore of sin in the heart and bring a man to healing and health. If He is refused the guidance of that pain, the end will be disastrous in the extreme. But in His hand it will "end in a saving repentance never to be regretted."

2. True repentance, furthermore, is based upon a realization of the fact that my sin is not simply my business, but is a part of God's business as well. It concerns far more than myself and my loved ones when I choose a life of shame and transgression. It concerns God, intimately and vitally. David understood this when he cried, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." He had sinned against the sanctity of his own home and the home of a trusted servant. That was true. But his act of sin was so much more an offense against God than against any other that these lesser relationships of his paled into insignificance. This was Paul's message when he exhorted to "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

3. But such repentance is possible only through the Spirit's conviction. In Moffat's words, God must guide and use the pain of remorse to bring the sinner to deep consciousness of his sin.

**IV. But such repentance is followed by glorious results.**

1. It ends in "a saving repentance never to be regretted." Here is the healing mission of the divinely directed pain. Nothing but the forgiveness and mercy of a loving God can give relief to the soul oppressed with guilt. Remorse, contrition and repentance, in the goodness of God, lead to salvation—the way that has no regrets.

2. And its only alternative is this grim assertion, that "the world's pain ends in death." It is the pain of the world versus the pain that is guided by God. They begin so near together. They end eternities apart. Which shall it be for us?

### Be Content

Learn to be contented with your condition. Is that animal better that hath twice two or three mountains to graze on than a little bee that feeds on dew or manna and lives on what falls each morning from the storehouse of heaven? Can a man quench his thirst better out of a river than full cup, or drink better from the fountain which is finely paved with marble than when it wells over the green turf?—TAYLOR.

## Expository Outlines for November

Lewis T. Corlett

### Christian Living (Romans 13:7-14)

#### I. EACH CHRISTIAN HAS THE GLORIOUS PRIVILEGE OF PUTTING INTO PRACTICE IN EVERYDAY LIFE THE PRINCIPLES OF HOLINESS

1. God imparts and implants these principles in the divine nature given in Christian experience.
2. Christian experience is the beginning of Christian living.
3. Each child of God should plan and study how best to manifest the grace of God in all the practices and relationships of everyday life.
4. The influence of Christianity is strong or weak according to the practical living of the Christians (John 17:21).

#### II. SOME WAYS OF MANIFESTING CHRIST IN PRACTICAL LIVING

1. Awake to the possibilities of Christian Influence. "It is high time to awake out of sleep" (v. 11).
  - a. Too many professing Christians are asleep to their possibilities in spreading the gospel through holy living.
  - b. God is dependent upon each of His children for proper presentation in this world.
  - c. The affairs of this world entangle and take up the Christian's thought and time.
  - d. The influence of worldly conditions tend to dull the sensibilities of the spiritual nature.
  - e. Each Christian should arouse himself and get busy in the matter of presenting Christ to a sin-sick world.
2. Maintain Proper Relations to Fellowmen
 

"Render therefore to all their dues" (v. 7).

  - a. In respect and duties toward those in authority.
  - b. Respect to each person's rights and position.
3. Walk honestly (v. 13).
  - a. Let the life be such as could easily be discerned as good and for good in the daylight.
  - b. Live such a life as to always leave a constructive influence with those with whom associated.
  - c. Make straight paths for the feet.
4. Manifest love to all men (v. 8).
 

"Owe nothing to anyone except mutual love" (WEYMOUTH).

  - a. Love includes all other duties.
  - b. Love should control all motives, thoughts and actions.
  - c. This enables a person to carry out the spirit of the commandments pertaining to man's duties to man (v. 9).

d. Love is a debt that can never be fully discharged.

#### III. THE MEANS OF SUCCESSFUL CHRISTIAN LIVING (v. 14).

1. Have the love life of Christ permeating the whole moral and motive life.
2. Put the ethics of Jesus as a pattern of living.
3. Study the teachings of Jesus to learn His will in all matters.
4. Plan at all times to suppress the desires that are not to the honor and glory of God.
5. Also prompted by the fact that the coming of the Lord draweth near. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand."

#### IV. ALL CHRISTIANS CAN LIVE A VICTORIOUS, CONSISTENT CHRISTIAN LIFE AND EXEMPLIFY THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRIST AND HIS GOSPEL

### Prayer

(Matthew 6:5-15)

#### I. THE LESSON IMPLIES THAT PRAYER IS NATURAL TO THE CHRISTIAN

"When thou prayest"; "When ye pray"; "After this manner therefore pray ye."

1. Prayer is the spontaneous communion of the soul of man with his Maker.
2. Prayer is fellowship of the child with his heavenly Father.
3. When a Christian is in normal spiritual health, prayer is a regular privilege as well as a duty.

#### II. PRAYER REACHES ITS HIGHEST POINT OF EFFICIENCY IN AND THROUGH THE CLOSED MIND (v. 6).

1. An exclusion of all the distracting elements and problems of the world.
2. A concentration of all man's mental powers to present the thanksgiving and praise to God, and also to make the desired petition.
3. Brings a sensitiveness of mental reception that enables the Christian to listen to the voice of God.
4. Secret communion with the Most High—alone with God even in the midst of many or surrounded by distracting circumstances.

#### III. PRAYER IS MOST SUCCESSFUL WHEN IT IS CONCISE AND DEFINITE

1. The Model Prayer, known as the Lord's Prayer, has only sixty-six words, yet is definite, inclusive as well as exclusive and right to the point.
2. All the prayers of the Bible are short.
3. The command is, "use not vain repetitions," meaningless, useless words.
4. The value is not so much in the length as in the definiteness in approaching God.

5. Indicates that an individual should know what his need is and be definite in asking.

6. Implies the thought of being prayed up, not lagging behind in the habit of prayer, so that access is readily gained to the ear of God.

7. As prayer lengthens it should continue to contain these same principles.

#### IV. THE REGULATIONS THAT MAKE PRAYER ACCEPTABLE

1. Pray to be acceptable before God. "Not as the Pharisees" (v. 5).
2. Use the powers of concentration and mental alertness in praying (v. 6).
3. Avoid verbosity in praying (v. 7).
4. Maintain a forgiving spirit toward all men. (vs. 14, 15).

#### V. PEOPLE CAN PRAY AND HEAR FROM HEAVEN IN THE MIDST OF THE RAPIDITY OF PRESENT DAY CONTACTS

1. The model prayer contains the elements that will work in any and all generations.
2. "Thy Father which seeth in secret will reward thee openly" (v. 6).
3. God will maintain a forgiving and listening attitude if man keeps a forgiving spirit toward all men (v. 14).
4. Thousands of Christians are proving this every day.

#### The Principles of the Kingdom of God (Romans 14)

Text—verse 17

#### I. THIS WAS GIVEN IN CONTEMPLATION OF THE RELATION TO TEMPORAL AND PHYSICAL NEEDS

1. Given for the purpose of strengthening those that are weak in the faith (v. 1).
2. Emphasizes the need of a Christian putting the principles of the kingdom of God first.

#### II. ADMONISHES THE CHRISTIAN NOT TO PLACE TOO MUCH IMPORTANCE ON TEMPORAL RELATIONS

1. Because men differ regarding standards of sacred days to be observed (vs. 5, 6).
2. Because various people view differently the proper foods to eat (vs. 1-3).
3. Because the undue emphasis of these things causes a Christian to lean to a tendency to sit in the seat of judgment toward their fellowman (vs. 3, 4).

#### III. THE ATTITUDE THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD TAKE TO THE KINGDOM

1. Know full well what the principles are (v. 17).
2. Recognize that all are living in complex social relationships (vs. 7, 8).
  - a. Each Christian should not depend on the standard of another.
  - b. Each should try to help others.

3. Earnestly follow the things that unify and make for peace (v. 19).

4. Be consistent in the individual standard (v. 22).

a. Do not condemn others on some physical relationship and then be lax on some fundamental principle (v. 16).

b. Strive to live in accord with God's highest standard.

5. Proper service to Christ in these things is approved of God (v. 18).

6. Observance of these principles will

bring the approbation of men (v. 18b).

#### IV. CHRIST DIED AND ROSE AGAIN TO HELP MAN IN THIS RESPONSIBILITY (v. 9).

1. To exercise self-control in eating and drinking.
2. To live a life constructive in all spiritual and social relationships.
3. To personally and individually enjoy the righteousness, peace and joy in the possession of the Holy Spirit.
4. God will require a personal accounting of service (vs. 10, 12).

## Suggestions for Prayermeetings

H. O. Fanning

### Leadership in Our Prayermeetings

IN few places in our work is quality of leadership more important than it is in our prayermeetings. The kind of prayermeeting that "just anyone can lead" is not likely to be the kind of prayermeeting we should have in our churches. Not only do we need a man who thinks he can lead a prayermeeting helpfully, but one who demonstrates in his work that he can. In too many cases there is more room for improvement than there should be in our prayermeetings. The best efforts of the best and most capable people in the church should be enlisted here. In his leadership of his prayermeetings the pastor may build one of his most helpful strongholds and one of his greatest and most effective fields of usefulness. In his "Lectures on Preaching," Bishop Matthew Simpson said, "In conducting meetings for social prayer the tact and skill of the preacher find a wide field. This service, as in distinction from the Sabbath service, is designed for the whole church, and the minister should not occupy an undue proportion. Some ministers kill their prayermeetings by their long prayers, reading long chapters, and giving long exhortations. They should remember that the people are benefited by taking part, and that as many as possible should be induced to join in these social services. The more who speak or pray, the better is it for the growth of the church and for the development of the moral power of the congregation. In this way also the minister may best learn the religious condition of his people. Especially should the young convert be encouraged to speak and pray. Under some ministers the prayermeeting is the glory of the church, and a large part of the congregation attends. Under others interest diminishes, and scarcely as many attend as are necessary to conduct the service (pp. 265-6). When people do not come to prayermeeting, there are more reasons than one for their nonattendance. Let

us see to it that we have prayermeetings worth attending.

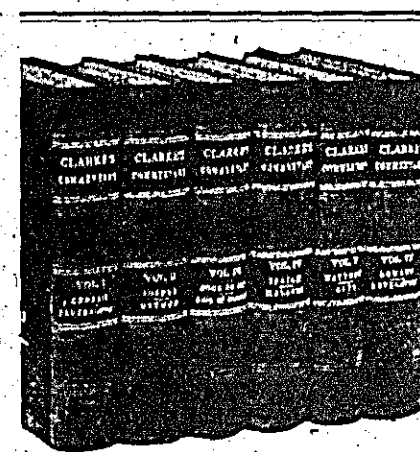
### Growing Faith

We are bound to thank God always for you brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth (2 Thess. 1:3).

One of the outstanding needs of the people of God, is now and ever has been, marked and continuing increase in faith. Faith is a living, vital thing, and, like other living, vital things, must increase or become subject to decadence, decay and death. Faith is a matter of degrees. In addressing men, our Lord addressed them as having varying degrees of faith, usually small. He marveled at the faith of a Roman centurion (Matthew 8:10). To a woman who was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation, He said, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt" (Matthew 15:28). Usually He addressed men in terms implying their need of an increase of faith.

I. Faith lies at the basis of all normal human relationships. Without faith these relationships are impossible. Faith in God is central and essential to all normal relationships in the spiritual realm. We go forward in matters spiritual as we go forward in the discovery, development and use of the faith capacities and powers with which God has endowed us. Human faith in God is confidence in the moral character and rectitude of God in all of His dealings with mankind.

II. The real difference between the faith of a newborn babe in Christ and that of a more mature and better instructed believer, is not so much one of kind, as one of content; one of extent. Other things being equal, it is the difference that comes through increased knowledge, understanding, enlarged vision. It comes through growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Through increased knowledge and experience of the words and ways of God.



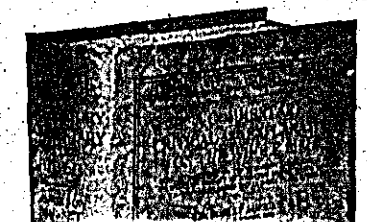
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III. In his sermon on "Justification by Faith," John Wesley said, "Surely the difficulty in assenting to the proposition, That faith is the only condition of justification, must arise from not understanding it. We mean thereby this much. That it is the only thing without which no one is justified; the only thing that is immediately, indispensably, absolutely requisite in order to pardon. As on the one hand, though a man should have everything else without faith, yet he cannot be justified; so on the other, though he be supposed to want everything else, yet if he have faith, he can but be justified. John Wesley was as sound on the necessary antecedents of such faith as the soundest among us. The blessings of salvation will be eternal in their outworking. Increase in faith will be constant.

IV. Faith is the one thing that connects us with God, joins our weakness with His power; what we are with what He is. It is the hand by which we grasp all spiritual blessings with which He hath blessed us in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. The multiplicity and the magnitude of the mercies of God, may give us an idea of our need of increased faith, and of the greatness of the possibilities of such increase. The willing mind paves the way for the work of the believing heart.

V. These Thessalonian believers were doing what we must do. They were putting themselves in the way of having their faith growing exceedingly. It was not a matter of accident that their faith was so growing and they were making such strides in its increase. God was the Author of their faith. It rested on incontrovertible and enduring facts.

VI. Faith, like other living things, must have proper nourishment. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). A better and more consistent knowledge and understanding of the Word of God would bring growth and increased vigor to our faith. Prayer and communion with God tend to constant increase of faith. Whatever better acquaints us with God tends to increase our faith. Fasting has its place in the matter of increasing faith (Mark 9:14-29).

VII. Faith must be cultivated and cared for. It is the greatest thing possible to a living child of God. All things are possible to him that believeth (Mark 9:23-24). We are not to suppose that we can realize the possibilities of a matter of such transcendent magnitude easily or quickly. Nothing less than eternity can make possible such realization. The way to eminence in prayer—in the exercise of faith—is not easy, and few indeed go far in reaching its heights. Even the most modest conception of the possibilities wrapped up in the exercise of faith, should encourage us to press on in the improvement of our God-given capacities for exercising faith in God.

### The Work of the Potter

And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it (Jeremiah 18:4).

The most beautiful life conceivable is one freed from sin as early as possible and lived in harmony with the will of God. One which knows the least of sin in personal experience, and the most of God in every way; one saved early and the first will of God worked out in him. The most of us are of the remade sort. It is to be feared that few of us know much of God's original plan for our lives. Blessed indeed are they who are saved early in childhood and have filled out in them the divine plan for their lives. Such a one Jeremiah seems to have been.

I. It is through the shedding of Christ's blood that atonement is made for sin, and human redemption made possible. In His birth we have His incarnation and His death made possible. In the life that He lived; in His teaching, His leadership, His example, His challenging life and all that went into it, we have the things that made possible and gave value to His atoning death. Not only the death of Christ, but the perfection of the Christ who died, is essential to the work of human redemption.

II. In one thing we are all alike; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Not all in the same measure. Many of us to the hindering of the working out of the plan of God in our lives. Life, as God designs it for His people, is vastly more than the hit or miss affair that many of us make of it. God would have it beautiful, symmetrical, and harmonious with His will. There is a positive as well as a negative side to Christian living.

III. Very little of our life is lived here below, but that little should be lived well. The life of a redeemed human being is eternal in its duration. A nation is a group of human beings, and God guides the affairs of nations, as He molds the lives of the individuals of these groups.

IV. When God called out Abraham, He had great purposes in mind to be worked out through him, and the nation that would come of Him. For twenty-five hundred years Israel has been a subject people, and the working out of those plans has been delayed. During this period we are having what is known in the Word of God as the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:20-24). Conditions have changed, the working out of the plans will be different.

V. The potter did not cast away the clay when the vessel he made was marred in His hand. God's purposes to be worked out through His chosen people are too great to be abandoned because

of failure on their part. Human life is too valuable to be sacrificed, when it can be saved.

VI. God accomplished much through His people before their setting aside was made necessary by their rejection and crucifixion of their Messiah. For fifteen hundred years He had kept alive in the hearts of men a knowledge of Himself. The world was a different world because of their presence in it. For hundreds of years devout men, both Jews and Gentiles, had gone up to Jerusalem to worship the true and living God. The entire Old Testament had been given to men. The Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, had been born in Bethlehem. Through Him the Father had revealed Himself. The New Testament came to us almost entirely through the Jews. Only God knows how much had been accomplished, and the import of it. Take from us what God has accomplished for us through Israel and we would be poor indeed.

VII. God has great purposes for human lives, for our human lives. He has chosen to work out His purposes through human instrumentality. What God has been doing through Israel, He has been doing through the people of Israel. Constantly He has been accomplishing all that was possible through each member of the race. Whatever may have been His plans for us, and whatever may, or may not have been accomplished, something is still possible with the most of us. And God is still willing to use whatever of life we have left to us. It is a glorious thing to get to heaven at any cost. It is more glorious to be granted an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, after a life of faithfulness in His service, and hear His, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. 25:21-23). It is our privilege to put ourselves in the way of this sort of thing.

### Some Lessons on Forgiveness

So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses (Matt. 18:21-25).

In all realms of life few things are more important than the matter of forgiveness. It is something we all must have. In one thing we are all alike. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Sin separates from God, and we do well to consider the character of the divine forgiveness, the foundation upon which it rests and the condition upon which it is granted. Not only is forgiveness something that we all need, but it is something we must all grant to others. The spirit in which we deal with others in this matter has its place in

determining what God will do for us in our need. This matter is of such importance that in answer to Peter's question, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but until seventy times seven (vs. 21, 22). Then He spake a parable illustrating and enforcing this truth.

I. In our Lord's answer to Peter, we have the measure of the forgiving spirit we should maintain toward others. It was much larger than Peter supposed. It is much larger than others of us suppose. Few things are more distressing with many, than a disposition to be slow in forgiving others. In this we dishonor our Lord, distress our brethren and others, do ourselves great harm and hinder the cause of Christ. A forgiving spirit is normal, an unforgiving spirit, abnormal to the child of God. Back of the forgiving spirit must be the compassionate heart.

II. The ten thousand talent debtor, with nothing to pay, represents our condition in relationship to our Lord. We have nothing to plead but the mercy of our God. Our Lord revealed Himself to Moses as "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty" (Exodus 34:6, 7). We cannot think of the God of all grace having an unforgiving spirit. The forgiving spirit is the touchstone of the heart's condition.

III. Forgiveness has such a large place in the carrying out of the purposes of God, that Christ was willing to die on Calvary's cross, to make it possible. It is essential to our enjoyment of the further benefits of the death of our Lord. In this we have a revelation of the heart of God and a revelation of the hearts He would have us as His people have. One of the distinguishing attributes of our Lord is His forgiving spirit and provision for its exercise. Divine forgiveness is based on divinely made atonement for sin and is impossible without this.

IV. In the matter of forgiveness, it is well for us to keep in mind that the man who has wronged you, has wronged himself in far greater measure. You cannot afford to maintain an unforgiving attitude toward him. Neither can you afford to harbor the emotions incident to an unforgiving attitude. In withholding forgiveness you do yourself a far greater injustice and injury than you do him. You cannot afford not to forgive.

V. Much that brings annoyance into our lives, is due to the fact that we are all in the making. We are living here and learning as we live. We are learning to be thoughtful, courteous and kind. The most of us are learning that these

are big things and that our progress in learning them is slow. Some who love us best try us most. There is lack of knowledge, poor judgment, incorrect or incomplete knowledge. We are compassed about with infirmity; we are hindered by slowness in the development of our powers and their proper functioning. In meeting life's issues manfully and victoriously we will find a forgiving spirit to be a decided asset.

VI. In this, as in other matters, we may be sure our sin will find us out. After a most gracious forgiveness from his king and Lord, this man found one of his fellow servants who owed him but a hundred pence. His sovereign had had compassion upon him. He has no compassion for his fellow servant. Hear the words of his lord, "O thou wicked servant, I forgive thee all that debt because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee. And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him" (vs. 28-34).

VII. Our Lord's application of the foregoing: "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" (v. 35). Heaven is a place for forgiven souls. A forgiving spirit is essential to a forgiven experience. An unforgiving spirit, with all that accompanies it, would be incompatible with heaven and destructive of its harmony. Such a spirit is as incompatible with Christianity here, as it will be there. Every step of advancement in Christlikeness will tend to enhance the beauty of a forgiving spirit, and reveal to its possessor its priceless worth.

### The Lord Our Helper

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth (Psalm 121).

Man is in constant need of help. He has greater possibilities than other creatures. And these possibilities are of such a nature that they can be realized only by that help that only God gives to human beings. The spiritual man has two horizons; the natural and the spiritual. There must be volitional effort if he scans either of them. The exercise of the natural senses if the natural horizon is to be scanned. The exercise of the spiritual senses if the spiritual horizon is scanned. The content of these horizons is important. That of the natural is passing. That of the spiritual is the permanent. Both these horizons contain vastly more in the way of possibilities than we now realize. We need help that these possibilities may be realized.

