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A VESSEL UNTO HONOR
Seven Sermons and a Life Sketch

Orval J. Nease,
Late General Superintendent
Church Of The Nazarene

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A PERSONAL PORTRAIT OF MY FATHER

By Orval J. Nease, Jr.

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INTRODUCTION

Immortality has two aspects. They are suggested in these familiar words, "They... rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13). The late General Superintendent Orval J. Nease has entered into his well-earned rest. His labors were abundant. His heart was faithful. His spirit was victorious. He rests now from his loved employ.

The second phase of immortality is in the undying influence of a good life. There are many now living the Christian life who will rise up in the judgment to call Dr. Nease blessed. He lives yet in the influence that lingers with everlasting fragrance in the memory of thousands.

That his ministry of love and holiness may be continued this volume of his sermons has been conceived and dedicated. It will be another way to perpetuate his message. His family and friends have yielded to a popular call for this book. From his many manuscripts they have chosen these as the best in completed form. For their willingness to share these sacred treasures all who read will be grateful. They reverently build this literary monument to his cherished memory and fervently pray that by it he, being dead, shall yet speak.

Ministers will find here sermons of excellent style and homiletical form. Laymen will find eternal truth interestingly presented and spiritually profitable. It is my prayer and faith that this book will be widely circulated and carefully read.

G. B. Williamson

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APPRECIATION

I am deeply grateful to my sons, Orval and Bob, and my husband's sister, Mrs. Joseph Herrell, for their many hours spent in preparation of this manuscript.

Also I appreciate the contributions of General Superintendent Dr. G. B. Williamson, Dr. R. V. Delong, and the kindnesses of our Nazarene Publishing House friends, as well as the personal interest invested by all my loved ones.

The sermons that we have chosen were preached in various settings. One was preached at the General Assembly of 1940, others at preachers' conventions and revival campaigns.

Only a few changes have been made in transposition to the written page. If you knew my husband, you will be able to recall the earnestness with which he delivered every message.

May the precious Holy Spirit, who inspired these messages, deliver them to your heart for your upbuilding and to the glory of God.

Mrs. Katherine Nease

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PREFACE

In sharing these sermons of Dr. Orval J. Nease we have endeavored to preserve the interpretations that were distinctively his. It is impossible, however, adequately to transfer the passion and earnestness that were characteristic of his manner of presentation.

The overflow of every message he preached was a keenness of the sense of God right then and there that demanded a personal and vital response in the hearts and minds of the hearers.

There was a dynamic in his preaching voice and gestures that surrounded and invested his words with extraordinary appeal. His loving, vibrant personality and richness of character were completely interwoven into a message of God-inspired truth.

He loved to preach. His developments of truth were thoroughly logical and carefully outlined. His sermons were primarily Spirit-anointed expositions of the Holy Scriptures. His illustrations were pungent with personal application and homely resourcefulness. There was ever present a deep-souled sense of humor that revealed the optimism and friendliness of his personality.

There was an old-fashioned, heaven-sent atmosphere about his preaching that revealed what those closest to him already knew, that his study preparation had been saturated in tears of genuine concern for the souls of those to whom he was ministering. He loved people and loved to share their problems.

He was primarily a holiness preacher. To him the message of the Church was not "and holiness." It was "holiness and." His messages were always permeated with an urgent challenge to wholehearted consecration on the part of believers to the whole will of God, that they might be wholly sanctified.

Holiness was the dynamic of his life. It was a loving, personal relationship between a holy man and a holy God. It was a cleansed, whole-souled relationship between man and God made possible by Jesus Christ through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

He was a holy man. I was privileged to walk close to him through many of the varied experiences of his life. I never heard him say an unkind word about any man or woman through all the years of my life. His life, both private and public, was above reproach.

I thank God that Orval J. Nease was my father.

Orval J. Nease, Jr.

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1

A VESSEL UNTO HONOR

"He shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use" (II Tim. 2: 21).

Have you ever stopped to consider what an apparently disorganized, hodge-podge, helter-skelter universe is this world in which we live? It is no wonder that men are asking, "Where is God? Where is God?" It is a world of blistering summer sun, freezing blasts of winter; disease, suffering, and death; plagues and famine; pestilence; trouble in the world, trouble in the nation, trouble in society, trouble in labor; discontent among educators; unrest, upheaval, sin, and hell. What's wrong with the world? Where is God? No wonder men have come back from the battlefields of the world (lads reared to love who have been taught to kill), no wonder that when they come back home and find that same unrest in America, they are asking, "Where is God?"

