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## **THE MINISTER FOR TODAY**

### **Expositions Presented At The 1974 Ministerial Institute Of The Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection**

The Allegheny  
Wesleyan Methodist Connection  
Maintaining the Wesleyan Message  
2162 Woodsdale Road  
Salem, Ohio 44460

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## **PREFACE**

The Ministerial Institute of the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection is an annual event for the ministry of the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection. Efforts are made by the Ministerial Institute Committee to prepare a program which will prove instructional and inspirational to the ministry. The Twenty-Eighth Institute, March 26-28, 1974 was held at Indiana, Pennsylvania. The Institute followed the theme, "The Minister for Today."

A number of our ministers were assigned papers on pertinent topics. These papers proved to be of such quality that it seemed tragic that the papers, and their contents, would be lost. For this reason, this effort, to reproduce them in permanent form, has been made. We, thus, commend them to our ministry, both those who serve now and those who will serve in the future as worthy of a place in the libraries of the ministers of this Connection.

Indeed we are indebted to the men, who authored the papers, for their research and labors to produce them. We feel they will prove both instructional and inspirational to the ministers who read them.

F. E. Mansell, President  
Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection

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## 01 -- THE MINISTER AS A STUDENT

Rev. John Englant

"Today's Minister as a Student," and the other seven papers that are to be presented to this Institute are only eight of a large number of titles for scholarly papers that could be written as regards the work of a minister. To name a few more: "The Minister as a Prayer Warrior," "The Minister as a Sunday School Teacher," "The Minister as Youth Advisor," "The Minister and a Building Program," "The Minister as Church Janitor," etc. The purpose of this paper then, is to set forth reasons why the minister must find time to study in the midst of these duties. Also, as a part of our assignment, we are to convey to you not only the necessity but also the means of study which are afforded the minister, as well as some suggestions as to the forms and value of study.

It should be noted that it is not my intention to emphasize the responsibility of the minister as a student to the neglect of his other responsibilities. For instance, Wesleyan Methodist ministers are instructed in paragraph 284 of the Discipline (with regard to visitation), "But it is objected, 'This (visitation) will take up so much time, we shall not have time to follow our studies.' We answer: (a) Gaining knowledge is a good thing, but saving souls is better. (b) By this very thing you will gain the most excellent knowledge; that of God and eternity. (c) You will find time for gaining other knowledge, too. Only sleep no more than you need, 'and never be triflingly employed.' (D) But if you can do but one, let your studies alone. We ought to throw by all the libraries in the world rather than be guilty of the loss of one soul."

Perhaps at the very beginning, I ought to repeat what we all know; the tasks of a minister of Jesus Christ cannot be completed in a forty hour week. Certainly the words of our Discipline

indicate this, the examples of our godly forebears illustrate this, and the work of the apostles proves this statement. Every young man entering the ministry ought to understand that sacrifice includes not only the financial area of his life, but that his time also is gladly given to the work for which God has called him.

Paul wrote to the young minister Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." I understand Paul to say that study is necessary if God is to approve us and our ministry. The indication is that God is not pleased with our ministry if we do not study. Moreover, we should study that we need not be ashamed of our work. Young people have asked me if God calls "boring" preachers. No doubt, preachers that do not command the attention of their congregations somewhat consistently, have not studied or have not prayed until they were burdened with the importance of their message. Finally, Paul is saying, study is necessary so that we might rightly distribute the truth to others. So, we have our outline. Ministers must study (I) for God's approval, (II) to improve their workmanship, and (III) to distribute the truth according to the needs of the people.

## I. Study For God's Approval

The Wesleyan Methodist minister preaches the gospel in a close and searching manner. He does not merely enforce the plain commandments of the word, but draws attention to the spirit of its writings, and expects his hearers to obey in every point giving God the benefit of the doubt. Our motive in part is that we love God, and by such obedience we believe that we please Him and will receive His approval. Therefore, a Wesleyan Methodist minister that does not study is a contradiction to the message he preaches, for he does not obey the plain commandment of the scripture. By his own teaching he cannot please God, nor can he expect God's approval.

Furthermore, a minister that desires the approval of God, realizes that he must be honest intellectually, for God "desires truth in the inward parts." This honesty on the part of the minister would require the study of the many issues that face Christians in these perilous times. A preacher who does not take the time to convince himself of right and wrong, will never convince his congregation. Moreover, to merely parrot what other men say on the issues places one in the dubious position of shallowness and later self-contradiction. We must also remember that a minister cannot warn his people of present day dangers if he is unaware of these dangers. We cannot enlighten the people if we ourselves are unenlightened. Many laymen, without time and equipment for spiritual research, trust their pastor to study thoroughly and then faithfully present the truth for the present hour. God help us not to live as religious charlatans.

Again, if we are to have God's approval, we must say something for Him to approve. Dr. A. T. Robertson's young son once remarked, "It's easier to preach than it is to talk, because when you talk you have to say something." We are to say something in sermon form to our congregations nearly 100 times a year. Certainly we must not be guilty of merely filling the time while we fill the pulpit. Jesus said to His disciples, "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." In like manner, we as scribes or ministers are to have treasures of divine truth, out of which we distribute to our people the old truths, along with the new inspirations. The something old are the old truths, the fundamentals of the gospel, which we need to repeat. The something new

are the new motivations, the new approaches to the gospel story, that we have found by diligent study through the Spirit. God help the minister who does not have something new for his hearers. As Adam Clarke has said, "A preacher whose mind is well stored with divine truths, and who has sound judgment, will suit his discourses to the circumstances and states of his hearers. He who preaches the same sermon to every congregation, gives the fullest proof that, however well he may speak, he is not a 'scribe' who is 'instructed in the kingdom of heaven.'"

A final reason why ministers must study if they are to have God's approval should not concern the Wesleyan Methodist clergy, for I trust we practice honesty as well as we preach it. Plagiarism is a grave temptation for those ministers who neglect their study. Broadus draws the line between plagiarism (stealing) and "borrowing" with three rules. "(a) Never appropriate an entire discourse, whether with or without acknowledgment.

(b) Never appropriate without acknowledgment the complete outline of a discourse. (c)... everything... borrowed must have been fully comprehended and made a part of our thinking." Broadus further adds, "The books of 'Sketches and Skeletons' which are so often published and so widely bought, are, unless honestly and wisely used, an unmitigated evil and a disgrace to the ministry of the gospel." Any man called to the ministry of the gospel ought to be able with God's help and with diligent study to grasp the truth for a particular occasion, and prepare that truth to the nourishment of his congregation. After all, this is our vocation, this is our calling.

## II. Study To Improve Our Workmanship

When Paul exhorted Timothy to study that he might be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," he was certainly urging Timothy to be a workman of high quality. Wesleyan Methodist ministers ought to be workmen of high quality. In fact they must be, if they are to have God's approval. However, quality workmanship demands tremendous effort, and this effort requires the attitudes and patience of a Spirit-filled man. As there are no short cuts in waiting before God in prayer there are no short cuts to ministerial scholarship.

A minister, if he is a student, will learn all he is able to learn in his field and related fields. It was the favorite teaching of Cicero that the orator ought to know everything. Cicero would have difficulties with this teaching in the midst of our knowledge explosion, if indeed, he could practice it in his day. But if the preacher seeks to improve his workmanship, he would do better by improving his general knowledge. Working and "cramming" for a particular sermon each week is not the best method of study, neither will it produce the best sermons. As Broadus has said, "The sermons that require the least time in immediate preparation are frequently better than those laboriously wrought out...." Sermons flow from the life and experience of a minister. If our life is given to study then our sermons will reveal our faithful scholarship, but if we are not faithful in our studies we shall be shallow in our ministry.

The first task of a preacher is to explain his text. We believe that the Bible is the written revelation of God to man, and that this is the only such revelation. Whatever we say, as ministers, that is not logically extracted from the Word of God is of little significance, but whatever we say that is logically extracted from the Word is empowered by the Spirit of God. Yet, Dr. Broadus has said, "If some sermons had smallpox the text would never catch it." A text that cannot be explained

should not be used. A sermon that is not derived from the scripture should not be preached. Let us heed the commandment of the Bible, "Preach the Word.... " Or, as A. T. Robertson once said, "My beloved brethren, if you never see to anything else, see that there is some connection between your sermon and your text."

If there is a valid connection between the sermon and the Bible text, and if the minister is faithful to vary these texts under the leadership of the Spirit, this minister is known as a Bible preacher. But it is obvious, that, if we are to be a Bible preacher, we must be a Bible student. Therefore, all of the studies of a minister of Jesus Christ ought to have as their center a better understanding of the Word of God. As Wesley has said, "I want to know one thing -- the way to heaven: how to land safe on that beautiful shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the way: For this very end He came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price, give me the Book of God! I have it: Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be 'homo unius libri' (a man of one book)." But Wesley was known as a scholar in many areas. His works include writings in the areas of logic, philosophy, language, music and theology. Therefore, if we would follow the example of Wesley and other great men, we would study widely that we would be prepared to study the most profound Book. We would read commentaries, sermons, science, mathematics, history, and current events, for every one of them help in the study of God's Word. However, next to the study of the Bible itself, the study of theology is most important. Spurgeon, the prince of preachers, gave much time to the study of this subject. Wesley often refers to the books that he read in this area. We study theology that we may organize the principles which are scattered through the Bible into doctrines, which, when systematized, compose the faith for which we contend.

All of this general study will equip us to find and interpret the text we are to use for a particular occasion. However, when we have found the text, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and are in the process of analyzing it, we should not consult the writings of other men immediately, unless it be the dictionary or commentary to get the meaning of words or sayings. We should find in the passage of scripture our own outline and approach to the truth.

Of course, it should not be necessary to point out, that not all, probably not even the majority, of our ministering is accomplished from the pulpit. The minister who has scant background knowledge, or who has "borrowed" his sermon from one of the present day prophets, will have a difficult time giving a more detailed teaching on the subject in the parlors of his parishioners. Indeed, if we have done our best in the study, we will not avoid the fair questions that our sermons did not answer. Certainly, our preaching should cause thinking in spiritual areas among our people, and the minister should be in a position to answer reasonable questions that indicate vital spiritual needs among his hearers.

Explaining the text is only one of the primary tasks of preaching. Of the other three (argument, illustration, and application), argument should be mentioned. Argument is the necessary judgment that the minister makes in his sermon. These judgments must be supported by valid scriptural evidence, and sound interpretation of the scripture. Many a minister has found himself in an awkward position when he has not thoroughly studied his argument, and upon delivery finds a flaw in his own reasoning. These arguments are vital, for they deeply affect the convictions and spiritual life of our laymen.

Let us not think that courage is the only virtue that is needed to deliver proper arguments. There are many examples of men and women who are courageous in a false or foolish conviction. The cults flourish with teachers who make strong arguments by using extra-Biblical principles, or who reason falsely from the Word of God. The Minister who extends an argument not logically derived from the Word of God does not merit a hearing. We believe the Bible is our rule for faith and practice: therefore, those ministers who fail to study and preach it, breed inconsistency among our people.

### III. Study To Distribute The Truth

Of course, studying to distribute the truth would indicate another kind of study; the study of people, of individuals. A minister might be a fine scholar and a saintly Christian, and not be able to feed his flock, because he does not know them. To know his people, the minister must be interested in his people; he must carry a concern for their lives, their problems, their joys, and their sorrows. But as a student, he must find what it is in the storehouse of divine truth that his charges need to help them live the victorious Christian life. Other men's sermons do not work here, and probably those in our files from other occasions will not fit this situation without total revision. Alone with God, with our storehouse of truth, and with our burden and knowledge of our flock is the only atmosphere in which we can construct a useful sermon.

One of the first things that a minister discovers in these studies is, that not everything that is of interest to him will be of interest and help to his people. Many things that we find in our studies are not relevant to the needs of laymen, and if preached may even discourage or confuse them. The studies of a minister of Christ should position him as a watchman on the wall to warn of approaching evil; they should educate him as a physician to effect remedies for the spiritual ills of his charges, or at least enable him to lead the needy to the Great Physician; they should cultivate him as a comforter to minister to the brokenhearted and bring them to the presence of the Paraclete; they should fully install him as spiritual instructor, that he might faithfully guide his people past the spiritual pitfalls of this world to the bright eternal shore.