I. It is no easy matter to lift up our eyes to mountains and so keep ourselves

in the hand of the Lord that we may receive the help we need, under the varying circumstances of life. We need help to keep our faith focused on the Lord, at all times and under all circumstances. Our needs are so great that only the Lord which made heaven and earth, can supply them.

II. We do not go far in life until we discover that one of our outstanding needs is that of stability. "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved." God deals with us as human beings, rational, and self-determining. He helps us in His own ways, and in the accomplishment of His own ends. Our stabilization is no small task. It will take faith, fortitude, patience and perseverance for its accomplishment. One of our difficulties is our indisposition or indifference in the matter of putting forth the determined and well directed effort necessary to the accomplishment of worth while ends. Co-operation with God will bring us the help we need here.

III. The Lord is our unfailing source of help. "He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." He who made heaven and earth, is unhindered by limitations in Himself. He deals with us as individuals, and adapts His help to meet our need.

IV. "The Lord is thy keeper." He is the one source of our help. There may be many channels through which our help comes. "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night." We have perils peculiar to the day, and perils peculiar to the night. We need help for the day, and help for the night. Whatever, wherever, whenever our need, our keeper is able to supply it. May we see that such keeping is desirable and abundantly worth all it may cost us to enjoy it. He is searching among us for those who will give Him opportunities to help us. It is folly to expect the worth while things of life to be easy. They have their price, and we cannot afford not to pay it.

V. "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul." Few things can be more desirable than our preservation from all evil. Every form of evil is inimical to our well being, both temporal and eternal. We need constantly to remind ourselves that evil is destructive, and only destructive, to all that is preservable in us. Here we have one of the great principles of salvation. It is preservation from all evil, not committing it and being forgiven. Wherever there is failure it is incident to our own infirmities and weaknesses (1 John 2:1-7).

VI. "He shall preserve thy soul." This masterpiece of God's creative power, must have the care of its Creator in its possibilities. Its creation was a great work. The realization of its possibilities will be a work for time and eternity. In

dealing with human souls, God is not dealing with things of small value, or passing significance. We can conceive of nothing more beautiful than a well-kept human soul.

VII. "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even forever more." It is a comfort to us to know that in all the affairs of our lives, nothing is too small for the Lord's attention. Things seemingly inconsequential to us, may be of supreme importance, and worthy of the most careful consideration of our Lord. In His eyes everything is significant. If we are to enjoy the help He desires to give us we must bring all the affairs of our lives to His attention. They must be constantly spread out for His consideration. Forming the habit of bringing all of the affairs of our lives before our Lord for His consideration will be of great value to us in giving our Lord opportunities to help us. Having His help now is as important in its place as was His work in the crises experiences of our lives in their places.

#### Revivals God's People May Need

Wilt thou not revive us again; that thy people may rejoice in thee? (Psalm 85:6).

There may come times when special help is needed because of conditions in the church, in the community in which it is located, or in wider areas. In our studies of God's dealings with His people Israel, we find that revivals came when they were sorely needed. Were our people ideal, or our communities ideal and all things as they should be, such times might not come. But we are of the common run of life and while provisions have been made for an abundant supply of all of our need, we do not always avail ourselves of sufficient supplies.

I. God himself is the Author of the revivals our churches need, however these needs may arise. Israel had a considerable record of God's dealings with them to consider. That record showed that when they had met divinely imposed conditions God had blessed them and they had flourished in all the avenues of life. They had found Him equal to every occasion that had arisen and able to supply their needs.

II. "Wilt thou not revive us again?" These people are conscious of their need. They had had better experiences of divine grace and had enjoyed greater measures of divine blessing. They are conscious that God has better things for them than they were then enjoying. And we too may become conscious of our condition. We may learn much from the experiences of others.

III. These people believed in being revived by the Lord in answer to prayer. It is likely that they knew that their

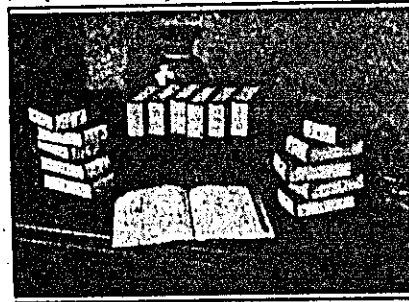
consciousness of need and their prayer to God to supply it involved the necessity of meeting conditions for revival and putting themselves in the way of being revived. It is likely that much of the failure in our prayer life and efforts is due to failure in these matters. Prayers that do not move us in these directions are not liable to move God to come to our help.

IV. Their appeal was personal. "Wilt thou not revive us again?" This would indicate that they were not strangers to discouraging conditions. They had met them before, and learned that God was able to give them the reviving, the quickening, they needed.

V. It is humiliating—or may be—to acknowledge such a need as this. Such a need may come to us an emergency. Forces may be arrayed against us that are staggering, and reveal to us our need of greater spiritual resources. Such times came to the apostles in their ministry. They cried to God, and were all filled with the Holy Spirit—quickened for success in the conflict. Whatever may be the condition, we should bring it to the Lord. God is as ready to supply church needs as He is to supply individual needs.

VI. "That thy people may rejoice in thee." Not all the things in our present experiences are joy producing, but the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ is a rejoicing religion and this rejoicing is far more than comes through the mere stirring of the emotions. These people are praying for vastly more than an emotional stirring. Anyone can rejoice when conditions are to his liking. What these people desired was reviving that would enable them to rejoice under adverse conditions. They had learned that the true source of joy is not found in conditions, but in the Lord himself. Concern for Christ's cause is a measure of our love for Him.

VII. And here is one of the secrets of victory in our spiritual experience and service, individually and collectively. He who has made our experience and service possible by His death; must make them actual by His life. In all that pertains to Christian life and service we need Christ as certainly as we need Him in the crises experiences of His grace. We do well to remind ourselves that Christian life and service are not indigenous to this world. Our citizenship is in heaven; and from thence cometh our help. We are here to overcome the world, not to be overcome by it. There may be many channels of the joy of the Lord. There is but one source, the Lord himself. God has honored us with places in His great work of redemption. Only as we honor Him by availing ourselves of the resources He has placed at our disposal can we hope to fill these places. We need both the resources and the God of the resources.

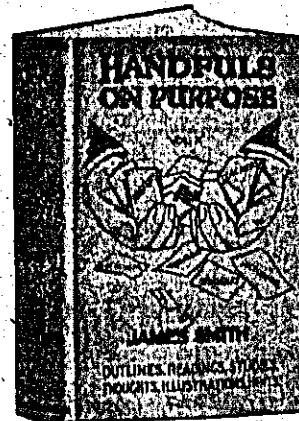


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# The PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

## THE BIBLE

WE have now before us the Holy Bible, or Book, for so Bible signifies. We call it the Book, by way of eminency; for it is incomparably the best book that ever was written, the Book of books shining like the sun in the firmament of learning; other valuable and useful books, like the moon and stars, borrowing their light from it. We call it the Holy Book, because it was written by holy men, and indited by the Holy Ghost; it is perfectly pure from all falsehood and corrupt intention; and the manifest tendency of it is to promote holiness among men. The great things of God's law and gospel are here written to us, that they might be reduced to a greater certainty, might spread farther, remain longer, and be transmitted to distant places and ages more pure and entire than possibly they could be by report and tradition; and we shall have a great deal to answer for if these things which belong to our peace, being thus committed to us in black and white, be neglected by us as a strange and foreign thing.—MATTHEW HENRY in his Bible Commentary.

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## The Flame and the Fuel

By the EDITOR

IN Hebrews 1:7 it is said that God makes His ministers a flame of fire. We make no contention for exposition of the text, but we think none will question our application. There is no higher compliment than to say of a certain preacher, "He is a fiery preacher," unless the term is used as an apology. Used as an apology it implies that he really does not say very much, but that he says what he does say with considerable show of zeal and small regard for the feelings of his hearers. In other words, the fire may be all flame, the heat may be all human zeal, or even the sort of fire of which James speaks which sets so many things to burning.

But we all know the genuine fire when we meet it. We are perhaps like the young man who asked the banker how he could learn to know counterfeit money when it was offered to him. The banker replied, "Become familiar with good money and then you will know the bad." That is, we would have an endless task if we were to attempt to define the substitutes for the sort of fire we know is essential in the making of a good preacher. But we know the real kind and then we know that certain other is not the real kind.

There are two essential factors in the making of good and useful fire: one factor is flame and the other is fuel. In the case of the preacher, inspiration is the flame and information is the fuel. We do not contend for the order. It may be that information calls for inspiration or that inspiration reaches out and demands information, as flame hungers after fuel. At any rate, both these factors must be present before there can be good preaching.

Inspiration comes through prayer, information comes through study. So prayer and study immediately take their places at the fore of the preacher's occupation. Among the qualifications required of the candidate for the eldership, our Manual makes one mandatory, "He must be an example of prayer." From both experience and observation I have been convinced that the maintenance of the spirit of prayer is of more consequence than the time actually spent on one's knees. To "shut to the door" one does not always require a literal prayer room or isola-

tion from people and from labor. Distractions of the mind often hinder more when one makes an effort to be quiet than when he goes on with seeming usual occupations. I have often been tortured with drowsiness at the time of prayer and have overcome it by pacing the room. I have even been forced to take up some form of service or labor in order to collect my mind and drive away indifference. And in the midst of what might appear to be preoccupation, I have been enabled to pray and to touch God and to exercise faith for things quite removed from the apparent interests of the moment.

It is no plan of mine in the present instance to tell anyone how to pray. Rather my thought is to say there is no formal way to do it. But pray we must, and we must pray until we touch God. We must pray until our daily lives breathe the spirit of devotion. We must push against the hindrances until we can fairly live in the audience room of the King. The big job is not to ask for favors. The big task is to "know that he heareth us." I have thought it is like getting a petition to a great man of affairs. It is all a simple matter once you can get an appointment and get into the great one's presence and gain his interest.

The preacher's life is largely one of distractions and interferences. Just at the critical moment someone rings the doorbell or calls over the telephone. Kindly people bother with their offers of service and inquiries about comforts. Even members of the family are often slow to sense the importance of long periods of isolation for the preacher. But these are things that cannot always be remedied. We must learn to make the best of what we have. This is why I think it is so important to develop the ability to pray on your feet, to pray in company—to pray any and everywhere. "Every breath a prayer," was the early Methodist's endeavor.

In my own experience it frequently happens that right while I am fighting against the temptation to be "triflingly employed" on account of the presence of someone who is inclined to be liberal with my time, a flash of light and inspiration comes to my mind and heart that is with small effort developed into a sermon or address. And often addresses so found become the most useful of any I ever get.

On the side of information I think the procedure is not largely different from that which I have mentioned regarding inspiration. What I have said must not be interpreted to mean that the desultory method of prayer is to be allowed to substitute for the time and place and formal effort at prayer. Rather I mean that it is to be supplementary and complementary. Likewise with study. There must be the time for definite and undistracted attachment to books. There must be the formal study. But I believe these can be supplemented by an atmosphere of observation, meditation, application and analysis that is of untold value. Rightly speaking, the preacher should never be "out of his study."

I have found it useful to have a book at a convenient place for ready use. By this method I am frequently reading as many as a half dozen books

at the same time. One I read when I must wait a few minutes for the meal to be called. One I read when my wife goes into the grocery and leaves me to wait in the car. One I read when I take a walk or am en route to some place of service, etc. In these odd moments I think I read on the average of a book a week. I train myself to take up right where I left off at the last reading. I use no book mark, but depend on knowing the place from familiarity with the matter itself. I make no marks on the pages of the book, file no cuttings, use no plan for memorizing. And yet I think I get considerable benefit. And I use only that which had sufficient force to stick to me. I reason this way: If I do not read an author's book, and thus fail to get the profit offered, I blame myself. If I read it and there is nothing new enough and forceful enough to stick to me, I blame the author for wasting my time.

But again I disclaim any idea of telling preachers how to study. I believe they will have to learn the how of it by practice. But I believe they will learn this if they are constant in their application. I believe in vacations for the preacher. I believe the church is benefited by the preacher's vacations quite as much as the preacher is benefited. But I do not

believe the preacher should develop a mania for vacations and for holidays and learn to chafe under the regular order.

*Life is just one long vacation, to the man who loves his work;  
But it's constant dodging duty to the everlasting shirk.*

A man's work can also be his diversion, and happy is the man who can make it so.

They used to tell me about a preacher who was a good preacher but for two faults: one fault was that he had a poor delivery. The other was that he had very little to deliver. Two faults are not many, but if they are as serious as these they spoil the preacher. If a man is really a "fiery preacher" he has and must have two things: flame and fuel—inspiration and information. These are just other words for delivery and something to deliver. To have something to say and then to say it forcefully and under the unction of the Holy Spirit—perhaps that is all there is to it. To your knees, then, O preacher! And to your study, too! And may you, by full co-operation with God in the processes, become a true minister of God, "a flame of fire."

## Thoughts on Holiness from the Old Writers

Olive M. Winchester

### DEPRAVITY AS LAWLESSNESS

*For sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 4:3b).*

WE COME to another aspect of the being of sin. This time we may wonder just how the text we have chosen expresses the thought of the topic. But if we turn to the revised version, we note it reads, "and sin is lawlessness." Then if we go to our Greek text we find that it is best translated by the revised version; this depicts to us thus not an act of sin as would appear from the authorized version but a state and condition of sin. If we try to paraphrase the statement, we would say, the sin principle is a lawless element within the soul bringing about chaos and disorder. Consequently we have the concept of the depraved state as lawlessness.

### LAW IN ITS FUNDAMENTAL NATURE

When we use the term law our minds at once revert to some enactment, some rule that has been laid down, some regulation stipulated, but there arises the question whether this is law in its primary sense. The Apostle Paul speaks of the Gentiles as having a "law written in their hearts," that is, there is a law of being; there is a law which expresses the "ideal for man's constitution" as one writer has put it. Law then in its fundamental nature as used in connection with sin, that is, the sin principle in the heart, denotes this ideal that is established for man's constitution.

Carrying this concept on and analyzing it, we are told the "law which expresses the divine ideal of man's constitution and growth has three chief applications. There is the 'law' of each man's personal being; there is the 'law' of his relation to things without him; there is the 'law' of his relation to God."

From these three applications of the law for man's constitution comes the various individual laws that we know and recognize as laws, but they are rather the specific and particular than the fundamental and the general. An act of sin violates some specific enactment, but the sin principle violates the fundamental law, the ideal for man.

### SIN AS LAWLESSNESS

When we come to consider sin as lawlessness, then we would view it in the three applications of the law. First among these is the law of personal being. Let us listen to Bishop Foster whose book, "Christian Purity," has ever been one of the standard works on the subject of holiness. "What, then," he asks, "is that depravity of which regeneration is the incipient cure?" The term stands for a state of man's soul which ensued upon the first sin as its effect. Not a physical effect, such as the addition or subtraction of some entity or faculty to or from it, but rather a change wrought in the order and harmony of its faculties and in their relations to each other. It is that derangement of man's moral nature,

induced by his transgression, whereby the harmonious acting of all the attributes of his soul has become warped and perverted; so that they no longer cheerfully and implicitly obey the divine requirements, but rise up in opposition to that which is holy, just, and good.

Let us illustrate: The soul possesses two classes of faculties which may be defined superior and inferior. The superior are the intellectual and moral powers, as judgment, conscience, will; the inferior are propensities and appetites of the body. In the holy, unfallen soul, the superior ruled and regulated the inferior; and it is this order which constitutes that soul a holy soul. An effect of its sin consisted in this, that it became immediately conscious of the withdrawal of God from its fellowship. As when the lights are extinguished the temple becomes dark, so when God withdrew His presence the soul became darkened; the regulator being removed the powers of the soul became confused, the inferior faculties usurped the place of the superior, the blinded and revolutionized soul called good evil and evil good, sense became supreme, and with a mad sway held reason and conscience subject. Harmony with God was broken, and everything was the reverse of right. That is depravity or the carnal mind."

Thus sin violates the law of our personal being, it disrupts the order and throws our inner nature into a disturbed, restive state in which the lower faculties usurp the control; it darkens the understanding, perverts the emotions and leads the will into bondage; it becomes a usurper and a tyrant ruling from and upon the basis of self-will.

But sin has its influence upon the second application of the law, that is, in relation to things about. All the maladjustments in life, the lack of harmony and accord, the hatred, envy, anger, jealousy, and all other manifestations of like kin have their root in this lawlessness within the heart. The daily tragedies of which we read in our papers the broken homes, and evil murders, come from a state of lawlessness within. Can there be any more descriptive designation of this sin principle than lawlessness when it is applied in relation to others? If the principle of love dominated instead of the principle of sin what a different world would this be?

Then there is the third application of the law which has to do this time with our relation to God. Instead of obedience and a filial relation expressed in love, there is the tendency toward selfishness. Man is ego-centric not theocentric. He was created to be theocentric; but when this perverting force entered the life, then with the revolution within, self took the throne of man's being, and the dominion of God ceased, thus in relation to God sin is lawlessness.

#### THE CONSEQUENT RESULTS

When we note the consequent results of such a state and condition in the heart of man, we find that some of them have been inherent in the very nature of the case and thus have been mentioned as we have defined sin as lawlessness, but despite this fact sin is so ramified that further results may be noted. This state of lawlessness within the soul when it

is dominant breaks all communion and fellowship with God. Thus mankind becomes alienated from the life of God; a stranger to holiness of heart and life. Light and darkness cannot commune so the human heart finds no joy in the presence of God; on the other hand there are fear and defiance.

Further, the atoning work of Christ is disannulled in the heart that allows this condition to prevail. The atoning work is provisional, conditional upon our acceptance, but when we fail to avail ourselves of its mercies, then so far as we are concerned, it is as though it were not.

With another picture of the inbeing of sin, we are led to conclude that its evil is so varied and extensive that it stands forth as man's worst foe bringing in its train all forms of sin and iniquity. Should we not with the hymn writer pray:

*Answer that gracious end in me  
For which Thy precious life was given;  
Redeem from all iniquity,  
Restore, and make me meet for heaven.  
Unless Thou purge my every stain,  
Thy suffering and my faith is vain.*

—J. WESLEY.

### My Debt

Mildred Bangs Wynkoop

THE church owes me nothing. If I fail for lack of a job or lack of means or opportunity I can lay no charge against the Church of the Nazarene. The church has laid at my feet all the intrinsic values of life and opportunity, enough to stagger the stoutest in heart and the most gifted.

I am in debt to the Church of the Nazarene for a church and pastor and evangelist, who covenanted together to present the claims of God to my soul so convincingly and so persuasively and so convictingly that I found it impossible to long refuse Christ.

I am in debt to the Church of the Nazarene for providing at heroic sacrifice, a college where my hungry mind could find satisfaction in safety and where taste and discrimination could be built into my character, as a bulwark against the flood of the varying experiences of life. Where, also, could be found a life-companion of like caliber, who would not tempt me away from the "faith of our fathers."

I am in debt to the Church of the Nazarene for opening her doors of service in response to my claim to a divine "call." There was no resentment that I was a woman. The vast opportunities of unrestricted Christian service were laid at my disposal, provided only that I proved my fitness by a reasonable display of ability and grace and courageous effort, to fill the place provided.

I am in debt to the Church of the Nazarene for a challenge for service that is bigger than the faith and talent of any mortal. There are no easy paths nor pampered pets. Whatever comes to us of fame or fortune or position comes as a result of fighting until we win. When we have ceased to be worthy of our place, our robes of honor fail to hide our poverty of spirit.

I am in debt for the frontiers provided where we may sharpen the tools of our ability against the roughness of experience. Only at the frontiers of life can be found the stimulus for greatness and nobility and majestic character. The unworthy in spirit are eliminated automatically by their own unworthiness.

I collect what I earn. If I am poor it is because I am deficient in inner resources. I would be foolish to accuse the church of partiality and embitter my

spirit with resentments because my brother is preferred before me or because I am unnoticed. There is plenty of "room at the top" for me if I have paid the price for bigness of spirit. No one can take my place, if in the quietness of my own soul, I have prepared myself for whatever may come.

After I have devoted a lifetime to Christ through the Church of the Nazarene, with all of life's capacities and talents, I shall still be hopelessly in debt. Would God I could ever pay it fully.

## Three Fundamental Religious Errors

Paul S. Hill

THE three errors that are basic in all false religious systems are (1) failure to identify God as a Being separate and distinct from His creation, (2) failure to recognize Him as the Supreme Person, and (3) failure to ascribe to Him absolute holiness in moral character.

All truth is related, and so also is all error. A fundamental truth embraced and believed affords a foundation for clear and lasting thinking. Error received as a fundamental thing leads most surely to confusion and wrong thinking.