A number of years ago I met my youngest brother in Chicago. He at that time was on the road, a traveling salesman working out of Paris, Illinois. We had not been together for months. We decided that a friendly place in which to enjoy each other's fellowship at leisure might be the Field Museum situated along the lake front of Lake Michigan, Chicago. In that museum there has been brought together one of the greatest collections of the things that depict the history, science, and art of all the world. We had spent most of the day going about from room to room, from gallery to gallery. Finally, we became separated, temporarily, and I found myself in a room upon the wall of which was hung just one painting, that masterpiece known to every high school student, that masterpiece of Gainsborough, "Blue Boy." There a lad is standing, the subdued shades of blue in the background blending with the tints of blue in his garments, forming a symphony in blue. That masterpiece has become famous all over the world.

I found a bench, perhaps twenty feet from the canvas, and seated myself. For there one could catch the meaning and the import that the artist had in mind when he brushed that great picture. I was completely absorbed. My brother, coming from another part of the museum, rushed into the room, caught the direction of my gaze, and, going up as close to the canvas as the guard rail would permit, he looked it over from the buckle on the lad's shoes to the curl of his hair. Looking it over quickly, hurriedly, he turned to me in a rather disgusted tone of voice and said: "O. J., what do you see about that painting that should take your thought? I've heard a lot about Gainsborough's 'Blue Boy,' and," he said, "I'm disappointed. As far as I'm concerned that's just one daub of blue paint on top of another." I'm not sure that the artist would have appreciated his analysis. I motioned

for him to come over and sit by my side, which he did reluctantly. He had been seated by me but a few moments until he too was completely absorbed in the beauty, in the meaning, in the glory of the artistry in the mind of Gainsborough, the artist. What was it? He had gained a right perspective. He had gained a right vantage point. He caught not simply the import of a small portion of the canvas, but he caught the blended meaning of the whole, and the masterpiece of beauty unfolded to him.

The trouble is that too many of us are so hurried, living so close to life, so preoccupied, so absorbed in other interests, that we have never taken time, we have never been still long enough. We have never come close enough to catch the viewpoint of God and the perspective of the divine plan that is unfolding in this universe of ours. For, my friends, this is still God's world. This is still God's world. And in spite of the apparent hodgepodge, in spite of the hatreds and turmoils and unrest everywhere, if we will step off a bit and get God's viewpoint--get close enough to God to catch His viewpoint, we will find out that God is a God of purpose and that this world is a world of law, design, and order. God is still on the throne! God is back of His world and in the tomorrows, if we will hold steady, He will bring out the beauty and glory and meaning of His plan for His world. God will complete His plan. Everything with which God has to do is according to plan, order, purpose, and design.

A number of years ago when I was connected with Pasadena College, I attended the District Assembly of the Southern California District. Rev. J. T. Little, who is now in heaven, was at that time the district superintendent. As was often the case in Southern California, on the day following the close of the assembly, ministers made up groups to go out for a day of relaxation and outing. This time Mr. Little had planned a party that should go to the top of Mount Wilson; for Pasadena is just at the foot of the great mountain. In fact, my home looks up into the very crown of Mount Wilson. Brother Little said, "We're going to visit the observatories on top of Mount Wilson. As you know, in the observatories on top of Mount Wilson are located some of the largest lenses in the world."

We drove our cars the nine miles to the top of Mount Wilson. There a guide was assigned us, an astronomer in his own right, a very kindly man Who took us from one great instrument to another, explaining the devices and apparatus. Finally, as a sort of climax for our day of study and interest, he took us into what is known as the Astronomical Museum, a building in which they have devised the replicas in miniature of the heavens above. By the aid of those great lenses they have brought the heavens near and photographed Saturn with its rings, Mars, and Venus, sections of the moon, sections of the Milky Way. These photographs are hung upon the walls of that museum with their accompanying explanation.