One group of needy folk that we should find in our congregation is the sinners. The Word instructs us that we are... to do the work of an evangelist.... " We are to deliver to the sinner the appeals of the gospel. The appeals of love, fear, joy, satisfaction, duty, etc., are extended more powerfully by the minister who is student enough to know the spiritual basis for the appeal, and who knows his people well enough to apply it. For instance, when we must use the appeal of fear and preach on eternal punishment, we find ourselves in a grave position. Certainly, we must have God's help, but the minister who has studied the passages of scripture that deal with this subject, along with the theological implications, plus what other men have said in their sermons, finds himself in a better position to help the sinner. The same can be said for each of the appeals, that is, we must study the scriptural basis for the appeal, the writings of other men on the subject, and the theological implications. If the truth thus gleaned is digested by the minister, applied to the people whom he knows intimately, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, sinners ought to be converted by this gospel. Another need that demands our attention as we draw near the end of this dispensation is that of false teaching. There are many scriptures warning us that these last days are days of deceit. Of course, the easy way is to attack the personal lives of those who propagate the false

doctrine. This is easy, for false doctrine necessarily produces false Christians, whose sinful lives bear witness to their doctrine. But remember when we preach in that manner, we leave ourselves and our people open to the same treatment. Some of our number have also failed. Let us not attack personalities because we do not know enough to attack the error of their doctrine. Granted; it is difficult and requires study to refute doctrine, but at least it is ethical, if not more effective. One can find books with the teachings of the modernists, the Calvinists, the Jehovah Witness, and many other false teachings in the public library, or from their own tracts and inexpensive literature. A minister with some study should be able to find enough in his Bible and in his library to destroy their arguments. The lists of people's needs certainly could be extended, but we have not the time, nor should it be necessary for us to do so. If the minister is faithful to study the primary sources of spiritual writings, i.e., the Bible and holiness theology, if he studies his people with concern, and if he stays abreast with the fields related to his ministry, he should be able, under God, to rightly divide the Word of truth.

## CONCLUSION

The world honors scholarship. Though this scholarship sometimes seems to be of poor quality, they honor their leading students with fame and fortune. Archimedes, the great mathematician of antiquity, is among the earliest. The story is told that his studying was so intense, that when his native city was besieged by the Roman army he continued his work on a mathematical demonstration. In fact, he continued until a Roman soldier entered his room and killed him as he worked over the diagram of his problem.

The ministry of the gospel has produced its scholars, but in general they are not acclaimed. Paul, the apostle, was scholar enough to deal with the philosophers of Greece, while he made tents for a living. Wesley was always a student, even on horseback, as he crossed and re-crossed England. Among these are the ministers of the small holiness churches, many of whom work with their hands to provide a living, yet are students of the things of God. Like Christ, it seems they have no time for study, yet like Christ, they always seem to have spiritual food for their flocks. Like Christ, they will not receive worldly fame or fortune, yet like Christ, they shall receive a great eternal reward -- the approval of God.

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## 02 -- TODAY'S MINISTER AS AN ADMINISTRATOR

Rev. H. C. Van Wormer

"The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul ... with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:32-33).

"Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (I Peter 5:3).

"So the twelve gathered all the disciples together and said:

"It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the Word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word" (N.I.V.). (Deacons were to take care of the material interests).

"I have a man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Christ's" (Phil. 2:20-21)... men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel (The Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection) ought to do ..." (I Chron. 12:32).

When I came into the holiness movement 52 years ago, we never heard of a topic such as the above. The preacher was highly respected as a leader of the people and as a preacher of the Gospel. He was expected to preach the Gospel and not entertain. There was a loyalty to his leadership by the people. This was shown in the business meetings, etc. The preacher had a loyalty to his Conference and he urged his church to support it in all of its interests. There were no questions asked. The Conference had a loyalty to the denomination and the churches and pastors were expected to support it and they did without question. It was expected of every pastor to attend the District Holiness Conventions and other District meetings without fail. In those days Conventions were three days in length. No pastor was absent unless sickness or something else hindered him. He was expected to be there. If he were not there, questions were asked. He was expected to be at the Conference session and stay all the way through. If he were not there, it had to be sickness, or something very important to keep him away, or questions were asked. He was expected to be there. It was his duty! He had a loyalty that seems to be lacking today. The same was true at the Camp Meeting. All were expected to be there. I was new in the Conference and did not know too much about its operation. Camp Meeting came and my father paid me a visit, and I was unable to get there at first. People began to wonder about my loyalty. In those days there was a loyalty of both people and preachers at the church services, prayer meetings, revivals, conference and to the denomination that we seem to know nothing about today, and we didn't hear anything about the minister being an administrator. There was a working together in a spirit of loyalty on the part of both people and pastor. This emphasis on the pastor as an "administrator" has come in as a result of the substitution of so many different things in the place of the real Gospel, which was the attraction in those days. Let us consider:

#### I. The Meaning Of A Minister -- What Is A Minister, Or Who Is He?

In I Timothy 3:1-7 the Apostle Paul describes him as one who is called of God and set apart by God with certain qualifications for the preaching of the Gospel:

1. "The saying is true and irrefutable: If any man (eagerly) seeks the office of bishop (superintendent, overseer), he desires an excellent task (work).

2. Now a bishop (superintendent, overseer) must give no grounds for accusation but must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, circumspect and temperate and self-controlled: (he must be) sensible and well-behaved and dignified and lead an orderly (disciplined) life; (he must be) hospitable -- showing love for and being a friend to the believers, especially strangers or foreigners -- (and) be a capable and qualified teacher.



3. Not given to wine, not combative but gentle and considerate, not quarrelsome but forbearing and peaceable, and not a lover of money - insatiable for wealth and ready to obtain it by questionable means.

4. He must rule his own household well, keeping his children under control, with true dignity, commanding their respect in every way and keeping them respectful.

5. For if a man does not know how to rule his own household, how is he to take care of the church of God?

6. He must not be a new convert, or he may develop a beclouded and stupid state of mind, as the result of pride, (be blinded by) conceit, and fall into the condemnation that the devil (once) did.

7. Furthermore, he must have a good reputation and be well thought of by those outside (the church), lest he become involved in slander and incur reproach and fall into the devil's trap." (Amp.)

It is plain that the true minister of the Gospel belongs to God in a very peculiar sense; a sense in which the average child of God does not belong to Him. He is called of God to the work of the ministry; he is a possessor of a Divine commission to proclaim the good news of salvation and life to the world, to be God's mouthpiece to mankind, or to make known His message to people. He is filled with the Holy Spirit and anointed of Him, and the power of God is manifested through his life and ministry.

The church recognizes or should recognize his position as one who is set apart from secular activities to devote himself to the ministry of the Word of God and to prayer; and to the opportunities of managing the work of the church, of working with people, and of the intimacies involved in being a spiritual advisor to those in need of such help; also a place of authority in leadership which gives him the direction of the affairs of the church and its different auxiliary organizations and, to a greater or lesser degree, places other people under his domination. This places the minister in the position of an administrator -- not as in a secular organization for there the position of power and authority are often abused in unfairness.

## II. The Meaning Of The Word Administrator -- What Do We Mean By This Term?

As far as I could learn from the Scripture, there is a gift of administration. Note I Cor. 12:28 -- "And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets ... those with the gift of administration..." (N.I.V.) In the King James the word is governments. The Beacon Bible Commentary says, "The term probably refers to administrators of church government." So, evidently a preacher has the right to seek this gift. I Tim. 3:1 implies it in the words "overseer, superintendent." I Tim. 5:17 also implies it: "The elders who direct the affairs of the church were all worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching" (N.I.S.). Also Rom. 12:8 -- "... if it is in leadership, let him govern diligently" (N.I.S.). The dictionary meaning is given as: "One who manages, governs, or directs affairs, or is capable of so doing."

Consider also Heb. 13:17 -- "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you" (N.I.S.). This shows that the leader is assigned this task by God Himself and that the leader is under subjection to the authority of God for the job of shepherding souls. I like this paraphrase: "For they seek continuously and sleeplessly for your spiritual welfare, because God will expect an accounting from them." Phillips says: "They are like men standing guard over your spiritual good, and they have great responsibility." "Those who are seeking to whittle down the authority of the clergy and to erase the line between the clergy and the laity today, would do well to ponder this passage, and remember that the ecclesiastical order which elevates the clergy in the church was not invented by the clergy; it was established by God."

Thus, I believe that we can say, when it comes to the ministry, the minister is to be a spiritual leader concerning spiritual and eternal verities and to be the director of the work of God in his church. In other words, he is to be the pace-setter for spiritual things. He is not just to tell people what to do. He is to be the example.

Now, the question is: How is he going to use this special divine relationship? How is he going to use this privilege and authority given to him by the church? Will he use it to make bread for himself; use it to his own advantage; use it to gratify his own ambition to rule others, or will he use this privilege as a sacred trust and to the glory of God? This is the question, and right here is a terrific temptation to the ministry.

In THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE of May-June, 1948, under the title - "Temptations Common to Preachers" -- Dr. D. Shelby Corlett said, "The temptation will be present always to use the opportunities and privileges of the ministry for selfish ends. Jesus gave the standard for the life of a true Christian ministry; it is not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life for others. There is much hard work connected with the ministry; there are many unpleasant tasks, tasks which the human would shun and neglect; there are many burdens to bear, the needs and troubles of others, the care of the church with its manifold difficulties, the burden of intercessory prayer in the priestly ministry, and the burden of soul passion for the salvation of the lost. The minister faces the temptation always to spare himself, to make bread for himself instead of being faithful to God and to the tasks which his calling necessarily lays upon him.

"The minister is not required to give an account to some employer of the use of his time, or the manner in which he has employed the privileges afforded him in giving himself to the ministry of the Word and to prayer (Acts 6:4). Shall he make bread for himself, spare himself in these matters? Dare the minister of God fritter away his time in useless matters, or give himself to empty and meaningless activities? Shall he spare himself the task of bearing burdens under the pretense of being busy? Shall he use the time given him by his position for study of the Word and prayer, for pastoral visitation and serious work for the church, in idleness, in gratifying his personal desires for recreation away beyond that which is necessary to his physical well-being; in applying himself and giving an unreasonable amount of time to a personal hobby until the work of the church suffers; of being the errand boy of the home and chore-boy for his wife -- doing the family wash, looking after the cleaning of the house, etc. -- all of which his own wife would have to do if he were engaged in any other profession? Dare a minister give way to the serious and fatal temptation of

merely "getting by" when he could accomplish much more for God and see many more souls saved and believers sanctified if he were to apply himself more diligently to his God-called task?

"If a pastor would give himself as consistently to his work as the average business man must to make his business go, as the average professional man must to succeed, as the successful farmer must to make his farm pay, or even as the average office worker must to keep his position, he would have success. If the average pastor would give himself to real, honest-to-goodness work and diligent application to his task on an average of eight hours per day, he would accomplish more than the average pastor is now accomplishing. There is the well-used excuse of 'being busy' which most pastors use. Check up; you are busy, no doubt, but busy about what? There are so many matters of little or no importance which a minister may permit to occupy his time that if he is not careful he will be busy about these things and the true work of the ministry is neglected. When we do this we are making bread for ourselves and failing in the primary task to which God has called us -- we are yielding to the temptation which Jesus overcame."

The second question the minister, as an administrator, is going to have to settle is: How shall he use his position and authority? Will he use his authority as that of rulership and dictatorship; or will he use it as the authority of leadership follow me as I follow Christ? Again, I wish to quote from Dr. Corlett who said: "More pastors limit their usefulness and influence through yielding to the temptation to become officious and dictatorial, to be overbearing, and jealous to their honor and standing, than perhaps any other one point. There must have been some even in the days of the apostles who yielded to this temptation, for Peter exhorted the ministers thus: 'neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock'; and Paul said in speaking of Timothy, 'I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's!'"

"Because of his position and place of authority, the minister is tempted to use people as his servants, or for his own pleasure instead of thinking of them as fellow laborers with Christ and lively stones from which God's living temple, the habitation of God through the Spirit, is built. How subtle is this temptation, to make bread for ourselves, to spare ourselves, or to misuse power and privilege! Ministers should carefully guard against this and by the help of God overcome all such temptations."

### III. Some Qualities A Good Administrator Will Have To Have

He will:

A. Have to be a spiritual leader in the devotional life of his people. As there is the law of reproduction -- "after its own kind;" so there is a spiritual law of reproduction -- "like begets like." If the pastor is not spiritual, his people will not be spiritual, and the community will have no preservation to stay its corruption. The spiritual life and the advancement in spirituality of his people should be his greatest concern. (Read Romans 9:1-3; 10:1).

B. Have to know how to handle people, to arouse their individual initiative, and to get them to work with him as working partners and not for himself. This will be the keynote of his success as a pastor.

C. Have to be a man of decision, not uncertain or unwavering in his opinions, able to think, able to size up a situation and decide, under God, which direction to go. A pastor has to be a planner, an organizer, a delegator (he must not do everything himself but be able to delegate work to others), a motivator, an evaluator, a communicator and a decision maker.

D. Have to work to keep his thinking from becoming lopsided and side-tracked -- will have to labor to have a well-rounded ministry. This is a day when even holiness preachers are being led away from the faithful preaching of God's Word. Preaching today is becoming secondary but God has no other way that He will sanction. He said, "Preach the Word." I don't need to go into this, for all of you are acquainted with His Word on this. But we might as well face it, we are beginning to substitute certain forms of entertainment for the preaching of the Gospel -- social events and parties (for almost every imaginable occasion); a lot of our music today is nothing more than mere entertainment; evangelists and singers are glorified and idolized; or someone's healing or other experience is exalted above the Gospel; counseling is substituted for preaching. As preaching goes down, counseling and entertainment take rise and take more and more prominence.

E. Have to be willing to work hard, to be faithful and diligent to all of his duties, obligations, appointments, and commitments. Will have to be careful about carelessness in these areas. It is surprising what is revealed of a person's life pattern in the monthly reports to the Connectional President. I could tell a lot about a preacher's ministry by watching these reports, and whether he even reported or not. This is very revealing.