The failure to identify God as a Being separate and distinct from His creation is error, and has in it the foundation for the two other errors mentioned, for this error is basic in pantheism; in all the ramifications of pantheism as taught by the pagan religious systems and also in the more modern cults that embrace the same philosophy. Pantheism stands for the belief that everything is God. Everything created whether matter or spirit is God. Those who hold that every material thing is God are called materialistic pantheists. Those who hold that all that we call nature is only an idea in the divine mind are called idealistic pantheists. This system of religious error places everything everywhere and all the time as belonging to and part of God.

There is no thing apart from nor distinct from God. Good and evil, right and wrong, sin and holiness are equally considered as belonging within the nature of God. Every contrary element and principle is mingled in God who is the All. Thus sin is not sin but a part of God registered in the human thought as an error. The teaching of the Bible in reference to Christ and the atonement for sin through His death are to be considered only as divine ideals or ideas thrust out toward us, while we ourselves are a part of the All and therefore have no separate personality but only a bit of the All into whose allness we lose our identity. This failure to identify God as a Being separate and distinct from His creation is a basic error and leads to pantheism in all its forms. Indeed pantheism is the only conclusion that can be reached when this error becomes fundamental in the thinking.

The second error is related to the first, for of course if God is not separate and distinct from His creation then He is not a person, but a force of materialistic

causation. Materialism is the logical conclusion of this error. The fact of human personalism must, according to this system, be denied and explained away while some grotesque shaping up of human powers so that they think, feel and pray, is blended into the rigid laws of materialism. With the denial of Divine Personality goes also the existence of human personality. The denial of human personality carries with it a denial of human personal responsibility. With the passing of both divine and human personality passes also the possibility of right or wrong as such, and consequently no future bar of justice where the human and divine persons meet again. The value of right is entirely gone from this erroneous system.

The two errors mentioned lead logically to the third, the failure to ascribe to God absolute holiness of moral character. The best that pantheism and materialism can do is to carry the notion that God is not absolute in holiness, but a mixture of good and evil. This is always the pagan idea of God. With them there is not a vice nor a virtue but what is deified. Gods of evil are always a part of the heathen thought. There is not, nor can there be, any worship of love out of a pure heart, but always a superstitious fear that seeks to appease the wrath of a god that is not good. Superstition takes the place of Christian faith while fear takes the place of Christian love.

The Christian doctrine regarding God is true. God is a Person, He is distinct and separate from His created worlds, and He is absolute in holiness. Any doctrine that departs from these three principles of truth become just so much pagan.

The Exodus of God's people from Egypt stands for all time as establishing clear religious truth in the world. For forty years God taught His people that He was a Person separate and distinct from His creation; that He was the Supreme Person and that He was absolute in holiness. As a Person he was eternal, almighty, just and good. In His relation to creation He was the Creator, and in His moral character He was absolute in holiness. These three truths lead logically toward the wickedness of sin, the responsibility of human personality, the need and realization of the atonement for sin through the death of Christ.



## The Bible and a Preacher's Filing System

E. Wayne Stahl

IN a preceding issue of this magazine (August, 1939) I detailed a filing system I had devised which, I found, had worked out most satisfactorily. Limitations of space prevented my showing how such a system can be linked up with Scripture. As great a satisfaction and effectiveness, I have realized is to be found in its connection with Bible passages as in relation to topics.

The only additional requirement, in order to experience this double helpfulness, is a different set of filing cards having to do not with subjects, but with scripture verses exclusively. These cards are the same size, three by five inches, as are those used for keeping track of the topics; they will be in cases separate from the others.

At the upper left hand corner of the card is the Bible reference. Following this are written the filing data informing me where the various clippings in scrap books and large envelopes, notations or in commonplace books, bearing directly on this particular portion from the Word are to be found.

Very often filable matter of this kind is so intimately connected with certain scriptures that it will be almost incalculably precious if the preacher can refer to it at once in studying this particular biblical passage in preparation for delivering a public discourse, for teaching a Sunday school lesson or for giving a Bible talk at prayermeeting.

In a general way, the use of the topic filing cards would give one access to the stored up matter, as the Bible passage in being studied. But I have found that the additional file, such as I am specifying, is by no means superfluous, and will often enable the preacher to "rejoice as one that findeth great spoil," in furnishing exquisitely appropriate material, either in anecdotal form, or more abstractly. The same reference system would be used with the Bible cards as is used with the topics, as outlined in my article of last August.

By means of these scripture filing cards I have been able to index in their case the texts of books of sermons and of daily Bible devotional meditations, as well scripture as in other books.

One of my treasured volumes is J. H. Jowett's "My Daily Meditation." For every day of the year it has a page of wonderfully illuminating exposition of a Bible passage, as one would expect from the pen of this princely preacher. This book is listed in my catalog of books as m6. If on the filing card having 1 John 4:17 at the top I find the notation m6. 127, and then turn to page 127 of this book by the great English pulpiteer, I will read a valuable and spiritual exegesis of this particular verse under the heading, "The Perfecting of Love."

Similarly if I would find on a card headed Matt. 9:9 the notation m6. 196, I would, by turning to the page of the book having this number, find Jowett's characteristically precious treatment of a scripture

portion, under the suggestive caption, "The Possibilities of the Unlikely."

And so with books of sermons, as well as with devotional meditations. The beauty of the plan is that it makes almost instantly available some of the finest things that have been uttered which bear directly on particular Bible passages. Working it out, a preacher is constantly making his own commentary. When he comes down to the real work of preparing a sermon or Bible talk he finds that he has equipped himself with homiletical material that is more precious than rubies, in its suggestiveness, not for copying purposes.

In my library are eighteen volumes of "Notes on the Sunday School Lessons." Their dates are those of many years back; they consist of Peloubet's great comments on the Sunday school lessons or of the writings on these scriptures from the press of the Methodist Church, before this denomination capitulated to Modernism. These "Notes" I picked up in a second-hand store at a nominal price. I have indexed them by means of my scripture filing cards. The value of these dozen and a half books for sermon purposes is inestimable.

I referred a moment ago to indexing books of sermons by means of the cards. Just now I picked up a book near my typewriter table. Its title is "Thirty-one Revival Sermons" (Louis Albert Banks). On a blank page in its front I find the notation t6. Suppose I were preparing a sermon with 1 Kings 21:20 as my text. I would turn to my scripture filing card having this reference. I would learn that t6 means Banks' book of sermons. Turning to page 129 of it I would find one of his stimulating messages based on this verse, under the theme, "The Nemesis Which Follows the Sinner."

Suppose I wanted to index passages in a religious paper which I was preserving in its entirety. Suppose this periodical is the PREACHER'S MAGAZINE of August, 1939.

In a large cardboard box, sufficiently spacious to receive this paper without the necessity of its being folded, I place it. Outside this box is the number 14. I have written on the first page of this particular PREACHER'S MAGAZINE the following: 14.61. There were already sixty religious papers in this container.

Reading in this particular copy of the MAGAZINE Dr. Chapman's superb article, "A Peerless Preacher—E. F. Walker," I say to myself, "This is a fine illustration of Paul's words in 1 Cor. 2:4." So, turning to my scripture card file, I write on the card having this verse 14:61 (2). The number 61, of course, specifies the number of the paper in this large, cardboard container, which container's number is 14, while the number 2 in parenthesis particularizes the page of the PREACHER'S MAGAZINE on which Dr. Chapman's contribution is found.

Turning to page three of this copy of the August issue I find the offering by Olive M. Winchester, "A Deceitful Heart." This begins with the Bible verse, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). The article in my scripture card file would be 14.61 (3).

On page five, in the first column of W. P. Jay's article, "The Federated Forces of the Great Tribulation," I find a reference to Ezekiel 39. Therefore in my scripture card file I can make the notation 14.61 (5a). The "a" refers to the first column, in which the reference to this scripture is made.

E. E. Wordsworth's appealing contribution, "Especially the Parchments," page nine, would be classified thus on the filing card, 14.61 (9), the top of which would have 2 Tim. 4:13.

In the "Illustrations" section, the various anecdotes would be referred to in connection with the different scriptures which most of them contain. In the "Homiletical" department the various sermon

texts which J. Glenn Gould uses as the bases of his offerings would be filed away on their separate cards.

And so with much of the other valuable matter in this issue of the MAGAZINE.

I have been thus detailed that there may be no doubt as to the simplicity of the plan. Its effectiveness will be evident when, days later, the preacher will have occasion to refer to any one or more of these various verses in preparing a talk or a sermon.

He will not necessarily imitate in all its particulars the plan as specified by this writer. But he will surely find an arrangement somewhat along this line an ultimate saver of time and an increaser of homiletic effectiveness. I have had such a delight in making Scripture references on my filing cards, knowing I was accumulating an invaluable store of sermonic aids, that the work could almost be called recreation. For the sermons of some over-worked preachers it may prove re-creation.

## What the Ministry Needs

A. S. London

A PASTOR in a large southern city writes as follows: "Brother London, you have had a lot to do with ministers. It is my belief that you could help a fellow like me if you could feel free to say what you would like. It is my desire to be as great a success as possible, and I am trying to correct my faults and failures, and build up the weak points. Could you give me five or more points that, if worked out, would help me to succeed?"

Preaching is big business. It was said of Savonarola of Florence, that it would be better for a state to go out of the Union than for him to quit the ministry. Gladstone, that Grand Old Man of England, said to his son, "If God calls you to preach, do not stoop to be a king." The Apostle Paul thanked God that He counted him worthy, "putting me into the ministry."

The first thought relative to the ministry is that we need a great crowd to preach to if we are to succeed. And it does look like a tragedy to preach to empty benches when there are seventy millions of our population out of our services on the Sabbath. But numbers may become a snare. When Gideon enlisted an army to battle against the Midianites, he had to reduce the number to comparative insignificance before God sent him out to rout the enemy. David took a census of Israel to determine national strength, and suffered dire penalty.

Doctor Drummond once said that what we need is not more preachers, but a better brand. Christ cannot command big situations with little ministers.

The second thought relative to preachers is that they need more money. It is true that the average salary paid the ministry in this country is less than one thousand dollars a year. But money is not a

chief essential in making a good preacher. It might be a misfortune for him to have money as it was for the church at Laodicea.

The third thought relative to our ministry is that we need "church union," both for the laity and the good of our preachers. A national leader said a few days ago that within twenty-five years sixty per cent of the church people of this nation will be in one organization. But what will this have to do with making better preachers? Jesus did not attempt to unite the Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees and Essenes into one great body. But He did emphasize some great, underlying principles which every minister needs in building the Church of the living God.

I said to my brother in answering his letter, Guard against idleness. A preacher practically makes his own hours. Woe to the preacher who becomes at "ease in Zion." A lazy preacher is both hopeless and helpless. He is a menace to the Church of Jesus Christ. It is not a happen-so that a man stays with one church for thirty and forty years. One of these types of preachers said to me that he averages visiting eight hours a day. He also says that it is a crime for any preacher to fail to give his people two good sermons every Sunday. To do this one must fight idleness as he would a loathsome disease.

A preacher must live what he preaches. A shoemaker's wife may go without shoes, or a carpenter's wife may live out-of-doors; but a preacher must have at home what he professes in the pulpit. A preacher must have a good disposition. He cannot be a grouch at home with his own wife and family, and think he can cover it up by being kind and tender with other people in the church. A man preaches

what he is. Lincoln once said that he would not sign a questionable paper for fear he would unconsciously speak out some time in public and say, "Lincoln, you are a liar." What you are at heart will come out. A preacher must be a joyful Christian. Paul uses this term "joy" twenty-eight times in his writings. It is used sixty-two times in the New Testament.

A preacher must guard against impatience, unworthy motives and habits. He must realize that he is a servant of the people. He is called like an Italian general said, "to come and suffer." He must constantly be on the lookout for opportunities to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Whitefield preached 18,000 times before he was 56 years old. Preaching cannot become professional and at the same time be effective. Preachers must speak out of a burning heart. A preacher cannot afford to become impatient. He speaks out of a burning heart to dying men. God will take care of results.

Every preacher needs a conviction in respect to sin. Men must be convinced and convicted of sin before they realize their need of a Savior. The minister who does not know that the people are ill, will be but little interested in a remedy. There is too often a compromising attitude in the pulpit toward the sin question. As a result the whole church becomes weak. The minister needs a genuine conviction respecting God's warnings. He must declare that those who have not Christ have not life and that the devil goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

A preacher must guard against envy. He must refrain from envying those who are his superiors and feeling that he could fill their place much better than they. A leading pastor said to us some years ago, just after he had returned from a great gathering, that he would love to have an opportunity of filling the pulpit as those who filled it did such a poor job of it. That man has been out of the ministry for years and the last time I saw him he was selling potatoes on the public square. You eye a man like Saul did David, and soon your heart is green with hatred. Better look out, brother preacher!

A minister must be a consistent man. He must not only have a knowledge of what is right and give that to his audience, but there must be on his part a willingness to carry out his own preaching. He must take his own medicine. Ezra, the scribe, was convinced that he should lead a migration from Babylon to Jerusalem. He thought of the dangers along the way. It was a journey of four months. It was a rough, unbroken wilderness. The country was infested with bands of marauders. He knew that Artaxerxes would give ample protection if he wanted an escort of soldiers. Now the question comes and the test. He remembered how he had preached to the people about God's defense and protection. Will he put his trust in God or soldiers? He halted for three days and through prayer and fasting placed everything into God's hands. He was not a fatalist. He was conscious of his weakness, but believed that God wanted him to do what he had undertaken.

This story ends with this testimony: "The hand of our God was upon us and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy and of such as lay in wait by the way. And we came to Jerusalem."

Preacher, are you consistent in your own trust and faith life with what you give out to the people? God's ministers cannot be consistent and effective in their own endeavors in building the church of Jesus Christ unless they "practice what they preach."

### God's Cure for Worry

If there is a cure for "nerves," this fast-moving generation certainly needs to find it. In addition to the natural longings and yearnings of the heart, the restlessness and perplexity of this present world, the very rush of the twentieth century and complexity of our civilization greatly increase the strain on the nervous system. Many have "shell shock" who were never in the army, but whose nerves have gone to pieces under the strain of daily living. A great number of our ills are caused by worry, and here is God's cure for it:

"In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God that passeth all understanding shall guard your hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6, 7).

"In nothing be anxious." But how can I help it? Take it to God. But can I take everything to Him? I know I can take some of my troubles to Him, but can I worry Him with everything? "But in all things"; thank God that "all" is there. God is concerned about anything that is worrying me.

"By prayer and supplication." Let Him know about it. He does not answer because of our much asking, but does want us to be in earnest about it, and certainly we cannot expect Him to answer unless we are in earnest.

"With thanksgiving." This is the part most frequently missed. We usually are so worried at those times we do not realize that we ought to be thankful. Thank God that we can take our troubles to Him! Praise His name because He is concerned about our trials. Be grateful for all the blessings we are enjoying. Glorifying His name because we know He hears and will answer, in His own way, and for our eternal good. It is time for songs of thanksgiving then because it is in the hand of One who can and will help.

"And the peace of God will guard your hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus." After the crucifixion of Christ the Pharisees went to Pilate and had him make the grave as safe as Rome could make it, lest the disciples come and steal the body. The Highest brushed away the guard as a man might brush away a fly. It is the power of God that keeps the citadel of our hearts and no power will ever storm it.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation; be of good cheer I have overcome the world."—S. BROWN HOLT, in *Christian Observer*.

## GENERAL CHURCH PROGRAM

### STEWARDSHIP

#### Using What We Have

C. Warren Jones, Stewardship Secretary

**A** FEW men have wealth and do not know what to do with it. It is a burden. They do not know how to use it. On the other hand, many people do not have wealth, but the most of them can tell you exactly what they would do, providing they had riches.

Many people are rich and do not know it. They do not know how to cash in what they have. A great number have a college education but never use it. We have seen young people with great musical talent, real ability, but they could not sell it to anyone. They possessed something they could not use. On the other hand we have seen men and women with limited education, but they used all they had. They were seemingly able to do big business on a small capital. They were able to use what they had and make it count. The same is true with music. Degrees in music avail but little if one is not able to sell his wares.

What we have said is applicable to the ministry. Some use what they have, though it be little, and succeed. Others possess great riches, degrees, a library, personality and yet they have trouble. They do but little and seemingly get nowhere. Unable to use what they have, that which is in their hand. God said to Moses, "What is that in thine hand?" Moses told God that it was a rod and then God told him to use it.

#### FAILING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE

As ministers of the gospel, there are so many doors we never enter; so many opportunities we never grasp; so many assets of which we make no use.

We call your attention to just one thing and that is religious literature, the printed page. We could name two or three religious organizations that are aggressive and growing rapidly. How do they do it? We cannot answer in full, but we do know that they major on the printed page. They sow the country down with their literature. We might, if we only would, profit by their example.

#### OUR LITERATURE

Our literature has to a large degree been a great factor in building the Church of the Nazarene. It has proved a real asset. Our church papers, Sunday school periodicals, books, tracts and pamphlets have gone to the ends of the earth. However we are wondering if all our pastors place a proper value on our literature. There are 100,000 homes in America where our literature—the *Herald of Holiness*, *The Other Sheep* and the *Young People's Journal*—

could be placed. There is no way to calculate the good that might come from the carrying out of such a plan.

#### STEWARDSHIP LITERATURE

We want to call your attention again to the stewardship pamphlets which are mailed out free. Of these we have a fine assortment. Last year we printed eight different pamphlets, known as 1939 series. They are all good, but one we want to especially call to your attention: "What Is Stewardship?" by Dr. J. B. Chapman. Mentioning the author is enough. Fifty thousand copies of this tract alone should be given out to our people and friends. It will inspire, enlighten and thus prove a blessing. Send for a sample package of the stewardship pamphlets.

### CHURCH SCHOOLS

Orval J. Nease

#### A Summons to Spiritual Advancement

**T**HE ultimate and final purpose of the presentation of the gospel and the work of the church is ever the "salvation of men for whom the Savior died." Every department is necessarily and vitally tied up in this all-consuming goal of the church. With the growing tide of worldliness and unbelief something more must be done than is being done to reach these wide areas of men and women on this continent who are as yet unreached by the gospel. Some feel they are gospel hardened. This may be true in instances and with the passing generation but on the whole and large this generation of Americans has never adequately been reached by the gospel. Raised in the homes of a generation which has rejected the family altar and the means of grace, they have entered life prejudiced against the church and the gospel before they have ever heard its message or been moved by its power.

Something must be done about the millions of America who are as yet untouched by the gospel even though they are under the very eaves of the church. Experience as well as statistics indicates that the overwhelming majority of those who find God are those who in childhood and youth have been subjected to the influence and teaching of the Word of God. This must be done either in the home or in the Sunday school. These are the agencies designated by God and the church to this responsibility. With the alarming majority of young America outside the church and with no family altar in the homes, what chance has the oncoming generation to



know God in any vital measure? There is no point of contact, no connecting agency, if the home and church fail. The work of implanting the seed of the gospel and the revival harvest are as inseparably and vitally connected as is sowing and reaping in nature. We believe we are right when we insist that the promotion of the Sunday school is, in the ultimate, the work of evangelism.

The Department of Church Schools, under the authority and approval of the Board of General Superintendents and with the co-operation of the District Superintendents, District Church School Boards, pastors and evangelists, is summoning the forces of the Sunday schools of the church, continent wide in a campaign for 25,000 new pupils for the classes of the Sunday school. Plans and information have been forwarded to district officers and local pastors and through them to the workers of the Sunday school for a Forward Program in every church and Sunday school. This advance is planned to cover a twelve-Sunday period, *New Year's through Easter, 1940.*

This must not exhaust itself in merely a numerical increase. This must be in the truest sense a spiritual advance for the salvation of souls as the final goal. This end must motivate every plan, program and activity. This must be *advancement upon the knees for the glory of our Christ and the upbuilding of His kingdom.* We believe that the awakening to action of the church in a concerted *Forward Program* through the channels of the Sunday school will inspire vision and passion for the *world-wide challenge of the church* which climaxes in the *Easter Self-denial Offering for Missions.*

"Speak unto Israel that they go forward."

**N. Y. P. S.**

S. T. Ludwig

**Special Announcement**

JANUARY 1, 1940, marks the beginning of the fifteenth year of publication for *The Young People's Journal.* The January issue will have special features celebrating this event. The entire year 1940 will be marked with outstanding devotional themes, challenging articles for young people, missionary programs and plans, and a wide variety of helpful ideas and suggestions for leaders of youth.

We have already secured some of the best writers in the church to give us material for this anniversary year. We are asking each N. Y. P. S. to bring up their subscription list to at least one-fifth of their total membership. Many are doing much more than that. Certainly it is not too optimistic to expect that a copy of *The Journal* should be in every home where there are young people.

We will greatly appreciate your co-operation with the local N. Y. P. S. president in securing the quota for your church. Special announcements will appear in the January number concerning further details and plans. Thank you for your kind co-operation.