Our kindly guide took us about, pointing out the wonders of the universe to us. Then he said: "Gentlemen, this universe of ours is according to pattern. It is according to design and order. This is a predictable universe; so orderly that scientists are able to predict forty, sixty, seventy, even one hundred years in advance the movements of the heavenly bodies. They can tell you according to the split fraction of a second when a certain star will cross a given meridian. For," said he, "this is a universe of order, a universe of plan, program, and design. It is a predictable universe."

Dear Brother Little, one of those old-fashioned Christians, one of those Christians who upon occasion would shout--do you remember when holiness people used to shout? I can remember when Baptists would shout. I can remember when Methodists would shout. I can remember. Brother Little was that kind of Christian. Knowing him as I did, I could tell he was getting about all the spiritual steam on board that his boiler could contain without some channel of relief. I turned to our kindly guide and said, "Friend, this is a wonderful universe; a universe of law and order, design and pattern, a predictable universe. My friend, in such a universe as this, does it not occur to you that back of all this there must be a God some place? Back of all this order, precision, law, and pattern must there not be a God some place?" Our guide dropped his head for a moment, thoughtfully, for he knew he was talking to a group of ministers. Finally, lifting his head, looking us in the face, he said, "Gentlemen, back of all of this universe of law and order and pattern, back of it all, there must be Supreme Intelligence some place; there must be Supreme Intelligence." My friend, J. T. Little, raised his hand over his head and shouted aloud so all could hear. "Yes," he said, "and that Supreme Intelligence is my Heavenly Father."

This is a universe of order. God is still on the throne. God still has His hands upon the helm of the universe. Go yonder to the side of the road in summertime and pick from the most delicate flower a fragile petal. Bring that petal, high school student, bring that petal to the botanical laboratory. Have your professor put that tiny petal on the microtome--that instrument that cuts the delicate tissues in cross section. Prepare it for a slide and slip that slide under the microscope. If you never yet have adjusted your eye to the lens of a microscope and looked into the heart of a cross section of a blade of grass, or even a cross section of the commonest weed that grows by the roadside, you have a new world to discover, a world that is just as wonderful as the one that Christopher Columbus is supposed to have discovered. You will discover in every rock and clod and stalk by the roadside that there is response to order, law, precision, and plan.

This is God's universe. God sits in the shadows. His hand is at the helm of destiny. God is still on the throne! Everything with which God has to do, everything in this universe, God has planned and programmed; God is the great Architect! No parent ever planned the future of his child any more thoughtfully or with any more yearning of heart than God has planned this universe. From the grain of sand blown by the breeze to the rolling planets in the abyss of space; from the glowworm flashing in the evening shadows along the highway to the rolling star that plunges itself through its God-ordained orbit, this universe--God's universe--is according to plan!

And amid all of this, God has not forgotten the climaxing creature of His creation. God has a plan for every man's and for every woman's life. He has a plan for you. The trouble with us is this: we are so preoccupied, we are so hurried, so rushed, and so driven that we have never stopped long enough to take God's plan into account and to seek God's will for our lives. Too many men and women have gotten into difficulties, suffered heartbreak and despair, as their dreams and air castles fell shattered at their feet. They have wrung their hands, shed tears, and cried, "Oh, why did God have to let me get into this? Why did God have to let me experience all this heartbreak and sorrow?" Don't lay that at the door of God Almighty, unless you first consulted Him before laying the foundation of your life plan. Before you make your choices, take God into account. God has a plan for us all. Not only for stars and daisies, but for men, God has a plan.

But you know, there is a difference between stars and daisies and men. There is a difference -- this difference: Stars have neither will nor choice. Daisies have neither power of choice nor manner of expression. Having no choice, stars and daisies coming from the finger tips of Deity, brought into being by the spoken word of divine power, find their place in God's universe and carry out the will of God according to the law and plan of God. But man has both a will and a voice.

Have you ever stopped to think of it? God did a very hazardous thing when He wrapped within human personality the power of choice. Think of it, that speck on the surface of the universe called a man, a woman, who has the power of choice wrapped up within him, can look up into the face of God Almighty and question His wisdom, call into question God's plan for his life, and lift his will and voice and refuse God's plan. For every time God wills, and every time God permits a child to come into being with the power of choice wrapped up within that personality, God Almighty sets a self-imposed limitation upon His own infiniteness. Not even God in heaven will violate your power of choice. A man can take the way of sin if he wants to take it, in spite of prayers, in spite of the admonition of godly loved ones, in spite of the ministry of truth, in spite of the faithfulness of the Holy Ghost, in spite of providential circumstances. An individual may set his jaw and clench his fist and take his own way, turn his back upon God and go the way of sin and hell, if he wants to. And God Almighty will not stop you in your downward rush if you choose against Him.