F. Have to learn to work with his church boards and not take an independent, bossy attitude and try to push what he wants through, regardless of the feelings of his people. This always means trouble. He should take his boards into his confidence and show appreciation for their thinking as well as his own. It is the pastor's duty to see that his church boards are well-organized and that each board assumes the responsibility assigned to it by the Discipline and to see that everything the boards do is in harmony with the Word of God. He should also see that every member of the board has a fair chance to express himself on any matter and that no one person dominates the board actions. As a pastor, he should avoid anything that looks like dictatorship. Stick to the Discipline. This will save him a lot of heartache and trouble. Remember that a pastor and a church have to work together as a team. As a pastor you are the planner and the pace-setter, but it is to be in harmony with your people. As a pastor and as a Conference P resident, I never asked for people to do what I was not willing to do or to take the lead in. The Connectional officials, pastors and churches have to work together as a team if we accomplish anything. Loyalty here is the cement that holds things together.

G. Have to announce worthwhile but modest objectives with a real challenge -- but not too revolutionary. How many have gone to a new pastorate and immediately tried to revolutionize everything the former pastor had done, as though the former pastor were entirely wrong. Was it to demote the former pastor or was it to put yourself up?

H. Have to show real sensible, reasonable leadership. Will have to be considerate and be careful to avoid expressing quick, snap judgments. Think of the harm that has been done here.

I. Have to be careful to keep faith with his people and his denomination.

J. Have to be impartial and be a pastor to all, so that no one can say truthfully that he is pastor of only one group in the church.

K. Have to have a lot of bounce back to be a good leader. Dr. McLeister told me after I had gone into the Presidency, "Brother Van, you will have to have a lot of bounce-back to be a good leader. When you are struck down, bounce back up again."

#### IV. The Loyalty That Is Needed By A Good Administrator

The loyalty of the minister is threefold:

- (1) A deep-hearted loyalty to God;
- (2) A deep-hearted loyalty to his local church; and
- (3) A deep-hearted loyalty to his denomination which has recognized his call to the ministry, has ordained or licensed him, and has given him a place of service within its ranks.

Loyalty is more than an abstract quality of personality. It is an attitude which an individual assumes and maintains. It goes far deeper than mere words or deeds. It is the mood or state of mind which determines the direction pursued and the course of action followed. One may have loyalty to a principle, to an organization, to a cause or to a person. All the faculties are involved in loyalty -- the intellect, the will, and the emotions.

While loyalty is an abstract quality of the personality and an attitude of the mind, yet it gives unmistakable evidence of itself in the outward life -- shines out of the eyes and beams in the smile. It spreads in our words and enables all our deeds.

Loyalty is certainly a quality which should characterize the minister of the Gospel and, above all others, the holiness preacher. It is intelligent devotion to an idea, a cause, a person or a government. The simplest form of loyalty may be summarized like this: "Here is my appointed task, my station: This is my group. I must work in and with it; and that is, within the framework. (I can't understand those who desire to belong to a group but who refuse to work within the framework of that group.) A loyal person is one who is steadfast to an honorable obligation; one who does what he ought to do in his relations with the group to which he belongs. Loyalty is the cement that holds a group together.

There is no place in which there is greater need for loyalty than in our relationships within the church. Other organizations may succeed because of power, profit, or propaganda; the church must have brotherly love to succeed. This is a solvent for discord and dissension. It is a lubricant that eliminates friction within the body. It is the bond of the church's unity in worship, in fellowship, and in service. It is the insignia by means of which Christ's true followers are to be known by the world.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of the loyalty of a pastor who serves the local church. No one can contribute more to the loyal support of the departmental leaders -- the Sunday School, the WMS, YMWB, the Youth Society, etc. -- than the pastor. He holds in his hand the master key to this situation. His whole-hearted loyalty within these areas in the local church will determine the faithfulness in church attendance, in sacrificial support and measure the success of revivals, as well as that of the regular services. It sets the limits of attainment of the goals in the various departments. It effectively helps the leaders of the various departments to succeed. If the pastor is loyal, then his members will be loyal. If he is indifferent, his members will be indifferent. The members, by loyalty or lack of loyalty, will do more than to contribute to his happiness or sorrow. (I am speaking words of truth and soberness, as you well know.) Without loyal, whole-hearted members, the pastor had better pack his bags, box his books, and forward his furniture to a new location. His work at that place is really finished. No pastor, no matter how great a preacher he is, can build a spiritual, soul-winning church. It takes Sunday School workers, teachers, janitors, prayer helpers, faithful laymen, and someone to help pay the bills.

Our local churches are not isolated units. Every church is an integral part of the denomination. Here we have leaders who are dependent upon the loyalty of the pastors, as the pastors are dependent upon the loyalty of their members. There may be some honor in holding high offices in the church, but that is far outweighed by heavy responsibility. The work must be done. The divinely appointed task must be accomplished. As pastors we all must take that attitude and loyally contribute our share to the advancement of the work of God as a whole.

It is my conviction that, in a democratic organization such as our church, everyone should abide by the will of the majority. One should not only be subject to those who are over him in the Lord, but he should bear toward them an unfeigned loyalty. It is my personal opinion that one's ballot is his own when the election is being held. He must pray for guidance and vote his own convictions. But, regardless of how he may have voted, after the election his loyalty belongs to the ones elected. Brethren, let us love our church sufficiently to be loyal to its elected servants.

Loyalty will not "spread surmises injurious to the good name of others." It "worketh no ill to his neighbor." It is a sure indication of a deficiency in one's loyalty when he is casting a reflection or throwing a shadow upon a fellow minister. Can he build himself up by tearing others down? We who are ministers must put into practice as well as preach the Golden Rule and I Cor. 13.

Success in the local church or in the Connection depends upon whole-hearted co-operation on the part of everyone. Co-operation requires loyalty. The crucial problem in both the local church and the Connection is not so much to arrange the program or to set goals as to secure the whole-hearted co-operation which is required for their attainment.

It must be recognized that the pastor holds the strategic position relative to the general interests of the Connection. For the Pioneer Work, World Missions, our Literature and our Educational Institutions, etc., he is the loyalty leader in the local church. The measure of the pastor's co-operation is the extent of his success for the members will work, pray, and give as he leads the way. He is the shepherd; they are the sheep. He must go before them and set the example by enthusiastic co-operation. He is the key man for loyalty in our Connection.

Absolute perfection of persons and organizations is not prerequisite to loyalty. If it were, there would be no loyalty, because everything human is faulty. We need not be blind to faults and failures in order to be loyal. We can voluntarily overlook them just as we all desire that other people will regard our shortcomings with a charitable spirit and be loyal to us.

Although the explicit word loyalty is not to be found in the Bible, the concept is certainly there in example and exhortation. May we have, in our Connection, the devotion to one another which the early church enjoyed among its leaders and members. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul ... with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all."

We must recognize that in this day of the trend toward independency, that there is a tendency to be careless about loyalty to one's church and to its program both in the local church and the Connection. There is the tendency to set one's own judgment about the value of the place a certain program or project should have above the judgment and thought of the leaders of the Connection, who are better able to view the situation as a whole and to understand better the program essential to the best interests of the entire church. A pastor may not fully understand all of the factors involved in any project promoted by his church, but until he knows assuredly that it is contrary to what his loyalty to God would demand of him, he should give his co-operation to his church leaders. He must remember that, if he takes a critical, resentful and contentious attitude toward what his church is attempting to do, his church will do the same. If he takes a grasping, self-centered attitude and attempts to bring everything into his own church and refuses to support, as far as is possible, the program of the whole church, his people will take the same attitude. "This is bringing fruit unto one's self" according to Hosea 10:1, and it means death to the church.

Loyalty does not imply that a pastor may not have some individual thought about the program or project; he may question the advisability of promoting it and he certainly has the privilege of asking questions or requesting more information about the matter, even to the extent of presenting his individual protest, if he thinks the situation merits this; but in spite of his personal feelings, he should give his co-operation to the endeavor and co-operate with the leaders of his church. Any plan is better than no plan; and a poor plan which is supported by all the people involved is much more successful than the best plan which receives poor support.

The basis upon which a pastor may test his co-operation and loyalty to any general project or program of the church is this: Am I giving to this project or program the same co-operation and loyalty I expect my church members to give to any program or project I, as pastor, may present to them? If the Golden Rule is applied to these matters, there will be much greater loyalty given by pastors to the work of the Connection and much greater success will be attained.

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03 -- TODAY'S MINISTER AS GOD'S MESSENGER  
Rev. J. C. Himes

Text: John 12:32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

### Other Scriptures:

Matt. 11:10, "For this is he, of whom it is written, behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before me."

Luke 1:17, "And he shall go before him in the spirit of Elias, to make ready a people for the Lord."

Luke 1:77, "To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of sins."

Num. 16:28, "Hereby shall ye know that the Lord hath sent me, to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own mind."

Isaiah 48:16, "The Lord God hath sent me."

Zech., "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; after the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which hath spoiled you."

### I. The Minister Himself

Quotations from "Ministers' Workshop," Luccock. If the preacher is not the source of his message but a channel for God, then he himself is a primary matter, his inner life: the flavor, the color, the fire, and the music that make him himself, his capacity to absorb spiritual truth and experience, which will determine his capacity to transmit them.

The minister's own religious experience is the incomparable source of preaching. It is the prelude to preaching, the sort of prelude that Jesus gave to His own disciples. His first word to them was, "Come ye apart and rest awhile." Stand where I stand. See what I see. Hear what I hear. Jesus' prelude to preaching, the same yesterday, today and forever is, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

Oscar Wilde once said a true thing about the preacher, without having any idea what he was saying. "I have put my genius into my life; I have put only my talent into my books." It was a sorry genius that Wilde put into his life. But the order of importance is correct, an order which no preacher can ever dare forget. Life is more than meat and more than sermons. The best of one's life, his genius, must go into living, into receiving, and into being. After this then talent comes in for its legitimate contribution.

He must have first hand experience of the riches of the grace of God.

### II. The Ideal Of Preaching

What then is preaching? What shall be our ideal of the sermon? An ideal we must have, pure and high, if we are not to be ashamed of our work. We must build after the pattern in the



mount. The conception will direct all training and effort. It will give self-knowledge, awaken unknown powers and lead to larger attainment.

### III. Preaching In The First Place Is Characterized By A Sense Of A Message From God.

We stand up before men, not to enforce our own opinions, our own likes and dislikes, but to teach them the will of God, and conditions of salvation. The messenger should have a message from God. He can get that message by praying and keeping in contact with God. Much harm has been done by getting out of the Spirit and into the human.

All we need for the message will be found in the Word of God. It is God's gift to man. The instructions and conditions are not ours, but God's. We are merely ambassadors and messengers, and it is our duty and privilege to enforce the conditions and to beseech our fellowmen to embrace them and become reconciled to God.

### IV. The Sermon Should Be Instructive

It must teach the truths of Christianity in a way to inform the mind, in a way to give new and clearer views of the facts and truths of the gospel, if it is to be true in its mission. It is not pleasing panorama nor a fervent exhortation. The pulpit fails that does not broadly and soundly educate the people in the Scriptures.

### V. A True Sermon Is Scriptural

I do not mean that it must be full of Scripture, but it must give the message of Christ and His Spirit.

A sermon may be full of Scripture and yet convey no message. It may be wholly in the language of today and give the very heart of the gospel. One has said, "Raise me but a barn in the very shadow of St. Paul's Cathedral, and give me a man that will preach Christ crucified, with something of the energy which the all-inspiring theme is calculated to awaken, and you shall see the former crowded with warm hearts, while the matins and the vespers of the latter, if the gospel is not preached there, shall be chanted to the mighty dead."

### VI. The Sermon Must Be Persuasive

A sermon tries to do more than instruct and please, it aims to affect the will and so control the life. "The conviction of the judgment will not necessarily lead a man to act." We must provide motives that shall induce the person to choose the right way of life.

The will is the citadel of personality, and to reach the will, so to display and commend the truth, that the man shall of himself accept and follow it, is the aim and secret of effective preaching.

And as we are complex, with many different approaches to the will, the study of life must constantly go on, that we may know how to persuade men. We must remember that the sermon falls short of its mission if it does not persuade.

Persuasion was the note of Mr. Beecher's preaching. "To preach the gospel of Jesus Christ; to have Christ so melted and dissolved in you, that when you preach your own self you preach Him as Paul did; to have every part of you living and luminous with Christ; and to make use of everything that is in you, your analogical reasoning, your logical reasoning, your imagination, your mirthfulness and your humor, to take everything that is in you all steeped in Jesus Christ, and to throw yourself with all your power upon a congregation, that has been my theory of preaching the gospel."

I have felt that man should consecrate every gift that he has got in him that has any relation to the persuasion of men and to the melting of men, that he should put them all on the altar, kindle them all and let them burn for Christ's sake.

## VII. The Sermon Should Be Direct And Personal

We should take aim and hit, but without rudeness, with the sensitive and kindly spirit of Christ and of a Christian gentleman.

The message should be given in such a way that men cannot escape it but apply it to their own lives. Peter at Pentecost and Paul before Felix are good examples for us. It will require a heart of love and courage and the true spirit of a prophet to do this.