**WE GREET YOU**

The members of the General N. Y. P. S. Council wish to take this opportunity of extending the SEASON'S GREETINGS to all pastors in the Church of the Nazarene. May the changeless message of that first Christmas morn, heralded by angelic choir, bring you increasing joy and peace amid the bewildering times in which we live.

**THE GENERAL COUNCIL**

- DR. R. T. WILLIAMS
- S. T. LUDWIG
- J. G. TAYLORSON
- MILTON SMITH
- G. B. WILLIAMSON
- D. S. CORLETT
- O. J. FINCH
- M. K. MOULTON

**BOOK CHAT**



P. H. Lunn

I WAS IN PRISON is the intriguing title of a book by Charles S. Macfarland (Revell—\$1.00). This volume contains suppressed letters from German pastors also a thorough review of all the events which led up to the present crisis in Germany. It also contains the open letter which Dr. Macfarland wrote to Chancellor Hitler in June, 1937, and the plea that Chaplains of Germany's armed forces made to Hitler in November of that same year.

STORIES OF POPULAR HYMNS by Kathleen Blanchard (Zondervan—\$1.00), contains the inspiring and touching stories of sixty-seven hymns. Some of the best known and loved older hymns are included in this list. The newer gospel songs are left out. Some of the hymn titles are: "Abide with Me," "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," "Blest Be the Tie that Binds," "God Be with You Till We Meet Again," "How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds," "In the Sweet Bye and Bye," "I Need Thee Every Hour," "Jesus Lover of My Soul," "Just As I Am," "My Faith Looks up to Thee," "Nearer My God to Thee," "Onward Christian Soldiers," "Rock of Ages," "There Were Ninety and Nine," "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," etc. One fine feature of this book is the fact that the words of all the hymns mentioned are printed in full. The stories are terse but well told. This seems to be one of the very best books of hymn stories that has yet appeared. And so reasonably priced.

JERICHO'S JUDGMENT by Walter J. Beasley (Zondervan—\$1.50) gives the fascinating story of modern discoveries in biblical archeology told in a popular form by a series of letters to a friend. It gathers up the results of recent research and gives in a clear and simple form an idea of the wonderful voices that are coming from the stones as "the spade confirms the Word."

A very interesting and unusual volume is PAY DAY SOME DAY by C. B. Hedstrom (Evangelical Beacon—75c). The author is a business man and these messages and sketches are based on incidents and circumstances in his own life.

For ministers who are called upon to talk to business organizations or for pointed illustrations for sermons, here is some excellent source material.

There comes from the author, Warren D. Bowman, his book, HOME BUILDERS OF TOMORROW (\$1.00). This is a book for young people dealing with problems of forming friendships, choosing a mate, courtship, the engagement and entering upon marriage. It is written from a sane, wholesome, Christian point of view. A book of this kind should be valuable to any minister, not only to give him the information it contains but that he might pass it about among his young people.

Early arrivals in the Sunday school lesson commentary field are THE TEACHER'S GUIDE and PELOUET'S SELECT NOTES. The former (Dickson Pub. Co.—\$1.50) edited by Dr. James R. Kaye, has some excellent material but we recommend it for discriminating readers only. In a previous volume we found unnecessary emphasis placed upon the teaching of Eternal Security, a doctrine which is unscriptural. It seems a pity that a book which is prepared for distribution among all denominations should enter into a discussion of any moot question.

The latter volume (W. A. Wilde Co.—\$2.00) is now written by Dr. Wilbur M. Smith. It presents a thorough discussion of the lessons and is noticeably free from controversial argument. With this Commentary and our own Bible School Journal any pastor or teacher is well equipped for the teaching task.

**ILLUSTRATIONS**

Basil Miller

**Saved from Death**

"Lord, as we kneel around this family altar, we pray that Thy protecting hand will be over Father as he goes to work today. Watch over him in this dangerous job where he will be placed. Care for the children, and grant Thy mercy to me," prayed a mother around a family altar just before her husband went to a dangerous job on a river bridge.

"Goodby and God bless you. I'll be praying today that no harm will come to you," were the mother's parting words.

During the day Mrs. Mary Gregg went about her home duties feeling a peculiar restraint. Near one o'clock she felt divinely led to her secret place of prayer and to repeat the petition of the morning altar.

"Dr. Miller," she said later, "I could not get John out of my mind. I felt he needed my prayers more than ever before, and I could hardly get off of my knees."

During the afternoon one of the men on the job brought her husband home. As the mother ran to the car she could see he did not seem quite natural.

"What is the matter?"  
"Nothing much, Mary. Nothing to worry about at least," the driver said.

"Tell me what happened."  
"A twenty-pound weight fell from the bridge and struck me on the top of my head this afternoon," the husband told her. "I felt all afternoon that someone was watching over me."

That night Mrs. Gregg came to the revival which we were conducting and testified:

"I have so much to be thankful for. This morning I prayed for husband to be protected by the Spirit, and God guarded his life against that twenty-pound weight. It was

God and nothing else that kept the weight from crushing his skull."

There were no serious effects from the blow, and to date the man is perfectly normal.

God will protect if we will ask Him.

**Healed of Stomach Ulcers**

"You have the clearest case of stomach ulcers that I have ever treated," said the specialist, but you must take my medicine and do as I say. Otherwise I will not guarantee the results."

L. E. Hoover, then Sunday school superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene at Rockford, Illinois, went home seriously thinking about his condition. For weeks he had been unable to keep anything on his stomach. He was so weak that he could barely do his work as a salesman, now he faced the inevitable outcome of a serious operation.

"Lord, thou dost know that I have said you could heal others. I have helped the pastor pray for healing among the sick scholars of our school. Why can't you heal me right now?" he prayed on returning home.

"Come to dinner, Daddy," one of the children called at noontime.

"Take your healing, like you take your salvation, by faith," an inner impression struck him.

"Thank you, Lord. I do take my healing right now by faith," he said arising from his knees. "I'm coming," he called down the stairs.

The doctor had given him a bottle of medicine and some powders to take before eating. He walked to the kitchen sink with the medicine in his hand.

A gurgling sound struck Mrs. Hoover's ears and she turned around in time to see the medicine flowing from the bottle.

"What are you doing? That's your medicine."  
"I'm taking my healing by faith," he said and he began to tear the package containing the powders and to throw them in the garbage. "I believe God can heal me right now."  
"But—"

"No buts about it. Pass the potatoes," he said, sitting down to the table.

God heard his prayer and healed him instantly. He felt no more distress from the trouble, and the specialist could not locate any evidence of the complaint.

**Hugging the Mourner's Bench**

Dr. H. C. Morrison, mighty holiness preacher of the Methodist Church, was to conduct a campmeeting in Kentucky. He arrived at the grounds late the evening the camp was to begin. While the crowd was gathering the preacher walked under the tent and went directly to the mourner's bench where he knelt down.

"I love you, mourner's bench. It was at such a place I found God, and when the church grows too proud to use you for saint or sinner alike, she will drive God from her borders," he said stroking the lowly penitent form where multiplied thousands had been transformed from lives of sin to holiness.

"You have been put out of many of our churches," he went on, "but I pray God to raise up a people who will love and cherish you. Without this lowly bench the world is doomed to destruction. We need you to bring the glory down upon our poor lost souls."

When he arose tears streamed from his eyes and a radiance shone upon his face which bespoke the glory of the Almighty upon his soul.

The mourner's bench people are scarce these days, and it behooves us as preachers to keep our benches well stained with tears of sinners seeking God and saints pleading for the glory upon them.

During that camp the great preacher, whom William Jennings Bryan declared to be one of the most eloquent men of his generation, thundered against sin, denounced evil and with a holy pathos wooed sinners to God. Scores responded to his pleadings for mourners to seek the Lord.

**Dr. H. C. Morrison Is Sanctified**

"You can't leave this room until you are sanctified, Brother Morrison."

"But I must catch my train, Sister Kirk. I begin a meeting shortly and I cannot afford to be late," responded Dr. H. C. Morrison, then a young Methodist preacher.

"That meeting will be a failure unless you find this purifying power in your soul. You will preach with your eloquent voice, but your heart will not be cleansed of carnality. You will be powerless," pleaded Mrs. Anna Kirk, then a humble Methodist sister of Columbus, Ohio. "I obtained this blessing and it changed my entire life, and it will do the same for you."

"But—" began the minister.

"Now is the time. The promise is, 'If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship . . . and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin.' This promise and experience of cleansing is for you. Let's get down here in my front room and pray."

They fell to their knees, the humble sister and the youthful minister, and called upon God to sanctify the preacher. Sister Kirk agonized in prayer, while the minister consecrated his all unto God. The glory broke upon the scene. The pleading turned to shouting.

"I know I am sanctified by the blood of Jesus Christ," the preacher affirmed.

"God go with you, and make you a mighty winner of souls, is my prayer," Mrs. Anna Kirk said as the young preacher arose to make his train.

We do not have to be mighty ourselves to woo another soul for Christ. First, have the experience and the task of leading others into it is simplified. This humble saint was my wife's grandmother, whose voice never sounded before large audiences, but who knew how to wrestle with one soul alone.

**Receiving Church Members**

"Go on to holiness, I plead with you, young man. You have been wondrously converted at this altar, and before I take you into membership of this mother church of the denomination, I want to urge you to go on to holiness. This is the establishing grace," said Dr. H. B. Wallin, pastor of the First Church of the Nazarene of Los Angeles, the mother church of the denomination.

"There is no better time than now. Do not put off your 'going on to holiness,'" the preacher went on, noticing tears streaming from the candidate's eyes.

"Could—could I be sanctified before you take me in?" the youth inquired.

"Right now kneel at this altar and you can be sanctified."

The membership receiving meeting was turned into an altar service and the power of God broke upon the congregation as others joined the young man at the altar. He was sanctified and then received into membership.

Could Dr. Phineas Breece, founder of that local church and sire of the denomination, have looked upon that scene, he would have said:

"The denomination is safe in the hands of such leaders—men who are more anxious to see a soul sanctified than a member added to the church rolls."

We must be concerned about sanctification being a necessary condition of entering heaven. Let us urge it upon our members as we receive them. There will be less drifting in the future from the standards of the church's founders.

**Remembering Mercy Amid Wrath**

"The circumstantial evidence points to the fact that John [calling a criminal by name] committed that double murder last week," a detective reported to his superior officer. "I have checked the clues carefully and all we have to do is find the man."

"Find that man if it takes you five years," came the order. "There is also a matter of \$5,000 reward for catching him."

The detective started out on a search that took him five years to end. He covered the southern states, located a trace of the fugitive in Tennessee, trailed him to New Orleans, and then located a hide-out in the West. He arrived in the western town just a week after the criminal had left without a trace.

Three more years passed, and finally he unearthed a clue in another western state. It was reported that the criminal had reformed and was now in a legitimate business, a respected member of the community.

The detective became a salesman, traveling for a reputable wholesale house, and went to the reformed criminal's place of business. He sold himself to the business man through every scheme known to salesmanship. He played golf with him at the country club. On the links the business man said:

"You are the kind of a fellow I like. If I had a brother I'd like for him to be just as you are. Upright. Strong. You're a man after my own heart. Come out to the house tonight and meet my wife and baby."

"I'd be happy to take dinner at your home, John. I came here to sell you on my line, but I've taken a liking to you as well."

The detective was met by a charming woman, and when a three-year-old child raced into the room, it was more than his stony heart could endure. Those little arms entwined around his neck, and touched some loose chords in his heart.

He went to his hotel room that night and fought a battle of decision. He needed that \$5,000 to cure his daughter of a dread malady, which required the services of the nation's outstanding specialist. He had already mortgaged his home and was about to lose it.

Mercy won and tempered the wrath and justice that had driven him for five years. He never went back to the man's place of business again.

"Unable to find the man, I hereby resign from the force," he wrote his final report.

How could I, he reasoned with himself, do this injustice to a man who has remade his life? I am not so cruel as to break a pure woman's heart, and stain the future of a harmless little baby.

God spoke to that detective, "If you are thus merciful, will not I in my wrath remember mercy?"

That was his turning point. He found God as his Redeemer.

Now he is God's detective, looking for sinners he can lead to the Savior. He is a gospel preacher who has conducted revivals in practically every state in the nation, and has organized scores of churches through home mission endeavors.

Fourteen years later he returned to the western city and again checked on the reformed criminal. He found him a member of a church in good standing, and faithful to his vows. His charming wife is a leader in the community, and the daughter that spring graduated from high school as one of the most popular young women of the city.

That \$5,000 reward is still standing and is unclaimed.

"I'd rather lose my right arm than earn the reward money, as much as I need it, by turning that man over to the law," the preacher told me this spring.

Will not God in wrath remember mercy, if we thus show mercy to our fellowmen?

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**THE PREACHER'S WORKSHOP**

An exchange of methods, plans and seasonal suggestions. If you have discovered an idea that has proved successful in your church, send it in.

Roy E. Swim

**Sermon Seed**

*Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas!* "Fear not for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" (Luke 2:10).

*The Star of Hope.* "When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy" (Matthew 2:10).

*A Preferred Shopping List.* Revelation 3:18; Proverbs 23:23; Isaiah 55:1; Jeremiah 15:16.

*What to Do with Trouble.* "And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out" (2 Kings 4:21).

*Spiritual Astigmatism.* "How can ye believe who seek honour one of another, and not the honour which cometh from God only?" (John 5:44). The dominant life motive which energizes a man's thinking has as much significance in determining what is truth for him as have the facts which he has collected.—H. P. SLOAN in *Christian Advocate*.

**The Savior's Birth**

Oh, that birth forever blessed!  
When the Virgin, full of grace,  
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,  
Bore the Savior of our race,  
And the Babe, the world's Redeemer,  
First revealed His sacred face  
Evermore and evermore.  
(From PRUDENTIUS: "Of the Father's Son Begotten")

**Peace on Earth**

From wartorn China came a message of peace and good-will. Hard pressed Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and his valiant wife relayed through a Lutheran missionary and the Southern Methodist church a message to the people of the United States for Christmas. Said the message, A holocaust of raging violence and horror has enveloped a great part of our country, a country where for thousands of years our statesmen, philosophers and artists have all cherished and expressed the ideal of 'peace and prosperity under heaven.'

"Nor should we be ashamed that our people are unwarlike, unwilling, and to that degree unprepared, to wage war. We have not racked our brains for thirty years to obtain the sharpest weapons and the craftiest tricks of warfare, and we do not regret it.

"Our self-knowledge gives us a strength over which a tissue of wiles and lies cannot eventually triumph. When high moral standards become an accomplished fact there will be no more war."

**A Call to Worship**

The harp of a thousand strings comes to glorious music in hours of worship on the Lord's day. The touch of God's presence as the organ calls us to silence and worship, is wonderful. Sensing God in worship with assembled fellow travelers, mingling voices with them in prayer and praise, singing the stately hymns and waiting serenely in His holy presence is a high privilege which great souls cherish.

Let us worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

—Bulletin, Los Angeles First Church of the Nazarene

**The Bible**

Most wondrous Book, bright candle of the Lord,  
Star of eternity! the only star  
By which the bark of man could navigate  
The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss  
Securely; only star which rose on time,  
And, on its dark and troubled billows still,  
As generation, drifting swiftly by,  
Succeeded generation, threw a ray  
Of heaven's own light, and to the hills of God,  
The everlasting hills, pointed the sinner's eye.  
This Book, this glorious Book, on every line  
Marked with the seal of high divinity;  
On every leaf bedewed with drops of love  
Divine, and with eternal heraldry  
And signature of God Almighty stamp'd  
From first to last, this ray of sacred light,  
This lamp from off the everlasting throne,  
Mercy took down, and in light of time  
Stood, casting on the dark her gracious bow;  
And even now beseeching men, with tears,  
And earnest sighs, to read, believe, and live.

—POLLOCK in *The Free Methodist*.

**A Strong Man and His Bible**

After his captivity in Sian, Chiang Kai-shek wrote, "From my captors I asked but one thing—a copy of the Bible. In my solitude I had ample time for reading and meditation. The greatness and love of Christ burst upon me with new inspiration, increasing my strength to struggle against evil, to overcome temptation, and to uphold righteousness."

**At Home in the Bible**

"All I know of good, truth, honesty and idealism I have learned from the Bible. In school I listened each morning as a chapter was read before classes started, and it was then that I came to know and respect the Holy Book. I never have lost my regard for the Word of God, and if I had my way about it, a chapter of the Bible would be read every single morning in every school-room in this country. I feel at home in the pages of the Bible, for that Book speaks my language"—HENRY FORD.

**Give It to the People**

"Give the Bible to the people, unadulterated, pure, unaltered, unexplained, uncheapered, and then see it work through the whole nature. It is very difficult indeed for a man or for a boy who knows the Scripture ever to get away from it. It follows him like the memory of his mother. It haunts him like an old song. It reminds him like the word of an old and revered teacher. It forms a part of the warp and woof of his life."—WOODROW WILSON.

**Symbols of the Word**

A mirror to show us ourselves (James 1:23).  
A hammer to break the will (Jeremiah 23:29).  
A fire to melt the heart (Malachi 3:2).  
A sword to pierce the conscience (Hebrews 4:2).  
A seed to quicken the soul (1 Peter 1:23).  
A laver to cleanse the way (Ephesians 5:26).  
A light to show the path (Psalm 119:105).

—SELECTED.

**The Bible**

Here paradise is restored, heaven opened and gates of hell disclosed. Christ is the grand object, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, a river of judgment. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and condemns all who trifle with its sacred contents.—SELECTED.



The Bible and Science

No explanation of this difference between the Bible and other ancient books can be given except that the former was written by inspiration. It is not that the men who wrote it had knowledge superior to that of their contemporaries, but that, when they wrote this book, intended to be God's message, not to their generation only, but to us also, the guidance of the Holy Spirit was present, to restrain them from writing down anything that would discredit the divine revelation in the twentieth century.

Let it not be said that there is no reason for surprise at the freedom of the New Testament writers from scientific error, seeing they were discussing religion, not nature. So was St. Augustine, four centuries later, discussing religion, and it is precisely for the sake of strengthening his argument in favor of religion that he adduces some of his mistaken illustrations from nature. And Augustine himself had rejected the teaching of the Manicheans because he had found them in error in natural science! Why did not St. Paul make the same mistake as St. Augustine? Suppose St. Paul had adduced the story of the phoenix as a proof of the resurrection! Josephus writes a history,—so does St. Luke. The former makes many errors, the latter none. Our Lord uses illustrations from nature constantly; yet not one that today requires the slightest apology or amendment. George Romanes was right. The absence of scientific error from the Holy Scriptures is one of the strongest objective proofs of its divine origin.—SELECTED.

A Bible Prayermeeting

Rev. E. D. Messer, pastor of the McAllen, Texas, Church of the Nazarene, reports a plan for a prayermeeting which proved unusually interesting and helpful in his church. At the preceding prayermeeting he asked for volunteers who would promise to read a book of the New Testament assigned to them. Each was to bring to the next prayermeeting

a brief report on the outstanding thought of the book which he read. Enough volunteers responded so that the whole New Testament was read and reported on in the prayermeeting. The Bible reading and the brief reports blessed the people. It was decided to go through the rest of the Bible in the same manner.

Sanctification Defined

"Sanctification in the proper sense is an instantaneous deliverance from all sin, and includes an instantaneous power then given always to cleave to God."—JOHN WESLEY.

Holiness and Security

"There is no state of grace this side of glory from which the soul may not finally fall, yet permanency is the peculiarity of the anointing in the case of the persevering believer. The presence of the Comforter in the sanctuary of the heart, filling it with light, love and joy strongly inclines the person to persevere so that he may freely determine to persist in faith and obedience."—DANIEL STEELE.

Evidences of Holiness

"By what fruit of the Spirit may we know that we are of God, even in the highest sense? By love, by joy, and peace abiding; by longsuffering, patience, resignation; by gentleness triumphing over all provocation; by goodness, mildness, sweetness, tenderness of spirit; by fidelity, simplicity, godly sincerity, meekness, calmness, evenness of spirit; by temperance, not only in food and sleep but in all things, natural and spiritual.

"This involves further total resignation to the will of God without any mixture of self-will; gentleness without any touch of anger, even the moment we are provoked; love to God without the least love to the creature but in and for God, excluding all pride and all envy, all jealousy and rash judging; meekness, keeping the whole inviolable calm, and temperance in all things."—JOHN WESLEY.

They Said

"It is not work that kills men—it is worry. Work is healthy. You could hardly put more upon a man than he can bear. But worry is rust upon the blade—it destroys the machinery."—HENRY WARD BEECHER.

The Way Out of Misery

"When you find yourself overpowered with melancholy," said a saintly man, "the best way is to go out and do something kind to somebody or other. Thousands who today are sitting daily in the gloom of a self-centered misery would soon lose it if they began to care for others."—SELECTED.