When I was pastor in an Eastern city, a certain man by the name of Cook attended my services, particularly during revivals. At moments when the Spirit of God would come and play across the audience, his heart would be moved as a field of grain is moved by the gentle breezes. I have gone to him and laid my hand on his shoulder and said, "Mr. Cook, God is dealing with you tonight. You ought to give your heart to God. You ought to be a Christian." He would throw back his head and laugh. "Mr. Nease, I'm not rejecting God, and I'm not accepting Him. I'm just passing. God can save me any time He wants to." That man played the fool; for by that very act of apparent indifference he was closing his heart to God.

A man may close his heart against every proposal of God Almighty, against every influence of the Church and the gospel, and go the downward road if he wishes. On the other hand, a fellow can go to heaven if he wishes. Uncle Bud Robinson believed in election. He said that there were three ballots cast over the disposition of Old Bud's soul. He said that the devil voted against him, but God Almighty came by and cast a ballot for him; then Old Bud looked the situation over, and cast the deciding ballot on the side of God, heaven, righteousness, and salvation. You and I hold the deciding ballot. We hold within our grasp this matter of the reins of our destiny. We can go to heaven if we want to go to heaven. There is no power on earth to keep us from going there if we want to. We can take the way of righteousness and salvation and holiness if we will.

I remember hearing my father tell about one occasion after his conversion. While he was out on the farm one day God met him between the plow handles. Where did God meet you? He'll meet you some place. It may be in the kitchen, the office, or the schoolroom; but remember, God is going to meet you some place. God met Father out in the field between plow handles and said, "Will Nease, I want you to preach My gospel." Father replied, "Why, Lord, You can't mean that." He said, 'Yes, Will Nease, I want you to preach My gospel." Father said, "But, God, I can't

preach. I haven't had enough education and I do not have any particular gift or ability so far as speaking is concerned. I can't preach." But God repeated, "I want you to preach. I want you to preach!"

Father said: "God, there must be a mistake somewhere. Go across the highway there to the home of our neighbor Brown. Put Your hand on Clyde Brown. He has an education, and he has speaking ability. Lay Your hand on him and call him to the ministry." God looked back at my father and said, "Will Nease, I have something for Clyde Brown to do, but I have the gospel ministry for you." My father reasoned as though God didn't know what is wrapped up within our bit of mud, as though He didn't know what is wrapped up within us before He lays His hand upon our lives!

God Almighty knows better the possibilities that are wrapped up in you for the will of God and the services of God than you know yourself. The Divine Architect knows what is in your life. A life yielded to the Divine Architect will blossom out into the full-orbed will and plan of God. There is no other plan that is so worthy of what we are as the plan of God for our lives--a plan that is made in keeping with our ability, a plan that is conceived in love. God will reveal it to us a step at a time. It is our business to walk in the light and be obedient, and it is God's business to unfold the pattern of life as the days of experience come and go.

Oh, the tragedy of lives that are spoiled in the making! On one occasion I was in East Liverpool, Ohio, where I visited what is claimed to be the largest pottery in the world. There they turned out dishes so rapidly that the process lost its interest to me. There was so much machinery, so much of the process was mechanized, that it had lost the touch that I had hoped to find. But I was reminded of Jeremiah, down at the house of the potter, there to learn a lesson to be brought to the people of Israel. As the potter at his wheel worked on that big, tough mass of clay revolving before him, his sensitive, skilled fingers molding the clay according to the design of his own thinking, his own will, there came a moment when he pulled his foot off the device that made the table revolve, withdrew his fingers from the clay, and with a look of disappointment upon his face said, "There's something about this clay that refuses to respond." There was something inherent, something that was implastic, something unyielding, something hidden within, that refused to respond to the potter's plan.

The lives of young men and young women are in the hands of the Divine Potter. How many times I have seen them! There are the influences of God's dealing, the prayers of praying mothers, the advice of Christian fathers, the influences of Christian Sunday schools, the ministry of faithful pastors, providential circumstances that are prompted and directed by the Divine Spirit. God is trying to form the pattern of His will in those lives, and yet something within personality dares to say, "I have a plan of my own. I have my own will that I want to work out." And men reject the will of God.