It means the sympathetic knowledge of men, appropriateness, the fitting of the Word to personal need, above all sincerity, true in one's own life and with a disinterested zeal, never presuming under the protection of the pulpit what you would not say to men in the privacy of their own homes. Preaching is a direct message to the hearts of men, a word from life to life.

The sermon should be our word. "If I have not seen Him myself, I cannot preach Him," said Joseph Parker. And the Word should find its way as directly to the understanding and motives of our hearers as will make it most effective. Nothing of thought, style, or manner should interfere with the direct and personal quality.

## VIII. The Sermon Should Be Practical

Preaching is the highest art, but the artistic conception of the sermon is fatal. The sermon is not a work of art. The sermon is not to be something but to do something. It is simply a tool, and when it becomes an idol it is high time for the image breaker to come.

The story is told of Mr. DeVinci that when he had finished the painting of the last supper, he asked a friend to come and see it. As the painter withdrew the cloth, the friend exclaimed, "How wonderful the cup in the hand of Christ!" DeVinci impulsively drew his brush across the cup, passionately saying, "Nothing shall hide the face of Christ."

We should deal with the sermon in this spirit. The sermon is the best that does the best work. Preaching can be and is done in such a way that Christ is not seen in the picture.

The man and his message and the souls of his hearers must be kept supreme.

The pulpit cannot be an authority in education, or economics or civics, but it can be an authority in the things of Christ.

Men hunger for the truth of Christ, for that which heals and cleanses and gives strength and hope. When a man gets his message from the street, or some current book instead of the Bible, when he fails to preach Christ, he is giving the people a stone when they ask for bread.

Paul said, "But we preach Christ crucified, the power of God and the wisdom of God." Inscribed on the cornerstone of a large fashionable church was the text, "But we preach Christ crucified." As the years passed by vines grew around it until all that was visible were the words, "But we preach." Ironically, this was a sad commentary on the deteriorating ministry of that church, for the pastor spoke on other subjects without mentioning the crucified risen Saviour.

It reminds me of a statement made by the late Rev. O. G. Wilson at a ministerial institute some years ago, "A lot of preaching reminds me of the sign in the old time country store, 'Dry Goods and Notions.'" The pulpit is not for the purpose of taking advantage of someone or causing anyone to be influenced wrong.

I have better sermon material to bring before my church than use the time for ridiculing the conference officials and leaving a bad impression on the church and community. I remember the time when I had to talk to an evangelist because he was using my pulpit for gossip. I cannot build up my church and have the people stand by our good conference with some evangelist or other pastor tearing it down. I will not use a man of that description.

What impression do the unsaved and strangers have after listening to some preaching? Would they go away hungry for salvation? Or say like the group in the Bible, "Sir, we would see Jesus?"

Paul declared the heart of the gospel when he said, "Christ died for sins, was buried and rose again." This is the good news preached by David Livingstone when in spite of rain, more than 500 people remained to inquire, "What must we do to be saved." Jonathan Edwards proclaimed the same message, and men and women who at first gripped the benches in fear lest they slip into the hands of an angry God, were later converted. George Whitefield, declaring these truths to 10,000 men who had just come from the coal mines, saw them weep in sorrow for their sin, their tears making white streaks as they trickled down their unwashed faces.

Could this be the reason why so many were saved in those days? Did they preach more on the crucified Christ? Yes, and they preached more on hell and the judgment than is being done today. There is not much preaching on hell and the judgment.

I do not want to ever be a compromiser. We must hold the standards. We must take a stand against worldliness, such as T.V., immodest dress, the wearing of gold and bobbed hair, etc. But is that all we have on the menu to give our people? What if all would line up and get rid of all worldliness? Would you run out of sermon material?

Notice some good statements from Arthur T. Pierson.

The central vital secret of all successful preaching, is in its last analysis the constant presentation of the one and only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. All power must primarily and ultimately depend upon the faithful preaching of Christ crucified; and to this, all means and methods must be tributary and subsidiary.

If we have drifted from our original moorings, let us get back to the preaching of the crucified Christ.

To preach this is to lift up the Lamb of God so that all may look and live. The medicine for all the wants and woes of man is the cross.

The rallying point and the radiant-point of both doctrine and life are in the cross, that golden milestone in the Forum of the Ages, where all roads meet. From all quarters, sinners, seeking to be saved, must come to it. To all quarters, saints, seeking to save, must move from it; and on our way as penitent sinners, or on our way from the cross as witnessing saints, we find every need of man met and every vital question answered.

Preaching is the unfolding of a, "Thus saith the Lord." The true preacher thinks God's thoughts after God, searches the Word, compares spiritual things with spiritual, and so gets at the mind of God.

The true sermon has a divine genesis; it begins in God.

Such preaching as begins with God ends in a revelation of Jesus Christ, the very thing we need in our churches.

The Master Himself has left us our first and last lesson in homiletics, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The pulpit is the main agent in evangelization, and to raise or lower its standard is to help or hinder every other form of active effort to save souls. When the aim of every sermon is to glorify Christ in the saving and sanctifying of souls, and toward that every thought and word and gesture converge, we shall see results of which even Pentecost was a prophecy and foretaste. If we lose sight of the cross we have lost all and all our labors will be in vain. We need to keep the cross of Christ as our reference point.

Christ should be our all in all in our churches, conference, behind closed doors in the committee room, in the pastor's study and in all our dealings with the public.

If I had five minutes to write a letter to unite all Christendom, I would say, "Christ is all in all."

If I were to speak to an assembled graduating class made up of all schools, I would say, "Christ is all in all."

If I were to meet with a gathering of kings and all world rulers in conference to seek a solution to world problems, I would say, "Christ is all in all."

If I were a chaplain in the armed forces and only had five minutes to speak to a regiment of soldiers going to the front, I would say, "Christ is all in all."

If I had the opportunity to meet all the holiness churches in the holiness movement assembled together and had five minutes to speak, I would say, "Christ is all in all."

If I were to be invited to your church to give advice on internal problems that were endangering the future of your church, I would say, "Christ is all in all."

We Are God's Messengers

We are not diplomats; his is a message of compromise.

We are not public relation agents, trying to establish peace between the church and the world.

We are God's messengers. Ours is the message of the prophet. It is an ultimatum, "Either Christ or Chaos," "Either Christ or Hell."

We have a crucified, risen Christ; let us exalt Him.

May God help us as a conference and connection to lift up the eternal Son of God with the five bleeding wounds.

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#### 04 -- TODAY'S MINISTER AS A FAITHFUL PASTOR

Rev. C. A. Blair

"This above all else, to thine own self be true and it must follow as the day the night, thou canst not then be false to any man." Shakespeare

The word "pastor" is defined in Webster's dictionary as a shepherd (obs.), a clergyman, or priest who has charge of a church or congregation.

The word "faithful" is defined as:

1. One full of faith, believing, strong or firm in one's faith, especially religious faith.

2. Firmly adhering to duty, of true fidelity, loyal, true to allegiance, constant in the performance of duties or services, honest, loyal as a faithful servant.

3. Observant of compacts, contracts, vows, or other engagements.

4. True, exact, in conformity to the letter and spirit.

God describes pastors in Jeremiah 3:15: 'And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.'

To me there are three areas in which a pastor must be faithful:

1. To God

2. To himself and family

3. To his church and connection

## I. Faithful To God

This is a pastor's personal relationship with God. All of his pastoral activities hinge on this. If he fails here he fails everywhere. He is the leader. He may be a good organizer, a good administrator, a good worker, but if he is not faithful in his relationship with God, he will be a failure. He is to get his message from God. He is not a prophet in the Old Testament sense of the word, who got his message direct from God. God has given us His written Word and it is from it that the faithful pastor gets his message. Therefore, he must be a student of the Bible. The Bible is a spiritual book and therefore the pastor must be a spiritual man. If he is going to be a leader, he must be ahead of his flock. I do not mean by this that every pastor will be more spiritual than every member of the church. There are young pastors who have old mature saints who are spiritual giants. This spiritual state is not attained overnight. It takes time and experience. But the faithful pastor will be ahead of the average of his flock if he is to lead them to higher heights.

A faithful pastor must be a man of prayer. The poet has said, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." No doubt the opposite of this is also true. More things fail because of lack of prayer than this world dreams of. Prayer may not be the solution to every problem, but it is through prayer that most solutions are given. I know that God told Joshua to arise and do something about the situation but would He if Joshua had not first prayed?

The faithful pastor must be a man of patience and perseverance. Our God is a patient God. Someone asked Philip Brooks one time why he was so wrought up, and he answered "I am in a hurry and God isn't." The ability to just keep on keeping on, in spite of adverse circumstances is one of the greatest needs of a faithful pastor. To have to stand by and see your congregation grow smaller in spite of your praying and working, to keep yourself encouraged when the greater part of the congregation is discouraged, takes more than human strength. If he doesn't have a good grip on God, he will without a doubt, fail miserably. This one thing he must keep in mind -- that it is God

who has called him to preach; it is God for whom he is laboring, and it is God who is going to do the rewarding; and that is going to be on the grounds of faithfulness rather than on success.

## II. To Himself And Family

There are some things a pastor owes to himself and his family. They are all on public display. It is up to the pastor to see that they have some private family life. But always God's work must come first.

Be diligent -- never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never trifle away time, neither spend more time at any one place than is strictly necessary.

Be serious. Let your motto be, "Holiness unto the Lord." Avoid all lightness, jesting and foolish talking.

Believe evil of no one without good evidence -- unless you see it done, take heed how you credit it.

Put the best construction on everything.

Speak evil of no man, because your word, especially, would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast until you come to the person concerned.

The faithful pastor will be harder on himself than on anyone else. I do not think there is any realm in which the saying: "Others may, you cannot" is as true as in a pastor's life.

A faithful pastor must be a man of faith. "Now faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." So the faithful pastor must be a man of the Bible. No matter what profession or occupation a man may be in, he owes it to himself to seek improvement. The pastor may be tempted to seek a change of pastorates rather than to put forth the time and energy it takes to remain on a long pastorate.

## III. To His Church And Connection

The pastor is called to pastor the church. All other things are to be secondary to this. Of necessity he may be involved in other activities, but they must be kept secondary if he is to be a faithful pastor.

He must be faithful in his pulpit ministry. He is to preach the word; be instant in season and out of season. He will not shun to preach unpopular truths or doctrines because of who is in his audience. Neither will he ride hobbies or preach his opinions which cannot be backed by scripture. He will preach with a tender and compassionate spirit. I once knew a pastor who was so delighted when he found a text from the Bible which he thought just fit one of his congregation. He could hardly wait until he could preach at her. Needless to say he never stayed long in one place.

A man may be a good preacher and not be a pastor. On the other hand it is surprising sometimes how good a pastor a poor preacher may be. But this is no excuse for us to be negligent toward our preaching.

One of the most important phases of pastoring, and often the most neglected is pastoral calling. I heard of one pastor's wife who said they spent one afternoon in calling and had their week's calling done. Maybe it is lack of organization on my part but I have never had my calling all caught up. Pastoral calling always has been hard work for me personally, and especially in hospitals or prisons. But nowhere else have I been as richly rewarded or felt I brought as much help. It has been said, "A home going pastor will make a church going people." I will have to confess that I haven't seen that work very well, but that doesn't excuse me from keeping at it.

I feel that the faithful pastor owes a debt to his church. I never felt that the Allegheny Conference or Connection has ever owed me anything. It was through them that I got saved. It was Allegheny Conference that gave me a place to start my ministry, and if I behave myself, I guess they will give me a place to finish it. Next to God, I owe her my loyalty. I thank God that we are not the only people on the way to heaven, but Allegheny is the best place for me. I do not in any way set myself up as an example to anyone, but by His grace I am striving to be a faithful pastor.

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## 05 -- TODAY'S MINISTER UNDERSTANDING JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, AND DEALING WITH IT

Rev. R. W. Bolois

Romans 9:19-20

Paul teaches that a bad theology proceeds from a bad heart.

For today's minister to have an understanding of the Jehovah Witnesses we must familiarize ourselves with their history, their theories, and their goals.

### I. Today's Minister Understanding The Jehovah's Witnesses

#### A. The History of the Jehovah Witnesses

Charles Taze Russell was the founder of the Russellites. He was first a Presbyterian, and did not like their doctrine on eternal punishment, so he was converted to the doctrine of the Adventists, and joined them. After a short period of time, Russell and the Adventist N. H. Barbour had differences on the subject of the Lord's return. In 1878, they parted because they disagreed on the Atonement. In 1879, Russell launched his Zion's Watchtower and Herald of Christ's Presence.

He was in frequent clash with the courts. His wife was given a decree of divorce because the Judge of the High Court of Ontario opined that no woman of ordinary sensibility could live with a man of such egotism and arrogance. She claimed immoral conduct on his part with a female member of his church. He was charged with the practice of fraud. He induced sick people to make



over their fortunes to his organization, while vehemently condemning the clergy for taking up collections in their churches.

Russell died November 9, 1916, and Joseph Franklin Rutherford, a lawyer and a judge, was unanimously elected on January 6, 1917, to succeed Pastor Russell as President of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.