Briefs!

Resources Inexhaustible

The resources of the Christian life are—just Jesus Christ. Those resources are exhaustless.—R. C. MCQUILKIN in S. S. Times.

Mercy, Received and Given

"We do pray for mercy; and that same prayer doth teach us all to render deeds of mercy."—WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Let Your Light So Shine

"A lamp is a very small thing, and it burns calmly, and without noise, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house."—ROBERT MCCHEYNE.

A Fine Art

One of the fine arts of living is to learn from people with whom we disagree. Poor indeed are they who cleave only to those who agree with them.—C. IRVING BENSON.

Courtesy

Courtesy is like an air cushion; there may be nothing in it; but it eases the jolts wonderfully.

Wisdom is knowing what to do. Skill is knowing how to do it. Virtue is doing it well.

The Bible and Other Books

Books of biography tell how man has lived. Books of history point out what man has done. Books of philosophy teach the science of man's thoughts. Books of literature set forth the wisest words of great men. Books of travel tell of where man has gone to and fro in the earth. But the Bible alone tells us clearly and truly just where all men are going—into eternity. And the Bible alone tells men how to "Prepare to meet" God on favorable grounds of salvation and glory.—Selected.

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HOMILETICAL

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A PREACHING PROGRAM FOR DECEMBER, 1939

J. Glenn Gould MORNING SERVICE Faith Versus Flight

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Psalm 11.

TEXT—In the Lord put I my trust; how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain? (Psalm 11:1).

I. The Psalms are the hymn book of the Word of God. They are expressive of every possible mood of the soul; of elation and victory, or hopelessness and despair. David's own experiences cover almost the total range of life's possible happenings. In the Psalms he has recorded in perfect frankness and with transparent sincerity his moods, whether of hope or despair. Some of these poems are marked by a gracious and magnanimous spirit, while others are sinister with a spirit of vengeance. We read them and love them because we find them to be faithful mirrors wherein our own faces are reflected.

1. The exact occasion of this eleventh Psalm must remain in the realm of conjecture. There is no clear mark by which it may be related to some specific event in his life. It is likely, however, that it comes from that period of stress and strain in David's life after his anointing at the hands of Samuel and before his ascension to the throne of Israel.

a. Those were difficult and trying days. As a result of his victory over Goliath, David had married the daughter of Saul and had become a member of the king's household. It created a most delicate situation. Saul, though still king, had been rejected of God and his house denied the succession to the throne at Saul's death. David, on the other hand, was God's choice for the succession, a fact well known to King Saul.

b. There was a certain fondness in the soul of Saul for the youthful David. Ingrate though he was, he could not help being somewhat grateful for David's monumental victory over the gigantic Philistine. Then, too, in Saul's moments of depression, he loved to hear David play upon his harp. On one occasion, however, as David played before the king, Saul's soul was undiverted; and in a fit of jealous anger he seized a javelin at his side and hurled it at the young man in an effort to pin him to the wall. Thanks to youthful agility, David escaped that murderous assault. But from that hour he became a fugitive from Saul's household.

c. It is probable that then the psalmist was admonished to flee to some mountain fastness where he would be safe from the pursuit of Saul. His only security lay in flight, he was told. "Flee as a bird to your mountain." David frequently likens himself to a bird: an eagle, an owl, a partridge, etc. But here he can think of nothing but a frightened bird in mad flight from his enemies.

1. It is then that he utters his heroic cry, "In the Lord put I my trust; how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain." God had wrought miraculous deliverances in his life on many occasions, and he can do it again. This is no hour for flight but for faith. There is no security in a mountain if a man has not God; but there is security anywhere if a man has God.

II. God versus a mountain.

1. None of our hymn writers has more gravely misapprehended the true meaning of this text than the author of the hymn, "Flee as a bird to your mountain, Ye who are weary of sin." That is the very thing that David is repudiating in this brave cry. "I have God for my defense," he cries. "Why do you bid such an one to flee?"

2. The emphasis here is upon the futility of any earthly haven for the soul. There is no refuge for the soul other than God. He alone can lift the weight of sin's burden. He alone can purge the conscience from its sense of guilt. He alone can transform human personality until it can be said truly, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." And in the hour of life's great distresses—sorrow, adversity, sickness, disappointment—He alone affords a haven for the soul.

3. There is no more courageous and significant word that the soul hard-pressed can utter than this, "In the Lord put I my trust." A man can afford to rest his case with God. In misunderstanding it is God who can vindicate. Amidst the

loss of employment and home and living it is God who can supply every need. In the midst of bereavement, God can wipe our tears away and give confidence and courage to face the future.

III. Indeed, God is the only defense of His people.

1. It is obvious that they must have a defense. The people of God are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, seeking a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. There is nothing on earth by which spiritual life can be sustained. During the Civil War, General Sheridan announced that he had so systematically ravaged the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia that even a crow flying over it would have to carry his rations with him. In a somewhat similar situation is the Christian living for God in "a dry and barren land where no water is."

2. But God is a glorious hiding place for His saints. He alone can sustain them and uphold them and harbor them. He has given repeated assurance of His ability and willingness to succor. Let us note some of them:

a. In 2 Chron. 16:9, He says, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." God is searching for occasion to make bare His arm in deliverance for His saints. He is in alliance with every man whose heart is right with the heart of God. No matter where such a man is, God will find him and buttress him with His strength.

b. Again, in Psalm 34:7, we are assured that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." That means that God's angel is standing sentry duty for everyone who fears the Lord; watching night and day with unceasing vigilance that no enemy surprise them and no harm befall. Waking or sleeping, the convoy of angels follows a man and protects him from anything that is not in God's will for him.

c. Employing still another metaphor, in Psalm 91:4, we are told that "He [God] shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust." The figure is that of a mother hen who sights a hawk and utters a cry of danger sentry duty for everyone who fears the Lord; watching night and day with unceasing vigilance that no enemy surprise them and no harm befall. There they are secure until the enemy as gone his way. So does God undertake our defense; and under His wings is our security.

d. A more stalwart figure of speech is employed in Psalm 125:2 to express this same ministry of protection: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever." The psalmist here alludes to the impregnable situation of Jerusalem surrounded by mountains that greatly enhance her security. Similarly is the Lord round about His people. There is no promise calculated to promote greater confidence in the soul than this.

e. A supremely precious assurance is this of Isaiah 41:10: "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." There is no promise in the Word more comprehensive than this. God engages Himself to undertake our defense on every front, and to make us victors in the strife. With such a God, why should one flee to a mountain?

IV. There are two types of divine deliverance, however.

1. God at times delivers us out of the midst of our enemies. And that is the sort of deliverance everyone wants. In fact we are hardly willing to call it a deliverance unless the enemy is in flight and we are no longer beleaguered.

2. But sometimes God chooses to deliver us in the midst of our enemies. The three Hebrew children in Babylon were permitted to go into the fiery furnace and God kept them in

the midst of the flame. God refused Paul deliverance from his thorn, but did something infinitely better: He gave him sufficient grace. However God may choose to send it, the deliverance is divine and unfailing to the man who dares put his trust in the Lord. Let us have a faith in God like David's, and choose to trust rather than to flee.

## EVENING SERVICE

## The Water of Life

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—John 4:3-26.

**TEXT**—*Whoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4:13, 14).*

I. It is a singular fact that many of Jesus' most profound messages were addressed, not to the multitudes, but to individual men and women. In this day of crowds and emphasis upon mass movements and mankind in the aggregate, it might correct our perspective somewhat to recall this fact: We are apt to measure the worth of an opportunity by the number of persons we are able to reach. The big meeting is the meeting largely attended, and vice versa. But for the Master there was no value that could transcend the worth of the individual human spirit; and many of the Savior's most significant messages were delivered to a congregation of one. It was thus on this occasion. Jesus gave this heart-searching, soul-saving discourse to a lone spirit, sinful and broken by a life of shame.

There are a number of notable features that appear in this situation as we examine it closely. (1) The woman was a Samaritan, member of a mongrel race that was regarded by the Jews as beneath contempt. In the Samaritans, Israelite blood had been mingled with the blood of Gentiles and pagans to produce a race as impure religiously as it was racially. The Jews had no dealings with Samaritans and would not risk defilement by so much as setting foot on Samaritan soil. They preferred the longer road from Judea to Galilee through Perea rather than the shorter one through the province of Samaria. But Jesus "must needs go through Samaria." It was not to save time that He chose this route, but to bring His message of hope to the outcast woman at Sychar. So great was the Master's regard for the hunger of an immortal soul.

2. It is striking to note, furthermore, how searching was the presence of the Master. He did not actually tell her "all things that ever she did," as she asserted in her testimony of Him. In fact He placed His finger on only one of the sore places in her life. But so great was her sense of guilt and sorrow of remorse that it seemed He had revealed the whole shameful story of her sin. Many a guilty sinner has experienced a similar sense of exposure, even to asserting that the messenger of God must have been informed about him beforehand and was endeavoring deliberately to reveal his sins. It is the searching presence of the Lord that produces these results.

3. A third notable feature of this arresting incident is the remarkable revelation Christ gives of the essential nature of God. "God is spirit," He declares. The article "a" does not belong there. He is not saying that God is one of the many spirits, but that His essential nature is spiritual; and that men must worship Him "in spirit and in truth." It is not outward form but inward fact that matters most; not a bowed head alone, but a bowed heart as well. There must be, moreover, an absolute sincerity in the heart that would worship God. No mere pretense or make-believe can escape His detection.

(4) But the Master's self-revelation is equally notable. After eliciting from the woman a wistful expression of hope

in the coming Messiah, who "will tell us all things," He made that simple yet profound, statement of fact, "I that speak unto thee am he." There is no fanfare such as would announce the presence of a king, and yet the Lord of heaven and earth is here.

II. It is particularly significant that Jesus used so simple a figure of speech to drive home so mighty a truth.

Thirst is a universal experience. And in the souls of men there is a burning thirst for God.

1. The assumption throughout the conversation is that of thirst. It was thirst that brought the woman to the well at this unseemly hour of noontide. The shame of her life was such that she could not come to the well in the cooler hours of morning or evening and thus expose herself to the reproaches of her more reputable neighbors. But she must have water; and if the satisfaction for thirst demanded a trip through the menacing heat of midday, the chance must be taken and the discomfort borne. And equally insistent is the craving of a human spirit for God.

2. The physical demand for water is imperious. We cannot live without it. The tissues of the body demand their complement of moisture, and if they become dehydrated are an easy prey of germ diseases of numerous sorts. There is an increasing reliance upon the artificial restoration of water to the body tissues as a specific against the ravages of disease. The thirst of which we are conscious—the dry mouth and in extreme cases the swollen tongue, are only symptoms of the thirst that is present in every tissue of our bodies. Yet after having drunk, as Jesus said, we "thirst again."

3. With equal insistence the soul cries out for God. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks," said David, "so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." The picture is that of a hunted animal fleeing his pursuers, worn and weary, ready to fall with fatigue and perishing with thirst. Just as the hart so spent pants for a draught from the water brook, so does a man's soul cry out for God. It is this universal human longing, present in the soul of the woman of Samaria, and present equally with everyone of us, to which Jesus appeals.

III. Men have been forever fashioning makeshift wells for themselves to satisfy this universal thirst.

1. The futility of such an attempt is set forth clearly enough in Jesus' words: "Everyone that drinketh of this water shall thirst again." And that is the best that men can do, for themselves. A drink from Jacob's well could relieve thirst only for a season; but shortly this insistent craving would reassert itself and the process must be repeated. It is equally futile to attempt to satisfy the craving of the heart with weak human substitutes for the one thing that will meet our need.

2. The Prophet Jeremiah warned of this futility, in these words. "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living water, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer. 2:13). The best substitute men have for the living springs is broken cisterns; cisterns that can fail them only in the hour of need.

3. We need to learn that spiritual thirst can never be allayed by any carnal draught. Culture that deals with the mind and leaves the soul uncultivated can never satisfy. Sport that develops the body but leaves the soul unrelaxed is a snare. Wine that leaves the soul unexhilarated and carnal diversions that cannot divert the spirit, will never meet our need. Men may have them all and still perish with this thirst of the soul.

IV. Now, to all thirsty souls Jesus offers the water of eternal life.

1. What is this living water? It is small wonder that this Samaritan woman, sense-bound as she was, should misunder-

stand. The only thirst of which she had ever become clearly conscious, at least until this moment, was physical thirst; and the only satisfaction was Jacob's well. Could she be so transformed that these daily trips to the well would be no longer necessary?

2. The Master had a clear, certain answer. He could put into the soul a well of living water from which sustenance could be drawn. And some things about this gift of God are clear. It will satisfy the soul when nothing else can. It is the gift of God through Christ to thirsty men. It is an inner fountain, springing up within the heart. It is no stagnant, disease-laden pool, but a flowing, living, life-giving current. And the man who drinks of it will enjoy "life, life, eternal life." Ponce de Leon lost his life in a futile attempt to discover the reputed fountain of youth in the New World. But here is a living current that can satisfy that craving for life.

3. Nothing else is so important as this. Wealth, pleasure, success, the rewards of labor—all must perish, but this remaineth. At any price make it yours.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1939

## MORNING SERVICE

## Victory over Environment

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Romans 12:1-21.

**TEXT**—*And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God (Romans 12:2).*

I. It is a generally accepted doctrine that man is profoundly modified by the environment in which he lives. Sociologists hold the view that the stalwart, sturdy characteristics of the Scandinavian peoples are related intimately to the stern, rigorous climate in which they live, and their rock-bound homeland, broken by majestic fjords. It is equally true that the temperamental, passionate disposition of the people in the south of Europe is the result in part of life in so hospitable a climate as that along the northern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Migration from one climate to another has changed the whole outlook of a race of people in the course of a few generations.

Now, Rome, where lived the people to whom this letter was addressed, was a city of paganism, vice and ungodliness. It had not yet become one of the Christian centers of the world, but was still in the grip of the decadent religion of the latter days of the Roman empire. Such a city could not fail to exert a profound influence on its inhabitants. They were as men caught in a whirlpool, sucked into this seething vortex of immorality and iniquity. So imperious were the godless ideals and unholy standards of this ancient city that men were counseled not to defy them. "In Rome, do as the Romans do." That was the popular dictum. And men everywhere were content to yield before this moral tyranny.

The apostle, however, elevates an entirely different standard of conduct. He flings down a challenge to this iniquitous autocracy of custom, and cries, "Be not conformed to this world." Refuse to be dominated and corrupted by the habits and fashions of this age. Dare to be different, even in the atmosphere of ancient Rome. Call a halt to this servile worldly conformity, and live in defiance of the pagan customs of this unholy age.

## II. "Be not conformed!"

The American Revision renders it: "Be not fashioned according to this age." Weymouth makes it more explicit still: "Do not follow the customs of the present age, but be transformed by the entire renewal of your minds, so that ye may learn by experience what God's will is . . . that will which is good and beautiful and perfect." What is meant by conformity to the world?

1. It is certainly not God's intention to put a man out of relationship and harmony with the physical world, by means

of which his earth life is sustained. Our bodies must be sustained by food and air, must be sheltered by houses and clothing; and our minds must move in the realm of ideas, that are common to all men. It is apparent, equally, that God does not wish to put a man at variance with his fellowmen. God himself loves that world of men and gave His only begotten Son for its redemption.

2. A clearer understanding of the apostle's meaning is given us in the expression: "The fashions of the age." It is a warning against conformity to the estimates and ideals of this present evil world. What are the things men esteem most highly? On what level do they find their ideals? It is easily apparent that most men are content to live for material things, forgetful of the fact that Jesus said, "A man's life consisteth not of the abundance of the things that he possesseth." It is apparent, moreover, that the age in which we live is running madly after pleasure, oblivious of the Bible's warning that "she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." Sensualism is the order of the day; and we seem determined to have it even though it must be sought in illicit channels.

But the apostle's word is a challenge to the sins and iniquities of the age. The standards of the world are depraved and ungodly. It matters not at all to men of the world that God has said "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." If everybody is doing it, regardless of what it is, it is accepted as legitimate. Indulgences that once bore unmistakably the hallmark of sin have been reclassified by the spirit of the times as innocent diversions. The fact that they are destructive of body and soul appears to be a consideration unworthy of serious attention. "On with the dance," is the cry, even though it be the dizzy dance of death.

II. Now God demands that we control circumstances rather than be controlled by them, and promises that we may.

But how can it be done? The average man declares it to be impossible, but God affirms that it can be done.

1. "Be ye transformed." This is God's prescription. There is a radical and complete transformation possible to sinful men by the grace of God. It was this change of heart which Jesus sought to inculcate in His new birth message to Nicodemus. To be born again did not mean to re-enter the physical world. It meant, rather, an introduction into the spiritual world; a world as different and distinct from all that unregenerate men now know as is the world into which the human embryo makes its advent at the moment of physical birth. It is this transformation Saint Paul had in mind when he declared, as the result of extensive observation, that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The same emphasis is made in Col. 1:13: "[God] hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

2. Biology declares that life is sustained by a harmony with environment. That is still true with the child of God, with this difference: The environment is changed. "Behold, all things are become new." A man so changed lives with his feet on the earth and his head in the clouds. He will still traverse the streets of earth, but his conversation will be in heaven. He will still be doing business at the old stand, provided it be a legitimate business; but his chief commerce will be with the skies. He lives and moves and has his being in God. His will is yielded to God's will, and his life on earth is lived for God's glory, and under God's direction. It is not conformity but transformation.

## IV. But how is this transformation accomplished?

"By the renewing of your minds that ye may prove. . . Here is God's plan unfolded. Now what does such a program demand of men?"



1. It demands, first of all, a perfect repudiation of allegiance to the world and a turning of the whole heart to God. The sinner must come confessing and truly repenting. The proud-hearted must humble himself under the mighty hand of God. The self-sufficient, self-righteous man must realize how undone he is in God's sight, and discover his only refuge in the riven side of Jesus. A person who becomes a citizen of the United States of America must renounce allegiance to every other nation, and especially Great Britain; and a man who is becoming a citizen of the kingdom of heaven must be equally specific in his renunciation.

2. It demands, furthermore, a perfect surrender to God; a surrender that marks the end of rebellion and the proclamation of peace—"peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." For a soul thus surrendered, God engages to blot out transgressions like a thick cloud, and to cleanse the conscience from its stain of guilt. He engages to change utterly the nature of such a one, making him one of God's dear children, and assuring him inwardly by the witness of the Spirit that the work is done.

3. But it demands, moreover, a perfect acceptance of and yielding to the will of God—an experience to which many a sincerely regenerate soul has not yet come. It is one thing for a man to look backward upon a burden of sin but lately lifted and a perdition so narrowly escaped, and be grateful for such a marvelous salvation. It is quite another to face the unknown future and accept for it all the perfect will of God. There are some who hesitate at such a requirement and draw back. There are others who dare to go forward on these terms and receive a gracious sanctifying fullness of the Holy Spirit. And it is they alone who "prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God," which shall it be? Conformity or transformation? The answer lies with us.

#### EVENING SERVICE

##### Ladders that Lead to Hell

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—2 Kings 8:7-15.

TEXT—*And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? (2 Kings 8:13).*

I. Hazael was the trusted servant of Ben-hadad, the king of Syria. Over years of intimate association with his royal master, he had proved himself, as it seemed, a most reliable man, one who carried the interests of his master at heart. In this hour of Ben-hadad's illness, Hazael was the man entrusted with this mission to Elisha, the prophet of God, to learn what would be the likely outcome of the king's affliction. Elisha's reply was something of an enigma, "Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover; howbeit the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die." That sounded like both "yes" and "no." But Hazael was further mystified by the strange conduct of the prophet; for as he uttered these baffling words, he began to weep. Moved with concern, Hazael inquired the reason for his tears, only to hear a most astounding prediction concerning himself. I weep, said the prophet, "because I know the evil that thou wilt do, unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child." The prediction was so hideous that Hazael revolted from it in the words of this text: "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?"

But, dog or no dog, he did it. Out from this historic meeting with Elisha he went, and back to his royal master. Within twenty-four hours he had murdered Ben-hadad by suffocation, and had himself proclaimed king in his stead. During the years that followed he was guilty of every crime Elisha had envisaged and from which he had recoiled in such horror. There was a demon within his soul whose presence

Hazael little suspected; a demon that, once aroused, drove him on in a career of lust and rapine and murder second to none on the bloody stage of that ancient world.

We have a proverb which runs: "Let sleeping dogs lie." It is a wise and wholesome adage. For there is no way of knowing what hell-bent forces may be unleashed in the soul of an unregenerate man, once a suitable occasion arises.

#### II. "Every man has his own ladder down to hell."

Dr. Clarence Edward Macartney tells of hearing a statement like that from the lips of a Scotch preacher in "the lovely Isle of Bute"; a statement that proved the stimulus for a most effective message of his own.

1. But the ancient Romans had observed this same easy tendency in mankind, and expressed it most effectively in their proverb "*Pacilis descensus averno*"—"the descent to hell is easy." It is easy because it is a moral downgrade, and the soul who begins the descent becomes the victim of a gathering momentum. Once well started, it is increasingly difficult to stop, to say nothing of reversing direction. And it requires no more moral stamina than the ability to take the way of least resistance for a man to lose his soul.

2. How true it is that every man has his own ladder to hell—a private and personal ladder that is his, and his alone! There is some "weakest place" in every man's life; and, unless fortified by divine grace, an assault at that point can have only one result. I have heard men say, "If I ever lose my soul, it will not be by that route." But by what route will it be? If we were so certain of our points of weakness as of our points of strength, our security would be greatly enhanced. So many crimes of violence are the result of a certain moral surprise. The sleeping dog was suddenly awakened and the dastardly deed performed before the judgment and reason had a chance to intervene. And the remorseful cry is bound to follow, "Oh, why did I ever do it?"

3. But it should be remembered that everyone who makes the descent lands only in hell. God's Word speaks unequivocally at this point. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "The wages of sin is death." "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." These are grim, impartial truths. They apply with equal force to every man on earth. And Jesus made them grimmer still when He said that if a man's foot or hand or eye offend him, he would do better to cut it off or pluck it out than, by retaining it, to be cast into hell, "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." This is the inevitable end of the man who takes that fatal ladder leading down.

#### III. God's Word is full of examples of men who have made that tragic descent.

1. Here is the case of Hazael. For a moment the prophet uncovered the potentialities that lay hidden in his soul; and the sight was so shocking that he drew back in dismay. He little dreamed, and was ready hotly to deny; that such moral degradation lay before him. But Hazael did not know himself and the rotten moral fabric in his life. He made the slippery descent to hell.

2. Esau was a man against whose example God warns men. He played present gratification against future satisfaction and lost. The issue of the birthright—a precious thing, as he well knew—nevertheless seemed something with which he felt he could trifle at the moment. He never intended it should end as it did. God calls him a "profane person"; literally, a man who had nothing in his life too sacred for men to tread upon. He, too, gambled with his soul and lost.

3. Balaam was another such character. He imagined that he had won God over to his view of the matter; that the Almighty had rescinded His first judgment, and had been persuaded by His prophet. And Balaam discovered that in the end he had lost the promised emolument, his life and his soul.

4. David never dreamed that the demon of lust and murder could fise in his soul until the day he looked upon Bath-

sheba. Instantly his good sense and usually clear judgment and moral scruples vanished, and he became the creature of his passion. Not until the dark chapter was fully written and the record of shame complete did he awaken to discover what a beast he had been. He missed hell, but only by a hair's breadth.

5. Simon Peter could not believe himself as weak an ingrate as Jesus' prediction seemed to indicate. Forsake Jesus? Never! And he hotly denied the possibility even when it came on so reliable authority as the word of Christ. But deny his Lord he did, even with profane oaths.

6. Judas Iscariot never intended that his relationship with the Master should end as it did. He certainly was not deliberately placed as the villain in this tragedy of the cross. If anyone had disclosed to him the terrible possibilities that lay ahead, he would have refused them credence. But he became the Lord's betrayer and his name is today a synonym for all that is faithless and false. He took the ladder that led to hell, and lost his soul.

#### IV. But is there no hope for the man who finds himself far down that ladder?

Yes, thank God, there is hope.

1. Satan has two lies by which tempted and sinning men are deceived. One is that "this temptation is so trivial it will not matter." Why be narrow and radical? asks the tempter. You can do this and not suffer in your spirit. Satan said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die"; and a similar lie is preached to every tempted soul. But once the soul yields and the inevitable condemnation for sin rests upon the conscience, the tempter becomes the accuser, with this lie; this sin is so great there is no forgiveness. Many a remorseful and contrite spirit has been browbeaten into hopelessness and despair by such an assault of the enemy. Satan's one purpose is to get a man down and keep him there.

2. But, thank God, beside every ladder that leads to hell is another that leads to heaven. This is not a hopeless, unredeemed world. There has been a cross uplifted in it; and the Son of God has died thereon in full atonement for human sin. We are members of a ransomed race, for whom the whole price is paid. And there is life for a look at the crucified One.

Pastor Ufford, author of the hymn "Throw Out the Life-line," had his pulpit in Rockland, Maine, constructed like the prow of a sailing ship, with life preservers attached to life-lines on either side of his pulpit while he was preaching. It was a sailor man's way of asserting graphically that there is hope, and men may be saved from the waves of damnation if they will. Look to Christ and be ye saved today.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1939

MORNING SERVICE

A Normal New Testament Church

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Acts 19:1-20.

TEXT—*Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? (Acts 19:2).*

I. The group to which Saint Paul addressed this eager, searching question was one which bore every essential identifying mark of a truly Christian Church, save one: They were "disciples"; that is, they were followers after and learners of Christ. They had been baptized according to the practice of John the Baptist. And as the apostle defined John's baptism, it was an essentially Christian thing; for he said, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ." Hearing from Saint Paul that Christ had come, in fulfillment of promise, they were baptized again in the name of Christ. An eager Christian church they seemed to be.

1. The basic and original meaning of the term "church" is far different from the accommodated meaning it has come to have. As it is employed in the New Testament the term "church" signifies "the called out ones"; those who have heard the call of God and have separated themselves from worldliness and sin at His command. There is ample evidence that these Ephesian believers qualified under this definition of "church." Indeed, the one essential in which they lacked had to do with their understanding of and relationship to the Holy Spirit in His fullness.

2. The church shares equally with the world in the peculiar benefits of Christ's atoning death. It is true, blessedly true, 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." Here is redemption that is all-embracing, reaching to the last man. But it is equally true that "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Here is life for the sinner, and cleansing for the believer, provided for in the shed blood—the self-giving—of our Lord.

3. Thus the apostle's question was in direct line with one of the central purposes of the cross of Christ. He is inquiring, if this second and deeper purpose of the cross of Christ has been accomplished in the hearts of these believers. Are you stopping short of your privileges in Christ? or are you entering in?

#### II. As a matter of fact, no more vital question could be asked of any church.

1. How trivial are the issues that divide Christendom! Many of the major divisions in the Protestant Church are occasioned by differing views on church government, modes of baptism, theories of apostolic succession, the use of musical instruments in public worship, and a host of other and equally secondary matters. These are the questions that have erected barriers between the churches, and have broken organized Christianity up into distinct, and frequently warring, camps.

2. But here Saint Paul is driving straight to the heart of the most crucial issue in New Testament religion. This is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. He is in the world as the agent of God and the interpreter of Christ. Without Him it is impossible that any church will be able to function in a manner acceptable to God. And now: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" Here in the full tide of the Holy Spirit dispensation, do you have His cleansing, empowering presence within you?

3. Dr. E. Stanley Jones has declared that "Pentecost is normal Christianity." It is God's expectation and gracious provision that the fullness of the Spirit should be the rule among His people, rather than the exception.

a. It follows that anything less than Pentecost, is sub-normal Christianity; while anything more than Pentecost is abnormal Christianity. As Dr. Jones puts it, some men have become feverish and fanatical at this point and have spoken and acted deliriously; while others have been frightened into anæmia. The best antidote for either extreme is the New Testament baptism with the Holy Spirit.

b. Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst, Presbyterian clergyman in New York a half century ago, as quoted by Dr. Daniel Steele, says, "It takes Christ as a law and the Holy Spirit as a passion both to make of a man a completed Christian. We must learn to realize that in this matter of the Holy Spirit we are dealing with an essential. No matter how perfect a half-Christian a man may be, you have not secured Christianhood till you have put the other half along with it. There is matter here to be thought upon. It concerns us as Christian men and women, and it concerns us in our collective character as a Christian Church. There were no completed Christians till Pentecost, and there can be no completed Christians with

the cessation of Pentecost. There was no church till Pentecost, and a church without the Holy Spirit is as much a delusion as a church without Christ. . . . We dare never forget that though the disciples were thoroughly converted to Jesus Christ at the time He withdrew from them, yet they remained in a condition of organized helplessness till the work of Jesus had been supplemented by the work of the Spirit."

### III. But what is Pentecost?

1. It was for centuries a Jewish festival; more or less obscure in the place it held in the calendar of God's chosen people. But that day was lifted out of its obscurity forever by reason of the fact that on that first Pentecost after the cross of Christ the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the assembled church in Jerusalem. Amid the excitement and apparent confusion of that day, it stands forth clearly that there were two elements present: the passing and the permanent.

2. The passing elements were, first of all, (a) the ten days of waiting. Whatever dispensational reason there may have been for the ten days of waiting in the first instance, that necessity is now done away. Another is (b) the sound of rushing wind. Never again did God accompany the outpouring of the Spirit with this peculiar manifestation. It was peculiar to the first Pentecost. Still another is (c) the appearance of cloven tongues like as of fire. This was another unique aspect of that first outpouring, and God has not chosen to repeat it. A fourth passing element is (d) the speaking in other languages. It was a manifestation that filled a vital place and rendered a distinct evangelistic service on the Day of Pentecost. It is true that it did appear upon the occasion of other outpourings of the Spirit. But it is equally true that it was not always present, notably in the revival in Samaria (in Acts 8); and so cannot be regarded as a permanent and essential accompaniment of the Spirit's baptism. Indeed all of these peculiar elements can only be classified as passing, and not permanent.

3. There were, however, some permanent elements in this experience that were constant and unchanging in the hearts of the one hundred and twenty to whom the Spirit came. Fortunately we have the testimony of the most representative man among them—Simon Peter—given many years after the experience itself. One of those permanent elements was purity of heart. On that occasion in the Upper Room, declares Peter (in Acts 15:8, 9) God purified his heart by faith. The second permanent element was the abiding fullness of the Holy Spirit. He came in at Pentecost, amid striking manifestations. But His presence remained after those manifestations had ceased.

### IV. And now, friends, let me ask you this same question: Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?

1. This is normal New Testament Christianity. It is God's purpose and promise and provision that His Church should enjoy this gracious sanctifying fullness. It would solve a great many problems and ease a great many frictions and avoid a great many personality conflicts if the church enjoyed this fullness. At high tide the Thames is one of the most beautiful streams in the world. But when the tide is out, it is largely mud banks; with a narrow, navigable stream in the center of the channel, so narrow that it is difficult for two small boats to pass. It is not pleasant to see and hear the muddy banks exposed and the profane and coarse speech of the men whose tempers are ruffled by navigation difficulties. But when the tide comes in, the unsightly mud banks are covered and there is ample room for all. So is it with the Church of Christ. It gets on smoothly and gloriously only when it enjoys the Spirit's fullness.

2. But the church can be filled with the Spirit only as the individuals that compose it have received Him. Has He come to you in cleansing and fullness?

### EVENING SERVICE

#### Forbidden Altars

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Galatians 2.

TEXT—*If I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor (Gal. 2:18).*

1. The words of this text lie at the very heart of Saint Paul's argument regarding the sufficiency of Christ for salvation. The epistle to the Galatians is a controversial document, concerned to establish two points. It undertakes to establish Saint Paul's apostolic office in the face of those who declared him to be no apostle. And it endeavors to establish the truth that faith in Christ is the one sufficient ground for salvation from sin, without necessity for supplementation by such purely Jewish rites as circumcision, and the like. It is a fortunate thing that the great apostle took his stand here and fought for it so valiantly, for the issue was more far-reaching than a mere Galatian controversy between Jew and Gentile believers. It amounted actually to this question: Is the Christian faith going to be merely a subdivision of Judaism, or will it go forth in the power of the risen Christ to bring its gospel of hope to all men everywhere? We are Christians today, in all probability, because Saint Paul won this victory.

Now, the issue in these concluding verses of chapter two is this: Must a Christian believer depend for his salvation upon anything other than obedience to and faith in Christ? Or must he struggle to perform all the ceremonial rites of the religion of Moses? Paul contends for the former position, and says in substance: "I have torn down my confidence in legal observances, and am putting my faith only in Christ Jesus. Now, if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor."

It may be that, in employing this figure of speech, the apostle is mindful of the situation which frequently prevailed in Israel's history, when a new king, who feared not God, would come to the throne and rebuild the pagan altars that his predecessor had destroyed; thus leading the nation back into idolatry. Somewhat similar would be the backsliding of a man who had destroyed his faith in any saving medium other than the blood of Christ, only to forsake Christ and return to worship at forbidden altars.

### II. But what are "the things that I destroyed"?

Paul names only one in this connection, but intimates that there are many others. Here are some, in the apostle's own words:

1. They include, undoubtedly, all that is meant by "the weak and beggarly elements" of the world. This present evil age is characterized by false ideals, unholy standards, and rotting moral fabric. The ancient sanctities that our fathers knew have all but disappeared and in their places are found every evidence of a tragic moral collapse. We have accepted the cue of the Freudians and made the sex urge to be the most compelling force in the conduct of the modern man. We have a system of legalized adultery that has practically destroyed the sanctity of the American home. We have gone in for gambling and games of chance all the way from jack-pot machines to horse racing with high stakes; and the conscience of the average man is too enfeebled to utter even a whisper of protest. Thousands of generations before us have proved to their sorrow how elusive is the hope of finding peace of soul in these channels; but we are undeterred by such considerations and must learn by tragic experience that there is death in the cup.

Hand-in-hand with this revival of deception has gone a growing sense of godlessness; and inevitably godlessness is accompanied by despair. In fact, one of the most astute of our materialistic thinkers—Mr. Bertram Russell—acknowledges frankly that there is nothing left to men but "unyielding despair." And this is what comes of being a man of the world.

But the only way to keep from being a man of the world is

to be a man of God. The only antidote for worldliness is godliness. To follow Christ is to challenge this false idealism and put in its place the idealism that finds its finest expression in self-sacrifice. It is to reject the moral leprosy of this unholy age and dare to be different. There can be no turning again to the weak and beggarly elements if a man is to go the Christ way. "Be not conformed," cries Saint Paul, "but be ye transformed."

2. Among other things that a man destroys to go with God are unholy alliances. In business, in play, in the sacred bonds of marriage and the intimacies of friendship, a Christian man must find his greatest satisfaction in the company and fellowship of those of like precious faith. The apostle utters a solemn warning along this line in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, a passage which begins with those familiar words: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." It is a warning we sorely need to hear. In business and in the bonds of friendship a man should cultivate alliances with those who know God. Especially in contemplating marriage should a child of God see to it that he is not moving in defiance of this solemn warning. How many a person has ignored this caution, to his sorrow! I do not mean that a marriage should be dissolved when one of a couple, hitherto ungodly, is converted. But as a caution to young men and women who desire to live Christian lives, this warning should be repeated again and again. No man can serve God and at the same time build altars to unholy alliances.

3. Another altar that must be thrown down is that to self-righteousness. We have this illustrated by Saint Paul in Romans 10:3, when, in describing the tragedy of Israel's rejection of Christ, he says, "They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." A warning against such a mistaken attitude is contained in the apostle's second Corinthian letter, chapter ten, verse twelve, in the words: "We dare not make ourselves of the number; or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." And yet the whole of religion for many a person consists in the comforting assurance that he is as good as someone else. What a deceiving refuge of lies it is! It is only when a man realizes deeply in his soul that he is "all unrighteousness" that the way into God's favor opens before him. Self-righteousness must be left behind.

There are many other things that a man must destroy when he turns to God, of which these we have named are somewhat typical. But the point we should emphasize is that they must be destroyed. They will bar the road to grace and mercy completely, and defeat the godly aspirations of the soul for all eternity.

### III. Now, hear the warning the apostle utters.

It is nothing less than sin to build again forbidden altars to worldliness, to ungodly alliances, to self-righteousness, to anything one has destroyed for Jesus' sake.

1. There is a real temptation confronting every one of us to compromise with worldliness in our standards and ideals; a temptation so often veiled under the specious name of tolerance. Why be so narrow in this broadminded age? is the question we hear frequently. Why not be open-minded? as Dr. Stanley Jones puts it, "A man may have his mind so open that he cannot even retain a conviction."

It is not alone in standards and ideals; it is equally in practices and behavior that we are tempted to a less rigorous way of life. Dr. S. Parkes Cadman once defined worldliness as "anything you cannot do to the glory of God." As a rule of thumb no better definition could be found. In the light of it, can a man indulge in worldliness and still retain the smile of God? It is clear as day that he cannot.

2. Moreover, in these days of self-sufficiency, it is an easy thing for one to forget that salvation comes only by the

grace of God, made possible to us through the merit of the shed blood of Jesus. There is nothing, even in the field of Christian service, by which I can merit God's favor. For after we have rendered God our best service, we must seem to Him as unprofitable servants; we have done only that which was our duty to do.

3. The result of such rebuilding is tragic—"I make myself a transgressor"—a griever of God. Are we drawing back from a strenuous walk with God, content to ease along through life and hope for heaven in the end? We are deceived and doomed if that is our attitude. "If any man would come after me," said Christ, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Nothing less than this will satisfy the heart of Christ and discharge the solemn obligations He has placed upon us.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1939

### MORNING SERVICE

#### The Word Made Flesh

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Luke 2:8-20; John 1:1-14.

TEXT—*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 (John 1:1-14).*

1. The fourth Gospel is unique in many respects; but in none more so than in its account of the origin of Christ.

1. The earliest of our Gospels, that according to Mark, omits entirely the story of Jesus' birth. Its concern was for the active ministry of our Lord; and beginning with the baptism, Jesus is thrust forth upon the stage of action and holds the center of that stage until the resurrection is past. Matthew and Luke both give most engaging accounts of Jesus' birth, and between them present a fairly complete story. But Saint John does not linger about the Bethlehem manger at all. On the contrary, he reaches back into eternity to assert the truth concerning our Lord's pre-existence and equality with God the Father. There is a more-than-chance similarity between the opening words of John's Gospel and those of Genesis. "In the beginning God . . ." have their echo in "In the beginning was the Word. . . ."

a. John's conception of Christ, therefore, is that of the eternal God incarnate in human flesh. His human conception did not mark the beginning of His existence, but was simply a new and temporary mode of an existence that had its beginning far back in eternity. He was active in creation. He was the moving, active Word of the Old Testament prophets. It is probable that Christ was the person of the Godhead who was presented in the Jehovah revelation in patriarchal days.

b. But Saint John is particularly impressed by the glory that accompanied the revelation of the Incarnate Word. "We beheld his glory," he declares. Perhaps no one enjoyed a greater intimacy with the Lord than did John; and consequently, no one is better qualified to speak of this revelation of divine effulgence.

c. And he finds in that revelation both grace and truth. Israel, too, had a glimpse of God's glory at the Mount of the Law, and was overwhelmed and fearful because of it. But this revelation in Christ ministers grace—unmerited favor of God toward men, and truth—guidance, insight, understanding, a revelation that makes free.

2. It is, all in all, the most amazing and far-reaching conception of the person of Christ to be found in the New Testament. Even the profound insight of Saint Paul does not exceed in daring and faith this presentation of the significance of our Lord in the opening chapter of John's Gospel. Let us consider this illuminating appraisal of Christ.

### II. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

1. The "Word of God" is a very ancient and meaningful conception in our Bible. In the story of Creation it is God's Word that brings order out of chaos, that speaks' worlds into



existence, that divides land from sea, and day from night. The psalmist summarizes this power of God's Word (in Psalm 33:9) as follows: "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." According to Genesis, that is exactly what happened. Saint John concurs in John 1:3: "All things were made by him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." David declares again (Psalm 33:6), "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." And John asserts that in Christ that Word "was made flesh and dwelt among us."

2. The humble birth of Jesus, therefore, was but a new and redemptive revelation of Him. He revealed the power of God in creation. He revealed the will of God in His revelation to the prophets as the eternal Word. But not in His incarnation and subsequent death upon the cross, He revealed the mercy and grace of God.

The assertion that "the Word was made flesh" means more than the mere assumption of a human body; it means equally the assumption of a human nature—a nature mingled with the divine nature. This union of divinity and humanity—called by theologians the "hypostatic union," is one of the most difficult and yet essential teachings in our Christology. He is identified with the Father so intimately that He could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Yet He is so closely identified with us that He could suffer and die as a representative man. He was one with us, and yet perfectly acceptable to God. It is this gracious truth that underlies our redemptive gospel.

III. Now Saint John goes on to assert that "we behold his glory."

1. That glory was usually concealed by the veil of His flesh. There were occasions when it shone through, as on the Mount of Transfiguration, when in the presence of three of His disciples "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." There is a strong hint in that description of the vision of the glorified Christ given to John in the Revelation. Peter could never forget that experience, and refers to it in his second letter as one of the most convincing revelations of all Jesus' earthly life. To the mass of men, however, He was a man of marred visage, a root out of dry ground; His glory effectually concealed.