During his course of the Presidency, he spent nine months in jail because of alleged "un-American activities" at the beginning of America's entrance into the first World War.

Upon coming out of the penitentiary he found that several splits had occurred, that dissenters were continuing under various names. It was because of this that on October 9, 1931, at the Annual Convention at Columbus, Ohio, the present name of Jehovah's Witnesses was adopted.

## B. The Theory of the Jehovah Witnesses

The Witnesses have a deadly hatred against all the Christian Churches and what they stand for.

The teachings of the Witnesses have been correctly called a system of denials. Let's notice six of their theories:

### 1. Rationalism

The fundamental error of Russellism, which continues to be promulgated by the Jehovah's Witnesses, is its stark rationalism.

They place their reason above the Bible, and reject whatever is found in Scripture contrary to the human reason.

Russell wrote: "We have endeavored to uncover enough of the foundation on which all faith should be built -- the word of God -- to give confidence and assurance in its testimony, even to the unbelievers, and we have endeavored to do this in a manner that will appeal to and can be accepted by reason as a foundation. Then we have endeavored to build upon that foundation the teaching of the Scripture in such a manner that, as far as possible, purely human judgment may try its squares and angles by the most exacting rules of justice which it can command."

He also said; "Let us examine the character of the Writings claimed as inspired, to see whether their teachings correspond with the character we have reasonably interpreted to God."

The Witnesses further state the very character of unbelief lies in this, that the mind rejects that which it cannot, unaided reasonably -- accept. The Witnesses appeal to only 61/2 % of Scripture.

### 2. Trinity

The Trinity is denied in virtually all their writings. They believe "the origin of the Trinity doctrine is traced back to the ancient Babylonians and Egyptians, and other ancient mythologists. It will not be disputed by Jews and Christians that these ancient nations worshipped demon gods, and that God's typical nation of Israel was warned not to mingle with them because of this fact. It follows, then, that God was not the author of this doctrine. Two more interesting facts are:

First, a religionist living in the second century, by the name of Tertullian, located in Carthage, Africa, introduced the term "Trinias" into Latin Ecclesiastical writings, the term "Trinity" not once being used in the Inspired Scripture.

Second, the doctrine was first introduced into "Organized Religion" by a clergyman named Theophilus, also living in the second century. In the year 325 (A.D.) a council of clergymen met at Nice, Asia Minor, and confirmed the doctrine. It was later declared to be the doctrine of the religious organization of "Christendom," and the clergy have ever held to this complicated doctrine. The obvious conclusion, therefore, is that Satan is the originator of the "Trinity doctrine."

"When the clergy are asked by their followers as to how such a combination of three-in-one can possibly exist, they will generally answer, "that is a mystery." Some will try to illustrate it by using triangles, trefoils, or images with three heads on one neck. Nevertheless, God-fearing persons who want to know Jehovah and serve Him find it a bit difficult to love and worship a complicated, freakish-looking, three-headed God. The clergy who inject such ideas will contradict themselves in the very next breath by stating that God created man in His own image; and certainly no one has ever seen a three-headed human creature."

### 3. Christ Jesus

There is not a single Jehovah's Witness who knows himself as a lost sinner in need of a supernatural Savior. Their theory denies the Deity of Christ as vehemently as it does the Trinity.

Here are some quotes concerning their theory of Christ:

"Christ was not Jehovah God, but was existing in the form of God. He was a mighty One, although not Almighty as Jehovah God is; also He was before all others of God's creatures, because He was the first Son that Jehovah God brought forth. He was the first of Jehovah God's creations. He is ranked with God's creatures, being first among them and also most beloved and most favored among them. He is not the author of the creation of God: but, after God had created Him as His first born Son, then God used Him as His Working Partner in the creating of all the rest of creation."

### 4. The Ransom

The ransom theory of the Witnesses amounts, briefly stated, to this: The sinless man Jesus gave His life a "ransom," that is, that which loosens, or releases, providing deliverance.

They believe this ransom does not include Adam because he sinned willfully. The willfully wicked do not share in the ransom, but "he that exercises faith in the Son has everlasting life."

Russell wrote: "The ransom for all does not give or guarantee everlasting life or blessing to any man; but it does guarantee to every man another opportunity or trial for life everlasting." He also wrote: "They must be recovered from blindness as well as from death, that they each for himself, may have a full chance to prove, by obedience or disobedience, their worthiness of life eternal."

Rutherford wrote: "This restitution process will continue for a period of a thousand years, the period of the reign of the Messiah, during which time everyone of Adam's stock, including Adam himself, will have a fair and an impartial trial for life under favorable conditions."

In all of this there is not the faintest echo of, "He was wounded for our transgressions," or of "Christ died for our sins."

## 5. Second Coming

The Witnesses infer Christ comes, not as a human, but as a glorious spirit creature. They have an understanding that the Lord clearly shows He would use one organization, and not a multitude of diverse and conflicting sects to distribute His message. The "faithful and wise servant" is a company following the example of their Leader. That "servant" is the remnant of Christ's spiritual brethren. God's prophet identifies them, saying: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servants whom I have chosen."

They also believe that many years prior to 1914 earnest Bible students understood that the year 1914 marked the end of the Gentile times. According to the Witnesses, Christ returned in 1914. This date marked the end of Satan's uninterrupted rule, and therefore the time when Christ the rightful ruler of the world received control. By 1918, they feel He came to His Temple, the hundred and forty-four thousand with whom He formed "The church," He the Head and they the body. They have proclaimed it world-wide: In 27 years the Witnesses have distributed more than 470 million books and booklets, hundreds of millions of magazines and leaflets, and millions of oral testimonies, in 88 languages.

According to the Witnesses, we are now being tested by the Great Judge. Christ is separating the people into two classes, called sheep and goats. That separation is now going on, though many are not aware of it. They feel the people's attitude toward themselves (Jehovah Witnesses) and the message of His Theocratic government reveals their attitude toward the King. The persecutors, opposers, and indifferent, who identify themselves as goats, are doomed to destruction that will last forever.

## 6. Hell

The first question they ask is, "From where does our English word 'Hell' come?" The answer must be, according to their theory, that it comes from the ancient Anglo-Saxon verb *helan*, meaning to conceal. There is just one word, and only one, in the old Hebrew Scriptures that is translated "hell" in the King James, and that word is *sheol*.

Here are some questions they ask concerning hell: How do we know that sheol means the grave and not a place of torture? The Bible, God's word, interprets it so. Genesis 37 -- (35) -- -- 42 (38).

Do good people go to hell? Their answer "yes, if by hell you mean the Bible hell. Who does not know about Job or has not read in the Bible about his faithfulness and integrity toward God? In the midst of his affliction and under pressure on the part of Satan, Job offered to God the following prayer: "O, that Thou wouldest hide me in the grave [Hebrew, Sheol; Douay, "hell"]. If sheol means a place of torture and fire, would Job wish to go there and spend his time until God remembered him? Job's desire was to die and go to the grave, that his sufferings might cease.

Where is hell located? Their answer is, "Read what the Bible says about the location of hell. When the prophet Jonah was swallowed by a big fish to save him from drowning he prayed from the belly of the fish in these words: "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me out of the belly of hell ... [marginal reading, "grave"]. Jonah was in hell, in his grave or tomb; he was as good as dead in sheol. Plainly, hell is not at the hot center of our earth, for it is no deeper than the grave. It is so plain that the Bible hell is the tomb, the grave, that even an honest little child can understand it, but not the religious theologians."

"Many religious denominations believe that for all those who have the misfortune to go to hell there is no hope whatever that they will ever come out therefrom. The Scriptures, however, teach differently. We read, "and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them." Here the record states that hell delivered up the dead who were in it. Now, it is a case of choosing who is right, God or the clergy. Rev. 20 -- (14) -- "and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death period." This is highly symbolic language. Death and hell are conditions and reasonably they cannot be cast into a literal "lake of fire." Death itself, Paul said, will be destroyed. "Death is swallowed up in victory." The Bible gives us the interpretation by saying: "This," that is, the lake of fire, "is the second death," from which condition there is no recovery or resurrection. And then the gladsome statement is made in the 10th verse that the devil is "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," which, according to the Bible, is "the second death," from which condition the devil will never return to molest the subjects of the King of the New World.

Now, who is responsible for this God-dishonoring doctrine? Their answer is, "the promulgator of it is Satan himself; and his purpose in introducing it has been to frighten the people away from studying the Bible and to make them hate God. Imperfect man does not torture even a mad dog, but kills it; and yet the clergyman attributes to God, who is love, the wicked crime of torturing human creatures merely because they had the misfortune to be born sinners. The hell-fire doctrine was unknown for four thousand years since Adam's fall. It, as well as the doctrine of "purgatory," is based upon the other false doctrine of the "immortality of the soul." To suffer eternal torment in consciousness after death the human soul would have to be immortal and indestructible."

They summarize this doctrine by stating that the doctrine of a burning hell where the wicked are tortured eternally after death cannot be true, mainly for four reasons: (1) because it is wholly unscriptural; (2) because it is unreasonable; (3) because it is contrary to God's love; and (4) because it is repugnant to justice.

### C. The Goals of the Jehovah Witnesses

1. They are trying to destroy our confidence in the Word. We must realize they are diligent Bible students, although they study the Bible with a prejudiced, rationalistic mind. Their frequent references to Scripture passages are wrested out of their context and are all predicated upon pre-conceived ideas.

The Witnesses claim to believe the Bible in its entirety. After joining their organization they are quick to tell you that you do not need to read your Bible, because their books and magazines explain everything much more clearly.

Their Bible is different from most. The wording is considerably different, but it is not always detectable without a careful comparison with a King James. Their Bible does not use the name "God." You will hear them read "Jehovah." Also, they exclude the word "hell" and replace it with "sheol" or "gehenna."

Their reason for this is doctrinal, trying to change the historical Christian beliefs and to introduce new versions of old heresies.

2. They are trying to destroy our confidence in Christianity and to proclaim themselves as having the true religion. The Witnesses remark by saying, "Logically, there must be one true religion." But how can you identify the true worshippers of today? In applying the rule, the Witnesses have four identifying marks of true worshippers of God. These are:

(a) They would have love among themselves.

Jesus said, "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." Then they ask a follow-up question, "Do the religious organizations with which you have been acquainted instill in their members a love that is so strong that it remains true even in difficult times?"

(b) Respect for God's Word

God's Son when on earth set the pattern in this by showing the highest respect for the inspired Scripture.

The Witnesses set themselves as an example by saying, "What can we say in this regard about the many church organizations of Christendom today? When you hear or read statements by clergymen who refer to parts of the Bible as "myths" or who favor the theory of evolution, would you say that they are encouraging respect for God's Word? Or when you read statements in which such church leaders argue that sex relations outside of marriage are not necessarily wrong, or that even homosexuality can be quite proper, would you say that they are encouraging people to use the Bible as their guide?"

(c) Sanctify God's Name

The Witnesses question "now, stop and ask yourself, what religious group is most prominently known for publishing the name of God, as Jesus did? The churches, in general avoid the use of the name Jehovah. Really, what group does bear witness to the name of God as Jesus did? If you were to talk to your neighbors and refer repeatedly to Jehovah, using His sacred name, with what organization do you think they would associate you? That is not a difficult question to answer. There is only one people that notably follow Jesus' example in this regard.

(d) The last true requirement of true religion is that it keep separated from the world and its affairs.

After all this, they come back with the question and answer this way. "Who, then, are the ones who form the body of true worshippers today? On the basis of the evidence, which is known or available to persons in all parts of the earth, we do not hesitate to say that they are the Christian witnesses of Jehovah."

3. They are trying to destroy our faith in Christian holidays. Let's notice two holidays which they are strongly against:

(a) Easter. The Witnesses claim that Easter is Christendom's chief religious holiday, said to be held in memory of Christ being raised from the dead. But did Christ give a command to celebrate His resurrection? No, He did not. History books tell us that Easter is based on ancient pagan practices. They continue by saying that the word Easter appearing once in the King James Bible at Acts 12 (4) is a wrong translation for the word "Passover." Easter, therefore, finds no support at all in the Bible. It is of a pagan origin, and therefore, displeasing to God.

(b) Christmas. The Witnesses state, by checking reference works in a public library, that you will find that it was unknown among the earliest Christians. Jesus instructed His followers to observe a memorial of His death, not of His birth.

What, then, of the date December 25, celebrated by many as the birthday of Christ? It could not have been the date of Jesus' birth, as the Encyclopedia Britannica acknowledges, that Shepherds would not have been there in the cold, rainy season of winter. As for the origin of the date, The World Book Encyclopedia says: "In A.D. 354, Bishop Tiberius of Rome ordered the people to celebrate on December 25." He probably chose this date because the people of Rome already observed it as the Feast of Saturn, celebrating the birthday of the sun.

The Witnesses summarize it by saying "since the date of Christmas is of pagan origin, it should not seem strange that the customs of Christmas are also of pagan origin.

4. They are trying to destroy the plan of Salvation. The Witnesses Bible replaces "Cross" and "Crucifixion" with the phrase "impale on a stake." The reason is two-fold. This serves to further separate their cultic belief from historical Christianity. The stronger reason is probably an attempt to avoid all the normal truths of salvation that are associated with the Cross of Christ.