2. Yet there was a strange glory that shone out amid the simplicity of His life. The glory of His birth, announced by angels, accompanied by the choir of heaven, was a glory that had never before been seen on land or sea. There was a glory about his life that made Him the most moving character in that ancient Jewish world. The things that He said, as well as the manner in which He said them, stirred men as they had never before been stirred. "What manner of man is this?" they questioned. "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" By which was meant that He had not had benefit of the rabbinical schools. "Never man spake like this man" was conceded by both friend and foe. Even in the hour of His shameful death there was something about Him that moved a godless centurion to say, "Certainly this was a righteous man."

3. This glory that men dimly recognized—a glory so clearly evident to His followers—was the "glory as of the only begotten of the Father." It was more than the revelation of a masterful personality, a gifted and urbane leader of men. It was a revelation of the only begotten Son of God.

IV. And, finally, the evangelist declares that this glory was "full of grace and truth."

1. There was a mighty fullness in Christ, and in this respect He is unique. Probably no man who has ever lived has realized to the full the potentialities that were resident within him. However broad and commanding the scope of his intelligence, there is always something left to be desired. There is no man so great but his greatness is dimmed by some flaw. But of Christ Saint Paul could say, "in him dwelt all the

fulness of the Godhead bodily." And here John found in his fullness a ministry of grace and truth.

2. But this fullness of Christ is to usward who believe. "Of his fullness have all we received," testifies the apostle, "and grace for grace." More specific still is the evangelist's word in verse 12: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." What a marvel of redemption and renewed hope is this!

3. It is, furthermore, a fullness of grace and truth. Grace properly stands first. For grace opens our hearts to the mercy of God, and we come into a loving and vital union with Him. But the grace of God quickens not only the heart, but also the mind. A realm of truth is thrown open to the understanding that has been closed hitherto. It was this illumination that came to Saint Paul, with such conspicuous results. His knowledge of Christ was pitifully meager when he first met the Lord. But once grace had reached his heart, God was able to give him the most amazing grasp of truth; especially, the truth relating to the redeeming death and triumph of the Lord.

It can be true with us all, each in his own measure. "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." This is the glorious result of the incarnation of Christ, the Word was made flesh."

#### EVENING SERVICE

##### The Reincarnation of Christ

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Phil. 3:8-15.

TEXT—Christ liveth in me. (Gal. 2:20).

1. The Christmas season commemorates an event that has proved to be world-shaking in its power and world-transforming in its influence—the revelation of Jesus Christ in the flesh.

1. The ancient prophets had spoken with one voice of the coming One. His nature was definitely foretold, as well as the character of His redemptive ministry. Even the place of His birth was accurately anticipated by those inspired men of old. Perhaps the most convincing evidence of the uncanny accuracy of their prophetic insight is the entire Gospel according to Matthew. His chief concern was to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the long-promised Messiah; and he is forever citing some word or deed or circumstance in Christ's earthly career as a fulfillment of "that which was spoken by the prophet."

2. It is a matter of the utmost significance that God chose to reveal His Son in human form, clothed with our flesh; as the writer to the Hebrews puts it, "Verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." There is a wealth of mystery surrounding the unique personality of our Lord, mystery the most astute mind will never be able to fully unfold. But of the fact of that personality and of the certainty that in His incarnation God is revealed in human flesh, there can be no reasonable doubt. He was one of us, this Incarnate One; bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. His identification with us was complete in all respects save one: He did not partake of our depravity and our sins. Yet even here He went farther than one would have believed possible; for He assumed the shame and guilt of our transgressions, and atoned for it all in His fearful death upon the cross. He was able to do it because, while He was identified with us, yet He was essentially different from us. For He never ceased to be what He had been from all eternity, and now is—the only begotten Son of the living God.

II. We are prone to think of the incarnation as an event of first century significance, but with no vital meaning for men today.

1. Does the gospel story give the whole account of our Lord's incarnation? Did the matter begin with His birth in

Bethlehem and end with His ascension to the Father? It is true, He was born of the Virgin, making His advent into earth life very much as other men are born. He lived a very human life in Nazareth, assisting Joseph, the village carpenter, and possibly Himself performing the functions of carpenter at Joseph's death. He went from His tools to His pulpit, where He preached the gospel of the kingdom, and performed divers miracles and works of wonder. And at length He was betrayed into the hands of them who hated Him, was condemned and crucified on a Roman cross. He arose on the third day and for the space of forty days moved among His followers; and at length ascended into heaven. This is the story, in sketchy outline, of Christ's incarnation. Is this all there is to it?

2. We recognize that there is a deal of meaning in that story that does not appear on the face of it. That life He lived was an exemplary life—no man had ever lived as He lived. His death was a redemptive one. They jeered Him on His cross with the cry, "He saved others, himself he cannot save." It had been truer to cry, "If He would save others, Himself He must not save." And so He died. And His triumph over the tomb, what of that? His resurrection is the earnest of our resurrection. We are emboldened to believe that God, who suffered not His Holy One to see corruption, will make us victors over the corruption of physical death. His return to the Father was a purposeful return; for there, in the presence of God above, "he ever liveth to make intercession for us." This is a part at least of the hidden meaning in the facts of Jesus' life on earth. Is this the whole story of His incarnation?

III. The answer is "No"; for here again God's Word is unmistakably clear. It is His purpose to live in His people and become incarnate in them.

1. There was more than a hint of this in His promise recorded in John 14:18: "I will not leave you [orphans] comfortless; I will come to you." His bodily presence would be removed, and they would be denied the old-time physical intimacy they had enjoyed with Him. But far more intimately than before would He return to them to comfort, strengthen and guide them.

2. There is a practical identity, at least for purposes of devotion, between the Holy Spirit and the spirit of Christ. When our Lord promised that He would send another Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, He did not mean to say that He was leaving them forever, but that in the person of the Holy Spirit He would return to comfort and bless. The New Testament writers do not make any practical distinction between the presence of the Spirit and that of Christ. To have the fullness of Christ within and to be filled with the Spirit are not two experiences but rather two ways of regarding one experience.

(3) Saint Paul frequently seems to prefer the former expression, as when he declared that the "hope of glory" is "Christ in you." And here in the text is his personal testimony: "Christ liveth in me." He has died to self and to sin and lives only unto Christ. "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." It is a similar reincarnation that our Lord desires in the hearts of us all.

IV. Now what does such a reincarnation demand of men?

1. It demands, first of all, a crucifixion with Christ. That is strong language; but not too strong to convey the death to sin the apostle has in mind. Nothing less than death to self, to sin, to ungodliness of this present world will meet the demands of God upon us. It is a death that has been provided already in the fact of Jesus' atoning death upon the cross. As Saint Paul puts it in Romans 6:6, "Our old man is crucified with Christ," that is, provisionally; "that the body of sin might be destroyed," that is, actually. Jesus had this same necessity in

mind when He said, "if any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." The provision is complete; but have we entered into the realization of it in our experience?

2. The resultant of such a death is a life lived only unto Christ. It means such a yielding to Him that His will, His work, His purposes can be achieved in me and through me. "The life which I now live in the flesh," says the apostle, "I live by the faith of the Son of God." This is the meaning of the testimony: "Christ liveth in me." Christ's body today is the company of His saints, and He would be incarnate in them. Have we given Him such place within us?

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1939

MORNING SERVICE

Life's Greatest Ambition

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—2 Corinthians 5.

TEXT—We are ambitious . . . to be well-pleasing unto him (2 Cor. 5:9, R.V. mar.).

I. There is a degree of strength brought out in the Revised Version of this text which is more or less obscured in our Authorized Version. We commonly read the passage as "We labor . . . that we may be accepted of him." And the margin adds a little force by suggesting the word "endeavor" for "labor." But the Revised Version says "We make it our aim"; and in a footnote indicates that the Greek reads, "We are ambitious . . . to be well-pleasing unto him." The inspired writer is saying that the desire to please God had become the ambition—the consuming and controlling passion—of his life; the one increasing purpose to which all else must give place.

1. Ambition is a potent force among men. Indeed, the man without ambition is a man without hope. The lack of a high and dominating purpose must make life an aimless and meaningless existence. And life is measured, not by its length in years, but by its richness in achievement. What moots it that a man lives as long as a Methuselah if he does as little worthy of mention as Methuselah and finally dies in a flood, as it would appear Methuselah must have died?

2. Yet ambition may make us or break us forever. An ambition that is noble, and consistent with the will of God for one's life, will produce a Wesley, a Livingstone, a Moody, a Booth. But an ambition that is selfish and ruthless must produce a Caesar, a Napoleon, or even a Hitler; if one may be pardoned for mentioning so despicable a character in connection with these great names. Ambition is the driving thing in each case; and the direction in which it moves determines whether it shall end in weal or in woe.

3. The thing Paul is saying here is that he has found a way whereby ambition may serve Christ and the purposes of the gospel. This driving energy within him had changed direction; had been converted; had acknowledged a new Master. And from this hour forth it must be consistent with the will of God.

II. Ambition is a fearful and wonderful thing.

1. What a controlling force it had been in Paul's career! His earliest ambition was undoubtedly to excel in his preparation for life, and in this he succeeded admirably. He was fortunate that his boyhood home was Tarsus, and that there he had the advantages of the University of Tarsus, an eminent training place for that ancient world. Later his desire for rabbinical training brought him to Jerusalem, where he attended the school of Gamaliel. There was no man of his time better versed in classic lore and in knowledge of the Mosaic law than he.

This ambition easily merged into that which controlled him when we first see him—the ambition for a place of conspicuous honor among the Jews. Already in his youth he was looked upon as a man to be reckoned with. His astute intelligence and his tireless energy were qualities sorely needed in lead-



ers of the Jews against this new Christian heresy, as it was held to be. He never ceased to be legitimately proud of his ancestry and education, at the same time recognizing that they were not enough to merit God's favor. And he never ceased to regret that he had ever devoted his energies to a persecution of the church of Christ.

Yet here in the text this same man, once devoted to selfishness and hatefulness of Christ, is saying that his new ambition, the one now controlling his life is an ambition to please the Lord Christ. The One he hated has now become his Master and Lord.

2. Many a man has been damned by ambition. The man who lives alone for economic success, with no thought of service to God or men, is such a man. The man who lives for political preferment and the acquisition of power over his fellows is such a man. The man who serves God in a worldly minded way is such a man. To live for the praise of men more than the praise of God is fatal. When C. H. Spurgeon was first becoming conscious of the gifts God had given him, he was walking alone one day when a voice seemed to say to him, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." It was as the warning voice of God to his soul and led him to a place of deeper consecration than he had ever known.

3. But ambition may be a glorious and transforming thing. There have been numerous occasions where men of dissolute life have abandoned their sins and become sober, dependable men, simply for love of a pure woman. And supremely is the man transformed who gets a glimpse of the face of Christ and loses sight of all beside. This was Paul's experience, and can be the experience of us all; until life's greatest ambition will be the pleasing of God and the doing of His gracious will.

### III. But what does such an ambition necessitate?

1. It requires, first of all, an entire change of inner and outer attitude. There must be a deliverance from self and a centering of one's concerns in Christ. The normal life of men is one of indulgence, without thought as to the mind of Christ. But there must come about within one a new sense of devotion to Christ and His will.

2. But it requires, moreover, a mighty conviction concerning God and His attitude of mercy and redemption; concerning the permanence and importance of spiritual things in contrast with those things that are of the earth earthy. No man can reach the place of this testimony unless there is formed within his soul a mighty, stalwart conviction.

3. But even this is not enough. For the selfish fevers of life cannot be cooled by mere wishful thinking and mental acceptance of the way of Christ. Selfish ambition has a strangle hold on men today and will not yield without a struggle. It is just here that God's grace ministers so richly to men. There is power with Christ to make selfish living seem loathsome, and any ambition inconsistent with the will of God revolting in the extreme.

### IV. We cannot help anticipating the New Year a bit in our thought today. And what sort of lives will we lead during 1940?

Is it going to be the same slight healing of our hurt that has been the story of every earlier year? Or will it be a life submitted to and controlled by the will of God?

I plead for lives during this New Year from which selfishness is cleansed away by the power of Jesus' blood. I plead for lives that are hid with Christ in God. I plead for lives controlled by one ambition—"to be well-pleasing unto Him." Others may think our powers are wasted and we have thrown ourselves away on a meaningless enterprise. They thought that of Dr. John Scudder when he left a lucrative medical practice in New York City to serve as a pioneer medical missionary to India. Later on they thought the same thing of Sir Wilfred Grenfell when he gave his talents as a physician to the people of the Labrador coast. But in God's sight, and in

the sight of posterity, these are the noblemen of our world. They were men of ambition—"ambitious to be well-pleasing unto Him [God]." Let us make this our ambition, by God's grace, and go forth to the noblest living we have ever known.

### EVENING SERVICE The Changeless Record

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—John 19:1-22

TEXT—Pilate answered, *What I have written I have written* (John 19:22).

I. There is a solemnity attaching to these words which comes home to my heart with peculiar impressiveness at the turn of the year; a solemnity far greater than anything Pilate intended.

1. They were uttered as a haughty reply of the proud Roman to one who sought to take exception to one of his official acts. It was through fear of the Jews over whom he ruled that he had at last delivered Jesus to be crucified. It was that cry, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend," that appears to have been the decisive word. He lived officially by the grace of Caesar. But while yielding like a craven coward to this intimidating cry, he could not forbear showing to some extent his real contempt for these Jews over whom he ruled. And he selected this way to do it: he placed a title on the cross of Jesus which read: "JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS." Those words were like salt in an open wound, and the chief priests demanded that they be modified; to which Pilate replied in the words of this text:

2. But this title on the cross of Christ was a very small matter in comparison with other parts of the record of that terrible day—a record of unparalleled shame. The vaunted justice of Rome had indeed been brought low and made the object of bitter scorn both then and thereafter. For there was no shadow of justice in the condemnation of Christ. Pilate acknowledged frankly that He was an innocent man and deserved only liberty. Yet despite his own acknowledgment, and weakened by the essential cowardice of his own timorous heart, he yielded to popular clamor and allowed Jesus to go to His death.

3. That was the shameful record of that day, and that record is absolutely changeless. It is as damning an indictment of the character of this Roman today as it was the day it was written. Pontius Pilate has become one of the villains of the universal drama, and his name is a by-word and hissing. No man of intelligence would name his dog Pilate, to say nothing of giving that name to his son. It is an indelible record; and when Pilate so proudly and contemptuously said, "What I have written I have written," he was only pronouncing his own doom.

### II. But all of us are writing records with each passing day, did we but realize it.

1. First of all is the record book above. No deed is done, no word is uttered, no attitude is assumed without the record of it going in that fateful book. John, the Revelator, tells of his vision of the judgment hour in these impressive words, "I saw the dead, small and great; stand before God; and the books were opened; . . . and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." The records we are writing will face us one day. There is a great deal of truth in the simple song:

*He sees all I do,  
He hears all I say;  
My Lord is writing all the time.*

And of these records it can be said truly, "What I have written I have written."

2. There are records, furthermore, that are being inscribed on our book of memory; records that will live on to haunt or

hearten us in the days to come. Memory can bless a man or it can blight him. A man shut up with his memory of sin would be in a veritable hell. If Jesus' account of the rich man and the beggar, the most significant word in the picture of the rich man's hell is that of Father Abraham: "Son, remember." If he could only forget! The record in his memory was searing his soul as by a white-hot flame.

3. But, moreover, there are records that are being woven into the fabric of our characters. For character is a composite of our heredity, modified by all that we think, feel, say, and do from our earliest conscious moment down to this very hour. The choices we make are shaping and coloring our destiny. The passions to which we yield and the impulses which control us are weaving their lines into the tapestry of character and determining the details of the picture it will portray forever. And nothing is ever lost from this record. The whole content of our lives is on file in our subconsciousness like the stacks of a great library. It is all making its contribution to what we now are and what we shall be throughout all eternity.

4. Then there are the records we are writing in the lives of others, through our influence, consciously or unconsciously exerted. The impact of our living and example on other men is a part of our solemn responsibility before God. No man lives unto himself. He touches his fellowmen at so many points, and is touched by them, until it seems that every man's life is only part of a common whole. And the record we are writing in other men's lives is something for which we must render account.

### III. Now so far as these records are concerned, what we have written we have written.

1. The stream of time flows ceaselessly on, and never reverses its flow. There is no way back to yesterday. How many a man has cried, remorsefully, "If I could only live my life over again!" But no man can. The deeds of yesterday are done, and can never be undone. The words of yesterday are said, and can never be recalled; they will hurt or heal forever. Feathers scattered to the winds can be as easily collected again as the words and deeds of yesterday. Time marches on. That is a truism. But when one stops to think about it, how solemn and ominous the thought becomes!

2. How near last year-end seems tonight! Our memories can so easily bridge the gap between then and now, and bring up exceedingly close, as it seems, the event of twelve months ago. Yet in actual fact last year-end is infinitely far away. A gap as great as eternity yawns between then and now.

### Wesley's Rules for Congregational Singing

1. Learn the tunes.
2. Sing them as they are printed.
3. Sing all. "If it is a cross to you, take it up and you will find a blessing."
4. Sing lustily and with a good courage.
5. Sing modestly. Do not bawl.
6. Sing in time. Do not run before or stay behind.
7. Above all, sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing Him more than yourself or any other creature. In order to do this, attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually.

Indeed, a decade hence is nearer than yesterday; we may reach that, but we can never attain unto yesterday.

3. What we have written during this year so soon to die, we have written, and God himself cannot make it otherwise. As the Poet Fitzgerald has put it:

*The moving finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on: nor all thy piety nor wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,  
Nor all thy tears wash out a word of it.*

The record of the year must stand, and even the grace of a loving God, backed by infinite power, cannot deny the fact of that record.

### IV. Granting this, what hope have we for today and tomorrow?

1. There are some things God can do for us. He can forgive. He can lift from our consciences the guilt of past sins, and assure us that God remembers them against us no more forever. And while, as in Luther's vision, the scroll of our shameful past may be unrolled by our accuser, it will be found to bear from the hand of a merciful God the assurance, "All forgiven!"

2. Moreover, the writing is not done, though how nearly done no man here knows. The book of life is still in the making; and however sinful the past may have been, the record of today and tomorrow may be changed. This New Year can be, by the grace of God, a record of victory over sin, fellowship with Christ, glad submission to the will of God, and holy delight in His service.

He came to my desk with a quivering lip,

The lesson was done.  
"Teacher, I want a new leaf," he said;  
"I've spoiled this one."

In place of the leaf all stained and blotted,  
I gave him a new one, all unspotted;  
And into his tired eyes smiled,  
"Do better now, my child."

I came to the throne with a quivering soul,  
The old year was done.

"Father, hast Thou a new leaf for me?  
I've spoiled this one."

In place of the leaf all stained and blotted,  
He gave me a new one, all unspotted,  
And into my tired eyes smiled,  
"Do better now, my child."

### Expository Outlines for December

Lewis T. Corlett

#### The Christian a Reflector

(Phil. 2:12-16)

- I. THE CHRISTIAN IS PICTURED AGAINST A DARK BACKGROUND (v. 15).
  1. Living in a crooked and perverse nation.
  2. Amidst conditions and circumstances that are directly opposed, and antagonistic to the Christian.
  3. Beset by foes whose deliberate aim is to besmirch and betray the purest character.
  4. Christ prayed, not that the Christians should be taken out of these

conditions, but that they should be left in such a world.

#### II. GOD IN HIS SALVATION AND GRACE, PROVIDES AMPLE SECURITY AND LIGHT

1. God works in the hearts of His followers that which is pleasing to Himself and a benefit to the individual (v. 13).
2. God gives light to dispel the darkness. "Among whom ye shine as lights in the world."
3. God gives those who obey Him the assurance that He recognizes them as sons of a divine Father, "sons of God" (v. 15).

4. God provides grace to live free from contamination and condemnation. "That ye may be blameless and harmless" (v. 15).

### III. MAN MUST REFLECT THE MARVELOUS WORK GOD PERFORMS IN HIS INNER NATURE. "WORK OUT YOUR SALVATION."

- The imperfections of the physical, the shortcomings of the mental, and the limitations of the finite hamper the radiations of the divine light from the souls of men.
- The Christian must determine to set himself to bringing out the best manifestation of inward grace that is possible.
- The activities of the Christian help to reveal the purpose life to the world.
- An optimistic, boasting faith will enable the people to see more of the inner life (v. 14).
- Man must ever be so obedient as to keep himself blameless and free from rebuke of the divine judge (v. 13).
- The child of God must tenaciously cling to the Word of life (v. 16).
  - The Word of life is the proper Guidebook.
  - The Word of life is nourishing and strengthening to the inner life.

### IV. THE REFLECTION OF THE DIVINE INNER WORK WILL DISPEL DARKNESS "Among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

- The darkness of this world would be awful without the stars of hope of Christian lives.
- Each Christian is reflecting divine light in his locality.
- The faithfulness of each one brings joy to other workers. "That I may rejoice in the day of Christ."

#### Preserving Integrity

(Colossians 3:1-17)

### I. GOD HAS PLACED UPON MAN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF KEEPING IN PROPER RELATION WITH THE DIVINE

- Based upon the sharing of the resurrected life of Christ (v. 1).
- The crises of salvation give man a vital, inner, living relationship with God.
- Man must keep himself in the place where God can keep him.
- Man must ever practice righteousness both to himself and his fellowmen.

### II. PAUL MAPS OUT A PLAN OF ACTION WHEREBY THE CHRISTIANS CAN PRESERVE THEIR INTEGRITY

- Set the aim, purpose, and intent in Christ (v. 1).

- A determination to keep the renewed powers centered in Christ.
- The cultivation of a normal hunger of the soul risen with Christ.

### 2. Concentrate the mind on heavenly things (v. 2).

"Give your mind to things that are above" (WEYMOUTH).

- This controls the thought life.
  - This would shape the attitudes.
  - This fortifies the will in right decisions.
- Cultivate love one toward another (vs. 13, 14).
    - Forbearance of one another's peculiarities.
    - Forgiveness of mistreatment.
    - The cement that is the bond of perfectness, the security against wrong motives.
    - Follow the example of Christ in all of this.

### 4. Maintain a worshipful attitude at all times.

- Rest in the peace of God (v. 15).
- Be ever grateful for all blessings. "And be ye thankful."
- Revel in the rich treasures of the Word of Christ (v. 16).
- Be an example in public worship, "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs."
- Deepen the spiritual life in continuous, worshipful moods toward God.
- This strengthens the worshiper and encourages the onlooker.

### 5. Have the proper objective for all deeds (v. 17).

- All words must be seasoned with grace to bring glory to God.
- A self-forgetfulness in the desire to exalt and promote the glory of God.
- A life of trust in Jesus in all things.
- A constructive influence to show forth the glory of God in the whole of life.

### III. A MAINTENANCE OF THESE WILL NOT ONLY PRESERVE CHRISTIAN INTEGRITY BUT WILL ALSO STRENGTHEN CHARACTER AND BLESS OTHERS

#### Divine Relationship

(1 John 3)

### I. A SUPERIOR SONSHIP

- Superior to the knowledge of the world. "Therefore the world knoweth us not."
- Superior because it is a divine sonship. "That ye should be called the sons of God."
- Superior because it is through a bestowal of love.

- So superior that it is astonishing that man has received it. "Behold what manner of love."

- Superior because the Father bestowed it on those who were naturally unworthy of the love.
- Glorious because it is without the cost of what the world calls the medium of exchange. "The Father hath bestowed upon us."

### 4. Superior because man is elevated by it.

- To live on a plane with God.
- To live in the assurance of sonship. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God."
- Because it places man in a position of continual unfolding of grace and light. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."
- Because it gives man the proper perspective. "But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him."

- The conscious assurance of the unfailing promise.
- The hope of a better and brighter day.
- The prospect of being completely like the One who bestows the love.

### II. BEGETS A DETERMINATION BASED UPON THIS HOPE (v. 3)

#### 1. Every man who has the assurance of divine sonship longs to be pure as He is.

- Each son of God has a determination to keep himself where God can keep him pure.
- The One who bestows the sonship and begets the hope, draws the believer on to purity of heart.

#### 2. The ideal and experience of purity is freedom from sin.

- Sin is contrary to sonship, it is disobedience (vs. 4, 9).
- Sin is foreign to obedient love (vs. 6, 9).
- Sin is obedience to the devil and his works, so adverse to God and His love.

#### 3. This purity is right motive toward God and the fellowman.

- It is aligned with the life of God. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him."
- It is manifested by the love for the brethren (vs. 14-18).
- This purity is made possible by the sacrifice of Christ (v. 5).

### III. THIS DIVINE RELATIONSHIP IS MAINTAINED BY FAITH

- Arising from a heart free from condemnation (v. 21).
- Based on a continual obedience (v. 22).
- Manifested in a loving trust in Christ.

## Suggestions for Prayermeetings

H. O. Fanning

### Making Our Prayermeetings Effective

ONE of our chief objectives in our prayermeetings is the glory of God and the good of men in their effectiveness. That they should be of the greatest possible benefit to the church we are all agreed. We are equally agreed that they should also be made of the greatest possible benefit to the communities in which our churches are located. Our prayermeetings are public meetings. They should have their place in our ministries to the people of our neighborhoods. Somewhat after the fashion of our Sunday schools they should be gathering places for the devout people—and others—of the people to whom we minister. What our prayermeetings are to the people of our communities are pretty good indications of what our churches are to them. If our prayermeetings are a benefit to them, our churches will be a benefit to them. If we cannot help them through our prayermeetings it is not likely that we will do more for them through our other services. Special attention should be given to this matter if success is to be gained in it. Whatever would be unbecoming in other institutions for the benefit of the public is likely to be unbecoming in our prayermeetings. In our present infirm state, considerable care should be exercised to keep all that is not for the benefit of our prayermeetings at the minimum. We will lose nothing by consideration for others. We may gain much by it. Not only will we benefit others by such consideration, but we will benefit ourselves. The courtesies due to those who worship with us will benefit both them and us. One of our outstanding needs in many places is that of increased success in reaching the people of our communities. Our prayermeetings should be important factors in the accomplishment of this work.

#### Some Things About Patience

*My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work; that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing (James 1:2-4).*

It is the wisdom of God that life should begin, not in maturity, but in infancy. The greater the possibilities of life, the greater will be the difficulties to be overcome in their realization. Human life is the most improvable form with which we are familiar. Beginning at zero man must go through all of its stages to develop its powers and realize its possibilities. It would be ignoble on our part to desire to have the possibilities of life

reduced, that the difficulties to be overcome in their realization might be lessened. Human life is the crowning work of God's creative power. As beings created in His image and after His likeness, we cannot expect to realize our possibilities with little effort, or in a brief period of time. However we may be affected in our present state of being and development, some day we will be glad that God has created us with such transcendent possibilities of life.

I. *Patience is not a fixed quantity.* Some have gone much farther in its development than others. Some have much more than others. Many of us would like to have the patience of Job. Not so many of us would like to go through all he did to develop that patience. But Job's patience was worth all it cost him. For four thousand years he has stood as a monument to the power of God and the possibilities of human nature for its development. It is not because of limitations on God's part, or of impossibilities on our part, that we are so limited in patience.

II. *Patience is something in which there is room for improvement in all of us.* We are in the beginnings of life. We are all in the making. It is doubtful if there is any other virtue so tried as is human patience. But that is the way of its development.

III. *Patience is not the result of accident, but of trials of faith suited to its development.* God is concerned about this work. Not only does He save us from all sin, but His work of bringing us to the realization of our possibilities will go on throughout eternity. The time is coming when we will see that we were worth saving. Jesus did not shed His blood on Calvary's cross for the redemption of beings of little worth. It doth not yet appear what we shall be.

IV. *Patience is one of the most practical of the virtues.* It is necessary to the living of human life, and the development of its powers. It takes but an instant to become a Christian. It takes a lifetime here, and eternity hereafter to be one. The possibilities of salvation are as exhaustless as the resources of our Savior. All worth while undertakings require patience for their accomplishment. The building of human character, and the development of human personality are among the greatest of all undertakings. Not only are we destined for heaven, but we are destined to grace the place.

V. *Former temptations have begun, and are doing their work.* Others are beginning theirs. We are destined to run the whole course of life. There are two

sides to salvation—what we are saved from, and what we are saved to. God is as much interested in the one as He is in the other. We must meet the conditions of the one, as we are meeting the conditions of the other.

VI. *We owe debts of gratitude to those who, by their patience and perseverance, have given to us so many of the conveniences of life.* And this in the spiritual, as well as in other realms. In no other realm is patience more needed, or more effective. The patient are assets to God, to their fellowmen, to themselves. Never has patience been more needed than it is today.

VII. *Would we have more patience?* We must take the way that leads to its development. We must travel the route that others have traveled in gaining it. It is not a one-sided work. It is something in which God and man are interested, and in which they must work together. The more faithfully we work with Him the more satisfactory will be the results of our work. Not what we now are is to be our goal, but what we may become by the grace of God in cooperation with Him.

#### Thanking God and Taking Courage

*He thanked God, and took courage (Acts 28:15).*

Appreciation of the worth while things of life is one of the paramount needs of the hour. The many are allowing themselves to be engulfed by desires for things of little worth, either in time or eternity. Paul had come to a crisis in life. Because of his faithfulness he had been imprisoned. The court of Nero is before him at Rome. What his appearance there may mean to him, he will soon know. How does he prepare himself for the ordeal? He thanks God, and takes courage. He is living a worth while life. Imperial courts and their doings are but incidents in life to him. He thanks God for what life means to him, and meets the issue with courage.

I. *In Paul's attitude here we see two elements of wholesome personality—appreciation and courage.* Without appreciation of the right sort of things one will not rise very high in the scale of character and personality. Large lives are not built on foundations of trivialities. They are built on foundations that will produce them, and sustain them when they are produced. Worth while lives are not the product of attention to worthless things.

II. *Men strive for worth while goals as they appreciate the importance of reaching them.* Men must see the value of reaching goals before they will pay the price of reaching them. In a very real sense, Christianity means to one

just about what he develops in the way of appreciation of it. Reaching the goal was Paul's one objective. He allowed nothing to move him from this. Lack of appreciation, lack of courage are fatal to worthy ambitions.

III. *Paul had not had an easy time.* He had risen high in the spiritual realm. He had paid the price of such rising (2 Cor. 11:1-33). Climbing the heights is not easy, but it is worth all its costs. What a man values enough to secure is an indication of his character and fiber. An easy religion is of little value to God, to man, or to its possessor. The men God has used in blessing others are men who have put themselves in the way of being so used. The church that is doing little has little appreciation of the value of its work.

IV. *Why are not more people climbing the spiritual ladder?* Lack of appreciation of the importance of such climbing; lack of courage to put forth the necessary effort. The road ahead of Paul was not an easy one. It would take courage to travel it. He was giving practical evidence of what Christianity was worth to him. And so are you; and so am I. To expect an easy way to the worth while things of life is folly. There are no easy ways to such things. Christianity is worth little to many, because they are putting so little into it.

V. *It was Paul's appreciation of the value of the gospel that was bringing him to Rome as a prisoner.* Through his greatest trials had come his greatest blessings, his greatest opportunities, his greatest victories. His foes were God's foes. It was because of his faithfulness to God that they were his foes. It was through their opposition that much of work of God through Paul was accomplished. Conflicts were fierce. Victories were glorious. His life was a challenge not only to the forces of light, but to the forces of darkness. The world was being turned upside down through him. It needed this in Paul's day. It needs it today. The God who stirred it then, can stir it now. What He needs is men through whom He can stir it.

VI. *We have had some trials during the year that is drawing to its close.* If we had not had them we would have missed some of our choicest blessings. What have these trials meant to us? What has been their effect upon our lives? In what ways have we benefited by them? We will not go far in Christian experience and service until we learn more of the value of testings and trials, of temptations and troubles, and the blessings that come to us through them. Take from Paul the blessings that came to him through his trials and troubles, and you would rob him of much.

VII. *Paul sounds no note of slackening his pace, or minimizing his efforts.* There

are difficulties in the way. But there are compensations, and the compensations are commensurate with the magnitude of the difficulties to be overcome. Humanly speaking, the outlook was dark enough. Not only did Paul appreciate the power of the gospel, but he appreciated the condition of the world, its need of Christ, its possibilities with Him, in Him, and through Him. Conditions are appalling. But the remedy for them is in Christ. Paul had the courage to face them, and win in the conflict. For nineteen hundred years the world has been blessed. The world of today is rocking and reeling on its way to ruin. Its one hope is in Christ. Humanly speaking, the need of the hour is men who will thank God, take courage, and press on with Christ. He still uses human instrumentality.

#### Some Things About Prayer

*And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint (Luke 18:1-8).*

Prayer has many aspects. Our Lord speaks this parable to enforce one of them; that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. We recognize that there are alternatives in many things in our lives. In the matter of prayer, this is often true. It is pray or faint. Prayer makes the difference between man alone, and man with God; between failure and success; between insufficiency and sufficiency; between helplessness and omnipotence. Prayer is not only an institution for emergencies and special occasions, but for all occasions; not only for some subjects, but for all subjects. God is interested in all the affairs of our lives. The one safe thing for us to do is to bring them all before Him.

I. *Here we have a helpless widow; a heartless judge, who feared not God, neither regarded man.* A hopeless case from the human standpoint. There seemed but one thing for the widow to do—faint. But this heartless judge, inconsiderate of God or man, was overcome by a widow who persisted in her appeal, and refused to faint. How much more will our gracious God answer the prayers of His people who cry to Him? People whom He has redeemed by the precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

II. *In any and all cases, there is not one reason why we should not pray.* There is every reason why we should. Here our Lord is challenging us—and all men—to prayer. There are no cases where fainting is necessary. There are none where prayer is hopeless. Compassed as we are with infirmity, at the beginning of life, and learning as we live, there are many cases which should be settled negatively, as well as others

which should be settled otherwise. A negative settlement is a settlement as certainly as is a positive. We need God's help to keep us off of wrong roads as certainly as we need it to keep us on the right road.

III. *There are many hindrances to prayer; many things that would make it seem to us to be hopeless.* What is an unjust judge in the hands of a just God? A petition resisting magistrate to a prayer hearing God! Such a judge yielding to unworthy motives, to a God yielding to worthy motives. A judge who is indifferent to a God who is interested. A judge who is indisposed to help, to a God who is seeking to help. A judge who is repellent, to a God who is inviting. A judge with little power, to a God who has all power.

IV. *Many things come into our lives that are staggering to our faith.* They are not beyond the scope of prayer. They are not staggering to our God. They are not to be kept from God, but to be brought to Him. The great lesson our Lord is teaching us here is that we ought always to pray and not to faint. Fainting is an antidote for prayer. Prayer is an antidote for fainting.

V. *Answers to prayer may be long delayed.* Delays are not necessarily denials. There may be many occasions for delay. God deals with us as with human beings, not as inanimate objects. There may be much need of preparation on our part. Answers to prayers in important matters may involve much for their successful coming.

VI. *We learn to pray by praying.* Faith is increased by exercise. Capacities for vision are increased by use. Great attainments in faith are not easily made. Great victories in prayer are not easily won. Prayer is not so small a matter, that its secrets may be mastered in a day; its possibilities realized by novices. It yields its fruit to those who seek it diligently; who persist in prayer, and refuse to faint.

VII. *We have an infinite God, an open Bible, a bending heaven, a divinely given invitation to avail ourselves of infinite resources.* We are in a world where needs are staggering. Many of us do not realize this because our vision is so meager, our horizon so narrow, and our undertakings so inadequate. Because we pray so little and faint so readily. The needs of the world are challenging, and demand the resources of God for their supply.

#### The Birth of Jesus

*Fear not; for, 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 (Luke 2:8-20).*

The ministry of angels is something of which we know little, but probably have

much. It is a joy to know that there is such a ministry, and this means of communication between earth and heaven; between God and men. It is an evidence of the completeness of God's provision to minister to the needs of men in the fullest possible manner. Sin brought ruin to the world, and fear to the hearts of men. Because of the coming of the Christ, this word, fear not, is possible.

I. *For four thousand years the promise of the coming of the seed of the woman had been known among men.* All this time the promise had been kept alive in the minds of men, as the link that bound them to God, and bridged the chasm between them and the holy and merciful God. During this time, forgiveness of sins and purification from sin, and the benefits of redeeming grace had come to them through the shedding of the blood of sacrifices and offerings pointing forward to the shedding of His atoning blood. Men look forward to His coming. God's work and man's redemption move forward.

II. *But the time of the coming of the Christ, arrived, and He was born in the little town of Bethlehem.* Humble in the eyes of men, but great in the eyes of God. He was born of humble people as men saw them, but people of royal blood, and highly honored before God. Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth, and Mary his virgin bride, with child by the Holy Spirit. They were after the royal line of David the king, a man after God's heart. On His throne our Lord will reign in Jerusalem in the dispensation to come (Isaiah 24:23; 9:6, 7; Luke 2:20-33).

III. *The birth of Jesus was the most important birth in the history of the world; to God, to men; to heaven, to earth; to the accomplishment of the divine purposes.* Through Him God has saved all from chaos, and has made possible all that has been accomplished. Eternity alone will reveal what has been accomplished through the shedding of His blood. Only as we see the blood-bought, blood-washed throng, sweep on from glory to glory can we know.

IV. *Men slept on in fancied security; the enrolment for taxation went on; the Christ was born in a manger, cradled in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.* But heaven was stirred when this mighty event which made possible all the benefits and glories of the divine purposes was consummated. The angel of the Lord with an angelic host was present to announce the consummation of the event, and reveal to a company of humble, but highly honored shepherds, the fact, and significance of what had taken place. It was especially fitting that the revelation of the birth of the Good Shepherd should be made to a company of men who were themselves shepherds.

V. *Wise Men from the east saw His star, and followed it to the place of His birth.* His birth made prayermeetings possible. Made worship possible. Made everything that is worth while possible for time and eternity. There they found the Christ of God; the Anointed One; God manifest in the flesh, and worshiped Him. He alone by the shedding of His own blood made possible the redemption of the ruined race with all that redemption means.

VI. *The witness of the shepherds at home and the witness of the Wise Men abroad has continued until this good hour and will continue forevermore.* It is not difficult to see how highly honored were these men of long ago. But we who in the providence of God are His witnesses today are highly honored. God could bestow no greater honor upon us than that of numbering us among His children, and sharers in the blessings of His grace with the saints of the ages.

VII. *Down across the ages to come, the significance of this honor will be revealed to us.* Throughout eternity we shall be sharers with Him of His glory, and the benefits of His atoning work. The redemption God has purchased for us at such a fearful price, can be no less than the most glorious possible to Him. He could go no farther than He has gone in the price He has paid. He can go no farther than He will go in the revelations of His grace. Hail, hail, Thou glorious Christ. Emmanuel, God with us, Our Kinsman Redeemer.

#### Divine Provision for Urgent Needs

*And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and they spake the word of God with boldness. . . . And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them (Acts 4:1-33).*

In considering this matter we may find it helpful to think of our Lord's provision of divine grace for us in our sanctified experiences in terms of provision for us in our personal experiences on the one hand, and of provision for us in our public services on the other. In the one the outstanding emphasis will be upon purity. This is in the nature of a fixed quantity, designed to supply our individual needs, and adapted to meet them as they arise. In the other the emphasis will be more upon power. This will be in variable quantities, as needs may arise. Here emergencies may arise which will demand vast increases, in boldness, grace, and all that is necessary to give us success in our work. The disciples seem to have been in a position of this sort at this time, and we have here an account of how they obtained help in their time of need.

I. *That emergencies do arise that are peculiar to public service in preaching the gospel, and in other services, is certain.* If we have not experienced them, we will not go far in these matters until we do. Such emergencies seem to be upon us on every hand. Staggering difficulties confront us everywhere. Overcoming them is our need if progress is to be made.

II. *That God has provided supplies for these needs is evident from the Word of God, from human history, and from personal experience.* It would be more than passing strange if our Lord should commission His disciples to preach His gospel, without making provision to supply their needs—whatever they may be—in fulfilling their commissions.

III. *The difficulty here is one of intensified ecclesiastical opposition.* It is not due to failure on the part of the disciples in the matter of their personal experiences. They are at their best.

IV. *It is not due to laxity on their part in fulfilling their commission, or to lack of success in the doing of their work.* It is due rather to their personal spiritual fitness on the one hand, and their abundant success in preaching the Word of God, and winning men to Christ. Not to their failures, but to their successes.

V. *The occasion demands in spiritual boldness, power, and grace, quantities beyond their present supply.* And that is not an uncommon situation among us today. Neither has it been down across the ages. These men got what they needed. How well are we following in their footsteps in this matter?

VI. *Their resort is to God in prayer.* They will go forward, or backward. The God who has supplied their needs thus far, and enabled them to go forward so successfully, can still supply their needs, and enable them to overcome in the present difficulty. The power of the Sanhedrin, and of the allied Jewish forces is arrayed against them. But it is also arrayed against the God, whose they are, and whom they serve. In themselves these disciples are helpless before these forces. Doing the work of the Lord is not an easy or insignificant task. It is one of meaning and significance.

#### The God of Force Versus the True God

Are our modern statesmen awakening to the fact of our modern peril, that the spirit of lawlessness is replacing the One True God of righteousness and law with a new concept of devotion to what Daniel described as "the god of forces"? Our own President recently said, "There can be no peace if the reign of law is replaced by a recurrent sanctification of sheer force."



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