W. E. Vine, in his book says: "By the middle of the third century A.D. the churches had departed from or had [made a distorted imitation of], certain doctrines of the Christian faith. In order to increase the prestige of the apostate ecclesiastical system pagans were received into the churches apart from regeneration by faith, and were permitted largely to retain their pagan signs and symbols. Hence, the T, with the cross-piece lowered, was adopted to stand for the Cross of Christ. The Witnesses exclaim it is not normal to cherish and adore the instrument used to murder someone we love. Who would think of kissing the revolver that had been used to murder a loved one, or of wearing it around one's neck? This being so, and the cross being proved to be a pagan religious symbol, persons thinking that this honored God and His Son, Jesus Christ, are faced with an important decision. Will they forget the cross?"

No Jehovah's Witness will ever say that he knows he is saved, that God is pleased enough with him that He has assured him that he is going to Heaven. Their denial of the cross, the absence of an altar in their church building, and their feeling that they have to wait until some further time to find out whether or not they are saved are all a part of the scheme to keep their revenue from book and magazine sales at a peak. With them forgiveness of sins is foolishness so no altar for prayer and repentance is needed. Since they cannot know whether or not they are saved, they keep working like fury to hope to win God's favor.

## II. Today's Minister Dealing With The Jehovah's Witnesses

Jehovah's Witnesses deny the great doctrines of the Bible. They are, therefore, misguided followers of a fallible, human organization. Consequently, they too, desperately need the salvation that Jesus Christ, alone offers to all men who will come to Him and accept Him as their Savior and Lord. In order to lead them to Christ, we must know how to deal with them

These are the most difficult people to evangelize. Simply because the cultists are not people who have to be aroused to an interest in religion. They are not folks who have drifted away from their moorings. The average devotee of a cult has left a traditional faith, in which he was more or less reared, and has adopted "Something Better."

Remember the cultist is not only repudiating the religion you represent, but he actually is hostile to it. There is a resentment against you as an intruder who ventures to come and lecture him who has found something so vastly superior. This resentment against you may assume various forms according to the character of your opponent and the nature of the cult which he represents. It may be haughtiness or even hatred, since you represent "Satan, the devil's organization." While dealing with the Witnesses, remember, they are well-informed about the shortcomings of our evangelical Protestant religion.

Several things need to be taken into consideration when dealing with the Witnesses.

1. You must have gained experience in dealing with and presenting the gospel to others. Try dealing with the large group of those who are just indifferent, of those who think they are all right, of those who admit that some day they should give more attention to religion.

2. Then when you decide to go into the lion's den, if ever you were in need of guidance, it is now. If ever you should pray for patience, it is here. The Witness you are about to visit is your opponent. He may lose his temper, or he may treat you with silken condescension, or again with icy disdain; you are to take it with unruffled spirit. Bear in mind that in the final analysis all his antagonism is not directed against your personality or your past life, but against the message you present. You have come to represent Christ, not Christians.

3. Approach the Witness with a sympathetic heart. Hostility does not win. Only love can do that. How many times have you heard Christians say, "I slammed the door in his face" -- "I really told him off that time" -- "I never gave him a chance to open his mouth, I just told him he was on his way to hell, and never to approach my doorstep again." No matter how much you may hate error, your first approach should always be that of speaking love. You must love the sinner while hating the sin in him. There should always be something in you of Christ, who was moved with compassion when He found the multitude as sheep without a shepherd.

I've found in my short ministry the reason so many ministers are so belligerent, and unkind, and un-Christ-like to the Witnesses, is that they cannot stand alone and refuse to get cornered by one who is to be of a false cult. The question arises, "Why are not more of the Jehovah's Witnesses converted for Christ?" Let me answer it this way, "Why are not more ministers concerned about seeing them converted?"

The average Christian becomes totally apprehensive when they are aware of the fact that a Jehovah's Witness is at their door. They try to think up all kinds of excuses to get rid of them or to let them know they are not interested. Don't you believe if we had enough of God and compassion in our hearts, we would want to sit down and try to tell them the real story of Jesus Christ. How few of the Witnesses have the privilege of sitting in a minister's home and hearing him tell about his day of conversion. I grant you, there will be controversy, but the story of salvation will ring in the Witnesses' ears through eternity.

4. This is indeed a specialty of theology. Combating the Witnesses is not a dunce's task. Needed is a workable knowledge in two fields: (a) One must be able to defend the principles of the "Protestant Rule of Faith." (b) In an argument with an adherent of a different faith, you should be able to attack and refute his stand. This can be done in two ways: i. Refute his principle, the foundation of his system (You must, therefore, have a clear conception of the fundamental error of your opponent). 2. Your opponent, with such theological zeal, is by no means a lamb that before its shearers is dumb; he is a mighty warrior. If he does not attack your doctrine, you attack his. This means that besides debating the fundamental position of the man you intend to convert, you may have to discuss his idea of sundry doctrines of the Christian Faith.

Only let the debate be confined to major issues. You are endeavoring to convert a man from a non-Christian belief to the Christian Faith, not from a less correct to a more correct understanding of the Christian tenets. You are not to lose yourself in a discussion of adult-only or also infant baptism, nor of the validity of sprinkling.

You will probably find, by probing the beliefs of your opponents, that their difficulty is more one of the heart than of the head.



Make them stick to the Bible -- your Bible. Ask them if they have ever read the book, Thirty Years a Watchtower Slave. Suggest they get a copy and read it. It deals with an individual who, at one time, was a Jehovah's Witness, who was converted to Christ. Do not let them deceive you. Talk up to them, and let them know they need to get right with God before they wake up in the very hell they are trying to deny.

Today's minister has a task set before him that can only be accomplished through a study of the Word and earnest prayer in seeking God's help as one deals with a Jehovah's Witness.

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06 -- TODAY'S MINISTER UNDERSTANDING  
ETERNAL SECURITY AND HOW TO CORRECT IT  
Rev. C. R. McPherson

The perseverance of the saints is the logical conclusion to the doctrine of predestination, as held by the Calvinists. Unconditional election, unconditional reprobation, irresistible grace, all are framed on God's sovereign will before the foundation of the world. But wherein does the Bible teach such doctrine?

The subject, "the perseverance of the saints," is the particular area I have been asked to present to this institute. I am a total debtor to Mr. Wesley and the Scriptures in dealing with this subject.

By the saints, I understand:

1. Those who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God Himself;
2. Those who are endued with faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience;
3. Those who are grafted into the good olive tree, the spiritual, invisible church;
4. Those who are branches of the true Vine, of whom Christ says, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches."
5. Those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to escape the pollutions of the world;
6. Those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit;
7. Those who live by faith in the Son of God,
8. Those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant; those to whom all or any of these characters belong, I mean by the term "saints."

Can any of these fall away? By falling away, we mean, not barely falling into sin. This, it is granted, they may. But can they fall totally? Can any of these so fall from God as to perish everlastingly?

I am sensible either side of this question is attended with great difficulty; such as reason alone could never remove. Therefore, "To the law and to the testimony." Let the living oracles decide; and if these speak for us we neither seek nor want further witness.

On this authority, I believe a saint may fall away; that one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God Himself may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

1. For thus saith the Lord: "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." Ezekiel 18:24

That this is to be understood of eternal death appears from the 26th verse: "When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them;" (Here is temporal death.) "For his iniquity that he hath done, he shall die." (Here is death eternal.)

It appears farther from the whole scope of the chapter, which is to prove "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (verse 4)

If you say, "The soul here means the body," I answer, that will die whether you sin or no.

Again, thus saith the Lord: "When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness," (Yea, or to that promise as absolute and unconditional,) "and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for the iniquity that he hath committed he shall die." (33:13)

Again: "When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby." (verse 18)

Therefore, one who is holy and righteous in the judgment of God Himself, may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

2. One who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless, so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the inspired apostle, "War a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." (I Timothy 1:18,19.)

Observe (1) these men (such as Hymenaeus and Alexander) had once the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience; which they once had, or they could not have "put it away."

Observe (2) they "made shipwreck" of the faith which necessarily implies the total and final loss of it. For a vessel once wrecked can never be recovered. It is totally and finally lost.

And the apostle himself, in his second epistle to Timothy, mentions one of these two as irrecoverably lost. "Alexander," says he, "did me much evil: the Lord shall reward him according to his works." (II Timothy 4:14) Therefore one who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

3. Those who are grafted into the good olive tree, the spiritual, invisible church, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the apostle: "Some of the branches are broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the fruit and fatness of the olive tree. Be not high-minded, but fear: if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of God! On them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou shalt be cut off." (Romans 11:17, 20-22.)

We may observe here, (1) the persons spoken to were actually grafted into the olive tree. (2) This olive tree is not barely the outward visible tree, but the invisible, consisting of the holy believers. So the test: "If the first fruit be holy, the lump is holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches." (verse 16) And, "because of unbelief, they were broken off, and thou standest by faith." (3) These holy believers were still liable to be cut off from the invisible church, into which they were then grafted. (4) Here is not the least intimation of those who were so cut off being ever grafted in again.

Therefore, those who are grafted in the good olive tree, the spiritual, invisible church, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

4. Those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, I am the Vine, ye are the branches," may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith our blessed Lord Himself, "I am the true Vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh it away. I am the Vine, ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned." (Jn. 15:1-6)

Here we may observe, (1) the persons spoken of were in Christ, branches of the true Vine. (2) Some of these branches abide not in Christ, but the Father taketh them away. (3) The branches which abide not are cast forth, cast out from Christ and His church; (4) they are not only cast forth, but withered; consequently, never grafted in again; nay, (5) they are not only cast forth and withered, but also cast into the fire; and, (6) they are burned. It is not possible for words more strongly to declare, that even those who are now branches in the true Vine may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

By this clear indisputable declaration of our Lord, we may interpret those which might be otherwise liable to dispute; wherein it is certain, whatever you meant beside, He did not mean to contradict Himself. For example: "This is the Father's will that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." Most sure; all that God hath given Him; or, as it is expressed in the next verse, 'Everyone which believeth in him,' namely, to the end, He "will raise up at the last day to reign with him forever."

And yet in the very next verse our Lord Himself declares that one of those whom the Father had given Him did not persevere to the end but perished everlastingly.

His own words are "Those that thou gavest me I have kept and none of them is lost but the son of perdition." (John 17:12)

So, one even of these was finally lost, a demonstration that the phrase "those whom thou hast given me," signifies here (if not in most other places too) the twelve apostles and them only.

5. Those who so effectually know Christ as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly. For thus saith the apostle Peter, "If, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," (the only possible way of escaping them,) "they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." II Peter 2:20, 21.

That the knowledge of the way of righteousness which they had attained, was an inward, experimental knowledge, is evident from that other expression, they had "escaped the pollutions of the world;" an expression parallel to that in the preceding chapter, verse 4: "Having escaped the corruption which is in the world." And in both chapters, this effect is ascribed to the same cause; termed in the first "the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue;" in the second, more explicitly, "The knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

And yet they lost that experimental knowledge of Christ and the way of righteousness; they fell back into the same pollutions they had escaped, and were "again entangled therein and overcome." They turned from the holy commandment delivered to them, so that their latter end was worse than their beginning."

Therefore, those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

And this is perfectly consistent with Saint Peter's words in the first chapter of his former epistle: "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Undoubtedly, so are all they whoever obtain eternal salvation. It is the power of God only, and not our own, by which we are kept one day or one hour.

6. Those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruit of the Spirit, may nevertheless, so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the inspired writer to the Hebrews: "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." (Heb. 6:4-6)

Must not every unprejudiced person see, the expressions here used are so strong and clear that they cannot, without gross palpable wresting, be understood of any but true believers?

They were once enlightened, an expression familiar with the apostle, and never by him applied to any but believers.

"They had tasted of the heavenly gift," (emphatically so called) "and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost."

The expression "they tasted of the heavenly gift" is taken from the Psalmist, "taste and see that the Lord is good."

And yet those who had been thus enlightened had tasted this gift and been thus partakers of the Holy Ghost so fell away that it was impossible to renew them again to repentance.

7. Those who live by faith may yet fall from God and perish everlastingly for thus saith the same inspired writer, "The just shall live by faith; for if any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him." (Hebrews 10:38) "The just" -- the justified person, "shall live by faith." Even now shall he live the life which is hid with Christ in God, and if he endure unto the end, he shall live with God forever. "But if any man draw back," saith the Lord, "my soul shall have no pleasure in him." That is, I will utterly cast him off and accordingly, the drawing back here spoken of is termed in the verse immediately following, "drawing back to perdition."

"But the persons supposed to draw back are not the same as those said to live by faith."

I answer, "Who is it then? Can any man draw back from faith who never came to it?"

But does not God say to everyone that lives by faith, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"?

The whole sentence runs thus, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' " True, provided "your conversation be without covetousness," and ye be content with such things as ye have. Then you may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Do you not see (1) that this promise as here recited relates wholly to temporal things? (2) That even thus taken it is not absolute, but conditional? and (3) that the condition is expressly mentioned in the very same sentence?

8. Those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus again saith the apostle, "If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified an unholy thing!" (Hebrews 10:26-29)

It is undeniably plain (1) that the person mentioned here was once sanctified by the blood of the covenant. (2) that he afterwards, by known, willful sin, trod underfoot the Son of God and (3) that he hereby incurred a sorer punishment than death, namely, death everlasting.

Therefore, those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

Can a child of God go to hell or can a man be a child of God today, and a child of the devil tomorrow? If God is our Father once, is He not our Father always?

I answer, (1) a child of God that is a true believer, (for he that believeth is born of God) while he continues a true believer cannot go to hell. But, (2) if a believer makes shipwreck of the faith he is no longer a child of God. And then he may go to hell, yea, and certainly will, if he continues in unbelief. (3) If a believer may make shipwreck of the faith, then a man who believes now may be an unbeliever sometime hence; yea, very possibly, tomorrow; but, if so, he who is a child of God today, may be a child of the devil tomorrow. (4) God is the Father of them that believe so long as they believe, but the devil is the father of them that believe not, whether they did once believe or no.

The sum of all is this: if the Scriptures are true, those who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God Himself, those who are endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience; those who are grafted in the good olive tree, the spiritual, invisible church; those who are branches of the true Vine of whom Christ said, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches;" those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge have escaped the pollution of the world; those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness of the fruits of the Spirit; those who live by faith in the Son of God; those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may nevertheless, so fall from God as to perish everlastingly. Therefore, let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.

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## THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT AND REFUTING IT

Rev. Howard Williams

Irenaeus, in the second century, wrote of those who had, or professed to have prophetic gifts and the power to speak in "Tongues." Tertullian, in the third century, claimed to have had a member of the church who spoke in "tongues." In the fourth century, "tongues" broke forth in Constantinople, under Chrysostom. He, perceiving it was not of God, rebuked and silenced it. These symptoms showed themselves "in wild inarticulate orgies, almost convulsive gestures." Little more is heard of "tongues" until it broke out in the eighteenth century, among the begging friars, or wandering monks of the Catholic church. In England it appeared momentarily in the sixteenth century; in 1668 it broke forth among those called "the French prophets." One, John Lacy, became their leader. "The convulsive, ecstatic utterances of the order drew down upon them ridicule." One of their writers, Nicholson, said he found himself unable to resist this power; though afterwards he came to look upon his own companions as "enthusiastic imposters."

The modern movement of "unknown tongues" had its origin in Western Scotland. Edward Irving, a talented Presbyterian minister, preached in London in Regent Square to great crowds. His movement was called the Catholic Apostolic Church. Irving failed; was expelled from the Presbyterian Church, and died, broken-hearted, about 1835.

The Mormon Church with all its vagaries and polygamy has claimed and practiced the gift of "tongues."

In the early twenties of this century, in a convention in Los Angeles, the "tongues" movement sprang up again. Several of its leaders with their "movements" have risen, flourished for a time, and fallen into disrepute and known immorality. After wavering starts through the past several decades, we now find the Charismatic movement in phenomenal growth and expansion, infiltrating or invading many, if not all, religious groups. This includes the Holiness Denominations. Because of this, there is a fear and timidity on the part of too many of even our conservative Holiness preachers to properly preach and teach against it.

### Scripture

There are nine scripture passages that contemporary proponents of speaking in "tongues" use in their teaching and writing:

1. Isaiah 28:11, "For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people." Because they had rejected the Lord the people would be led into captivity. In their captivity the Lord will speak to them by foreign and hostile people, whose utterance will be to them as stammering and strange jargon. The "tongues" people very clearly tear Is. 28:11 out of its context. Paul, in quoting this verse, was reminding the Corinthians of their childishness and rebellion, not encouraging them to speak in "tongues."

2. Joel 2:28, 29, "and it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy..." There is no reference to speaking in "tongues" in Joel's prophecy. Joel does mention visions, dreams, and prophesying. But prophecy is

distinct from speaking in "tongues." Paul plainly teaches this in I Cor. chapters 12 and 14. So the prediction of Joel, as well as the statement of Isaiah, must be rejected as a valid support for speaking in "tongues."

3a. The only reference to "tongues" in the gospels is Mark 16:17-18 "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

"They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Five signs are given here. To insist on speaking in new tongues and exclude all or any of the other signs is to misuse the Scripture. From this point of view, the snake-handling cults are given Biblical support to the same degree that speaking in "tongues" is supported. 3b. While the Gospels contain only one reference to speaking in tongues, several record the baptism or the coming of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 3:11-12, Matthew 28:19; Mark 13:11; John 14:16 and 26; John 16:8; John 13:14; John 20:22-23. These include John's telling of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and the commission Jesus gave to His disciples. The Gospels also contain examples of persons filled with the Holy Ghost who did not speak in "tongues." In no instance of any of the above Scriptures or persons, was there any speaking in "tongues."

## Acts

Acts 2:4, Acts 10:46, and 19:6 refer to speaking in tongues: at Pentecost, at Caesarea in the house of Cornelius, and at Ephesus. Regardless of the varied interpretations of scholars, one fact is clear and agreed to by all, every man heard in his own language wherein he was born. Every man understood. They spoke in known languages and every man understood in the language of his birth. No interpreter was there and none was needed. No place in God's Word is there any record of the gift of tongues where there was an interpreter. The gift of tongues is never misunderstood by any one who hears. Advocates of the modern "tongues" doctrine and its opponents all admit and teach that languages were spoken on the Day of Pentecost.

If Pentecost alone is a necessary pattern:

a. Then anyone speaking in tongues should be understood by all who hear him. (This would eliminate the modern "tongues" movement.)

b. Then no one should actively seek evidence. They prayed only for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

c. Then heart purity is the essential permanent result, rather than speaking in tongues. Acts 15:8, 9.

d. Then it should also be accompanied by sound of wind and visible tongues of fire.

In Acts 4:31 there is the record of Christians being filled with the Holy Ghost without speaking in tongues; "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." The "tongues" people teach that "in Acts the speaking with "tongues" is always a direct result of the filling with the Spirit. Also, "No one may Biblically and truthfully assume to say that anyone is baptized with the Holy Ghost, without such manifestation" -- Ness. Acts 4:31 contradicts this view.

Acts 8:13-17 refers to Peter and John at Samaria. Peter and John "laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost." There is no reference to "tongues" here.

Acts 9:17-18 refers to Ananias praying for Paul at Damascus, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus ... hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." No mention is made of speaking in "tongues."

Acts 11:15 refers again to Peter in the house of Cornelius. If the speaking in tongues had been different here than on the Day of Pentecost, Peter would have denied rather than confirmed that

"The Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning." Acts 15:8 "And put no difference between us and them purifying their hearts by faith."

### Tongues In Corinth

The contemporary writers and teachers of "tongues" have a twin emphasis: They teach that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is always witnessed by the initial sign of "speaking with tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance," but that this experience is not necessarily a permanent endowment. Others, they say, experience a gift of ecstatic utterance (I Cor. 12:10). "The saint is allowed to speak in the language of divinity -- a language unknown to humanity." (Thomas F. Zimmerman, Assemblies of God).

Since the tongues people regard the experience of Acts 2:4 as initial and temporary, it is the Corinthian gift of permanent ability to speak in tongues which is most frequently encountered today. Modern Pentecostalism, so called, stresses the initial evidence of speaking in tongues but greater emphasis is placed upon the permanent gift of tongues as in Corinth.

Corinth was a great port city of heathen practices and customs. H. F. Mathews -- The riff-raff of the world was there. It was more immoral than any other in the Roman Empire. In Corinth the outstanding building was the temple of Venus or Aphrodite. The Corinthians had in connection with their idolatrous rites their prophets and their "tongues speakers." Their temples of worship were dedicated to the basest of humanity.

These "tongues" speakers were beautiful young women gathered from all the land. One thousand such maidens ministered in this temple -- naked, shameless, indulging in the basest sexual orgies, unmentionable, too nauseating to read; too filthy to portray. Many of the Corinthian converts, as Paul's two letters reveal, had worshipped in this temple of unclean idolatry. These debauched women were called Pythonesses. Python means a serpent. For a description of one of these read Acts 16:16-18 where it speaks of "a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of

divination" out of whom Paul cast a devil. In the margin we read "pythoness." This woman at Philippi was clairvoyant in league with the personal world of wickedness. Those who gave forth their utterances in this temple were denuded, degraded pythonesses. They claimed to speak in "unknown tongues." They were possessed by a power which they could not resist.

In writing to the Corinthians, Paul reminded them that they were "called to be saints" (1:2). He complimented some and he commended them for their variety of gifts, but Paul also expressed some serious concern for them and enumerated many things:

1. There were divisions and schisms but "tongues" flourished.
2. They gloried in the flesh, but they spoke in tongues.
3. They were substituting Greek philosophy for the Holy Ghost, but had the gift of tongues.
4. They were carnal, but spoke in tongues.
5. They were babes, but spoke in "tongues."
6. They were in danger of "building on another foundation than Christ," but they spoke in "tongues."
7. They were in danger of destroying the very church itself, but they mightily spoke in "tongues."
8. They had passed judgment upon Paul, but they spoke in "tongues."
9. They were puffed up -- could they not speak in "tongues?"
10. The most revolting fornication (ch. 5). Lust and lasciviousness vied with other sins for supremacy. In one instance a man was actually living with his own stepmother as his wife (while the father was still alive). This self-inflated church had not in any manner dealt with this grievous offender. Uncleaness was largely characteristic of this one church, that among all churches, had the gift of "tongues."
11. Lawsuits (Between lawsuits they spoke in "tongues.")
12. A list of former sins that some had returned to: Unrighteousness, fornication, idolatry, adultery, effeminate, abusers of man-kind (Sodomites), thievery, covetousness, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, fellowshiping devils, taking the cup of communion of devils in pagan temples, (II Cor., chs. 6 & 12), debates, wraths, strifes, back-bitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults (riots); had not repented of their uncleanness, fornication and lasciviousness which they had committed. In the midst of all this spiritual and physical wickedness they dishonored unspeakably their bodies, but they abounded in speaking in "tongues."
13. Perverted teaching of marriage relationship (Like brother with sister).

14. Weak in faith.
15. They questioned Paul's apostleship and authority.
16. Refused to adequately support Paul.
17. Tempting Christ.
18. Drinking cup of devils.
19. Bobbed-haired women, women had broken loose from all restraint and were running in wild disorder.
20. Sectarian.
21. Degradation of the Lord's supper.
22. Misunderstanding and misuse of gifts of the Spirit.
23. Denying the resurrection.

We can be sure that there were some good and spiritual babes in Christ in this Corinthian Church, but the mass was deplorable. Such a church cannot be accepted as an example of sound practices.

The close ties of the Corinthians who spoke in tongues with devil practices and the occult is almost exactly paralleled in many cases today.

#### How To Refute It

It is not the most effective method of refuting the "tongues" teaching to point to their lack of standard. Many who claim to hold to Wesleyan Doctrine today have almost a total lack of standard. A few (not many) tongues people do have a standard.

To call them "fakes" and to deny that any miracles occur among them will be totally ineffective.

Matt. 7:21 and 24:24; II Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:14; Rev. 19:20. Every cult teaches bodily healing.

To say they have no power will not be accepted. (However, the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophets.)

To merely denounce their teaching sheds no light and will be unconvincing.

To say that no one gets saved in their meetings is not altogether true and many of your hearers will know this.

On the positive side for counteraction and refutation:

1. For them to say that speaking in "tongues" is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost is to make unholy the great men of the Old and New Testaments and of the Christian Age. In the Old Testament we have Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Gideon, Isaiah, and the prophets who did not speak in "tongues." (The magicians, sooth-sayers, diviners, enchanters, spirit-mediums, fortune-tellers, wizards, with familiar spirits, in touch with the dead and the damned (condemned and forbidden of God,) spoke in "tongues.") In the New Testament Zacharias prayed with such power that an angel came to answer him. Elizabeth, strong in faith, sang forth in her own native language. Mary, Mother of Jesus, when the Holy Ghost came upon her, did not speak in "tongues." Simeon, Anna the prophetess, John the Baptist, (filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb and no one had any trouble understanding him;) Jesus, Wesley, Luther, and Finney whom they quote, did not speak in "tongues."

2. The "tongues" people who call themselves Pentecostal emphasize Acts 2:4. They utter sounds that no man understands and call this the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. To refute their teaching, we can clearly and emphatically point out that their practice of "tongues" is the most directly opposite of what really happened on the Day of Pentecost from that of any other religion in the world. We must emphasize the fact that "every man understood in his own language wherein he was born."

As to I Corinthians, they were not to speak in tongues without an interpreter. (These were languages of different nationalities.) God never gave the gift of tongues where an interpreter was needed. The gift of "tongues" was not necessarily a mark of spirituality. Some unconverted people spoke in "tongues." Balaam's mule spoke in "tongues" and needed no interpreter. King Saul prophesied after an evil spirit came upon him. Balaam had the spirit of prophecy and predicted the coming of Jesus. Those who know and believe the Word will not be deceived.

3. A great antidote is Spirit-anointed preaching. A religion that does not believe that sin and carnality can be purged from the heart, but opposes the true teaching of full salvation, will not exist under a true minister of the Lord. Let us not be timid or sympathetic with false religion in our preaching.

4. Immorality and speaking in "tongues" can and often do co-exist. Contemporary writers and proponents of "tongues speaking" readily agree to this.

5. Prayer.

These people are hard to retrieve; they are possessed with a great fear; they are taught that to come out is to blaspheme. We can do little or nothing for them who will not hear and believe the truth. But we can take admonition and trust the promise Paul gave to Timothy in I Timothy 4:16, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

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## 08 -- TODAY'S MINISTER UNDERSTANDING THE OCCULT AND EXPOSING IT

Rev. Paul David Stonebraker

First, I must tell you very candidly that I do not fully understand the "occult," neither do I care to make too thorough a study of it. The "occult" is Devil-inspired, Devil-related, Devil-empowered -- and therefore should not be carelessly toyed with or trifled with.

I do, however, feel that every alert pastor ought to be sufficiently informed, so as to be able to guide his people away from such snares as Satan would devise.

The word "occult" is a Latin word which means "To be hidden," or "Something that is concealed." It refers to any phenomenon which transcends the five natural human senses. In other words, it is that which seems to be reality, yet it is above and beyond the natural and the physical. It can only be described as that of the supernatural or the super-human. It reaches into the realm of the spirit-world. "Occultism," therefore, is nothing less than a reaching out for that which is presently veiled, unseen and not intended for human penetration.

Thus, for the unregenerate persons (persons not covered by the blood), this outreach into the unknown is reciprocated -- and taken advantage of by the Devil and demons in that they lead such persons deeper and deeper into spiritual darkness, deception, demon-possession and every conceivable kind of gross evil.

"Occultism" therefore, is a cult, but it's the cult of the Devil. Yea, it's the religion of the Devil.

I'll not take time to graphically describe the awful gory depths to which the "occult" can lead. Suffice it to say that everything from the seemingly innocent E. S. P. games to seances is involved; everything from the horoscopes, the ouija boards, the tarot cards, to the efforts of communication with the dead is involved. Everything from animal sacrifices to human sacrifices is involved; yea, and everything from human sexual orgies to demon copulation is involved. (Copulation with evil spirits is the ultimate to which the dedicated "occultist" aspires.)

Some of the most gory, gruesome, immoral things the carnal depraved mind can conceive of are both started and find full expression in the "occult." There's simply no end to the evils which "occultism" can lead a person into. It can become the tie or the linkage of mortal man -- in alignment and allegiance to Satan and demon powers.

Let me warn you! The "occult" is not an innocent fad or fancy that is going to pass. No, it's possibly the final "capstone" of evil that will eventuate in our total moral downfall.

In the Bible, the "occult" is broken down into four main categories. They are: (1) Astrology (Not astronomy), (2) Magic, (3) Witchcraft, and (4) Spiritualism. Each of these categories

represent an unlawful, unholy effort by man to penetrate the unseen, the presently unknown, and that which is yet veiled.

This effort is entirely out of the permissive will of God. God, through His Word and through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit does penetrate the unseen and the future -- and He gives us all the knowledge we need concerning the righteous and the unrighteous "spirit-world" that surrounds us. Anything therefore, that is outside of Divine revelation is diabolical, it is dangerous and it can lead to unimagined spiritual darkness and degradation.

Let us notice what the Bible has to say about the "occult." I quote from Deuteronomy 18:9-15, and 18.

Verse 9: "When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. (Note, there are nine abominations.)

Verse 10: "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch.

Verse 11: "Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

Verse 12: "For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Verse 13: "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God.

Verse 14: "For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners, but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee to do so.

Verse 15: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken.

Verse 18: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

Note a part of verses 15 and 18. It says: "The Lord thy God will raise thee up a Prophet" -- and this Prophet is to be "from among thy brethren." Doubtless this is Messianic! It undoubtedly refers to Jesus, the coming Messiah, but to me it also bespeaks the fact that true knowledge, true spiritual wisdom, true revelation, true insight into the unknown comes from a Divine source. It comes from God. It comes from the Bible, the Word. It comes through the illumination of the Holy Spirit. It comes through prayer and sometimes through the preached word.

Our enlightenment does not come from a crystal ball, from a consultant of evil spirits or a necromancer. Both to Israel and to us, our directives must come from God. Any other quest for, or any other source than this is an "Abomination" to God.

I would also emphasize verse 12. You will note that it is because of these nine "occult" abominations that the Canaanites were driven forth from the land and the Israelites came in to possess it. I'm well aware that a covenant promise had been made with Abraham concerning this land, but according to this verse, the main reason they were thrust out was because of these nine "occult" evils, many of which are rapidly gaining prevalence in our land today. I ask, "Could it be that 'occultism' will be the final barrage of evil that brings the wrath of God upon us?"

As was said, "occultism" is the reaching out for the veiled unseen spirit powers. And whether one immediately realizes it or not, these, to the unregenerate person are evil powers. Most assuredly there are tremendous unseen powers out there! The Bible verifies this. They are everywhere! They surround us! They would try to influence us -- to coerce us and pressure us. Therefore, without the covering of the blood there is no safety.

That powerful unseen spirit world is composed of two parts.

(1) First, there are the powers of righteousness. They are governed by the triune God-Head, assisted by holy, loyal angels -- and directed toward a fulfillment of God's will. (2) On the other hand however, there's an army of spiritual chieftains and demonic rulers who are governed by Satan himself. They are wicked, diabolical and total enemies in their revenge -- first against God then against man. This black-winged army is simply sweeping our nation and our world! Why? Because people have turned their back in defiance against God and, in so doing, have opened their minds and hearts to Satan. Thus, the anti-God, anti-Christ rebellions of recent years has simply opened the way for the revival of "occultism" which is sweeping our continent.

Actually, what is behind this "occult" craze? It's the innate hunger of man for direction and spiritual guidance. Man was created by God as a creature capable of making choices. He was so constituted, however, that he intuitively looks to a higher (more intelligent) power for help and direction in making those choices. If he refuses and has turned his back on righteous Divine guidance, he therefore naturally turns to Satanic deceptive guidance.

As an example: A group of people in an "occult" oriented store were interviewed and questioned. The first man, when asked what he was seeking for, replied, "I believe there's a master plan to the cosmos and I want to learn it." Another said, "I need something like the horoscopes or the tarot cards to make my decisions." Another man said: "My marriage is on the rocks and I need to find happiness somewhere!" Still another said: "My life is dull and I must find something exciting!"

Everyone of these were seeking answers to questions which used to be settled at penitent altars, but there are few (family or church) altars anymore. Everyone of these had questions which with thunderous tones used to be preached about, but the seduced clergy, for the most part, is now silent in their apathy. Yea, and everyone of these had questions that are answerable in the Word, but the Bible has been so mocked, so outlawed and vilified that it's practically a forgotten Book. (Today, in some University areas the Satanist Bible far out-sells the Holy Bible. In some places it's two to one.)

Again we ask: "How have we arrived at this point where people en masse are turning to the "occult?" I believe the answer, in part at least, is in the fact that people have been told of a God who is either dead, irrelevant, unable and uncaring about man's ills. The "occult," however, gives promise, personal help and special power. The cold, dead, formal church community has left people with a repulsed attitude toward anything religious, so the "occult" deceptively comes with promise of the esthetic, the active, the vibrant, the pleasure-creating answer to man's need. Thus, from the vacuum and lack of true Gospel preaching and teaching, we're seeing the rapid acceptance of Satanic religion.

We may be prone to feel that this is far removed from us. We may envision it as primarily a campus or a large city problem and something we need not be too concerned about. This is not the case, however, for both young and old are engaging their interests in these things. You might be surprised to know how many in your church related families read and depend on the daily newspaper horoscopes. Yes, and you might be shocked at the innocent looking "occult" oriented games there are in your parish homes.

I cannot too strongly emphasize the danger there is in starting into these things! Some of the most oppressed victims of the "occult" started out by innocently playing with the Ouija board just for fun! Some started down the alluring path of hypnotism just for a laugh! Some purchased a charm -- just to remove a wart! Some subjected themselves unwittingly to Satan's infestation -- just by experimenting with E.S.P.! Some had their mind filled with evils they never before conceived of -- when in attempting transcendental meditation they emptied their mind against right, but opened it to evil.

At the time they'll tell you they don't believe in any of this; they're just playing; they're just having fun! But in so doing, they are making the initial overtures which open the heart and mind to Satan. To dabble with the "occult" in any way -- is to invite disaster. If nothing else, it's a plain irrevocable invitation to Satan to come in and be at home in you. It's the opening of your personality door to malevolent spirits, and eventually to demon possession.

Let me give you this true example: In one of America's most evangelical colleges, some students decided to have some fun. They did not have an Ouija board, so they manufactured a home made device. On this board they printed each letter of the alphabet. They inscribed the numbers from one to ten. They then made two squares, one marked "yes" and the other "no." (Remember these were professed Christian young people. They were only experimenting! For an indicator they used a common table glass. As they asked questions this glass would move from letter to letter accurately spelling out their answers. One girl asked about her grandmother. It told her the grandmother would die a tragic death within two weeks. The grandmother was killed in a plane crash nine days later.

On one occasion, the glass refused to move. When asked why it refused to respond, the glass moved briskly and spelled out the word "unbelievers." Two students had come in who scoffed, mocked and doubted its power. When they exited from the room, however, it again worked freely.



The final involvement, however, came when they began to ask it questions about Christ and salvation. One question was worded in such a way that it brought deliberate ridicule against the board. With that the board became violent in its reactions. The student who asked the question was picked up by an invisible force, suspended in air for a moment then with terrific violence was thrown across the room against the wall! That ended the game, but the effects on the young people did not end quickly. One young lady was so oppressed by the Devil that she slashed her wrists in a suicide attempt. It was all just for fun! It was only experimentation!

Pastor, there may be persons you know, and possibly some you preach to who are far more involved in "occult" deception than you realize.

In the past two and one-half years several "occult" related situations have come under my observation. Without revealing any identities, I will attempt to generalize these situations as much as possible.

1. There was a very attractive 13-year-old neighbor girl, who for a few weeks attended our Sunday School. We were told she already had instruction in witchcraft and just three doors from our parsonage had attempted to have seances with others of the neighborhood children. She had once been our Sunday School girl! Only God can know what is down the road of her already ruined life.

2. In another situation, a person of mature years, from a holiness background confessed to having already paid large sums of money to a "necromancer" in an effort to communicate with the dead. Suffice it to say, everything possible was done to help that person back to God, but they turned and within a matter of several weeks was attending a Satanist's meeting.

3. Another situation, the details of which I dare not give, came to our attention. Suffice it to say, this person rather innocently began to play with the "occult" arts. Then, they became quite deeply involved. Finally, after much prayer and a severe spiritual struggle they got back to God. This person has, however, had a great battle and Satan's obvious purpose is to again bring a snare upon them.

Only God knows what holiness-oriented people might get into if they reject light. It used to be that people might turn from our churches and possibly embrace any one of the cults or the erroneous beliefs which in this Institute have been discussed, but today there is danger that they may turn to the "occult" which is the religion or the "cult" of the Devil.

You and I, therefore, as faithful pastors, ought to warn our people (young people especially) concerning the "occult" -directed games, gimmicks and books which are so prevalent today. They include astrology books, fortune telling by tarot cards, tea leaves, the Ouija board, palmistry, the crystal ball, the divining rod, the pendulum, telepathy, hypnosis, charms, spells, amulets, transcendental meditation and E.S.P. Any one of these is wrong. If for no other reason, they constitute an attempt to by-pass God's power and authority to either reveal or veil the unknown.

What then, can we do to offset the revival of "occultism" in our areas?

1. Preach the Word! Preach it with power! Preach it with authority! Preach it with unction and the Divine anointing! Proclaim a God who is relevant. Proclaim a God who does care and is presently able to meet man's every need. Tell of His love, but also tell of His wrath. Tell of hell and the eternal torment which awaits the sinner. Don't fear to describe the Devil and the kingdom of evil spirits and demon powers that are round about us.

2. Don't be guilty of expanding the spiritual vacuum in your church -- which drives people to other "spirited" sources of emotion. Welcome the Holy Spirit, both in your life and in your church. People are still looking for that which is vibrant with life, spiritual in blessing and effervescent with the glory of God.

3. Keep a wall of prayer about your people.

4. Unblushingly be faithful to warn and forewarn your people about the "occult" or any other prevalent evil. Remember, you, under God, are appointed as a "Watchman" on the walls of your Zion! Therefore, be faithful to your task!

In summary, let me say: We're not to strive to foreknow, to foretell, or to foresee. We are not to crave supernatural or superhuman power. Yea, and we have no right to seek communication either with the dead or the spirit world.

Our future is to be kept in God's hand. Our power is righteous, Divinely endued by the Holy Spirit, and directed toward the pulling down of (evil) strongholds. Our communication is to God -- through Jesus Christ our Great High Priest. Our revelations are found in the Word -- illuminated to us by the Holy Spirit. Our fortune is great because we are joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Our concern is not what Zodiac sign we were born under, but whether we are presently under the covering of the blood. Yea, and our faith is not in the stars, but in the God Who made the stars!

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THE END