Very often around Christian centers, around churches, I see men and women who, as far as outward life is concerned, seem exemplary. They love the house of God and holiness. They are interested in the fellowship of the church, but they go only so far. They never carry the burden of prayer. You never see them getting actively into the work of the church. They never carry the burden of the Sunday school. They never have a glow upon their souls. They never have a testimony that rings with reality. They are seldom in prayer meeting or in Sunday night services.

They sit placidly through revival campaign after campaign under the prompting influences of the Holy Spirit. Their outward lives are exemplary, but they have no inward power, no blessing or glow, no sense of responsibility. If you could get them to talk, you would find out that down on the inside there is an unyieldedness, a something that refuses the plan of God.

I once visited a young man in the hospital who had married a young woman whom I had known for some time. He had just returned from the war and didn't realize how sick he was. He had had two or three operations on abscessed lungs. His wife had told me: "Mr. Nease, if you can do anything for Lawrence, I hope you will. Do whatever you can for him. He's to have another operation in Pittsburgh very shortly, and the doctors are afraid he will not survive it. There is but one chance, just one chance." I sat by the young man in the hospital talking to him about God and religion. His Bible was on the stand by the bed. He respected the Church; had no unclean habits. God had been good to him, had brought him back from the war, where he had seen months of terrible conflict in the South Pacific. I realized the seriousness of his situation perhaps more than he did. I said, "Lawrence, how about your relation with God?" He replied, "Some way I don't pray through. Some way I'm not like I ought to be. I hope you will pray for me."

I left him and went on my way down the corridor to visit another sick person. When I came back to Lawrence's bed, he said: "Come here, Mr. Nease. I think I'll tell you something. This is the last time you'll be in the city for a while. You may not return again. I want to tell you that there's just one reason why I don't get religion. There's something I don't want to give up!" There was a man facing death, facing eternity, who said, "There's one thing I can't give up, one thing I can't let go of." What was it? Something in the clay, something in the clay that wouldn't respond to the Potter's hand.

I went back to the church and preached that Sunday night, pouring my heart out as best I knew how. His little wife, Margaret, was in the audience. When I made the altar call she came forward. She had come from a Christian home. Her parents were supporters of one of the great camp meetings in the East, stalwart members of a local church. Margaret was reared under the sound of prayer and of preaching. She hadn't been near an altar for years. She had always attended church. I went over to where she was. She said, "I can't get through." "What is the matter, Margaret?" I asked. "I can't get through. I just can't." I said, "Margaret, God loves you. God is interested in you. Everything is in your favor." "But I can't make it," she replied. "Margaret," I said, "tell me the truth. Why is it?" She said, "There's something I can't give up. There's something I can't let go of." I sat down beside her. My heart was broken. I could talk to her as I could not talk to her husband in the hospital. "Margaret, you asked me to pray for Lawrence and talk to him. But when I talked to him he said that there was something he couldn't give up, something he couldn't let go of. And here tonight you tell me there's something you can't give up, something you can't let go of. In the name of God and heaven, what do you hope for when there is something you refuse to surrender to the will of God?"

My friends, there are among you men and women who deep down within your hearts harbor reasons why you don't have the glow you one time had; reasons why you don't have the blessing you once had; reasons why you don't get in the fountain of cleansing that your heart tells you that you ought to experience. There is always a reason. It may be a secret unbelief, secret

rebellion, secret withdrawal from the will of God. There is something within the heart that refuses to respond.

Not long ago a man came to me and said: "Back yonder God called me, laid His hand upon me for service, but I refused. Now I'm up in middle life! What shall I do? I can't do what God wanted me to do then. Is there any hope for me?" I was happy to tell him that there was hope for him. God is the God of a second chance. God will give you a second chance. There's no way back to the yesterday, neighbor, but God in mercy will take you from where you are. Remember the potter to whose home Jeremiah went? When the resistance and the rebellion, the implastic something, had been removed from the clay, we are told that the potter made it again, though it was another vessel. Oh, the mercy and the kindness of God! He will take what you have left to offer Him. If you will yield to Him, He will make you again, though you be another vessel.

When I was preaching in an Eastern city years ago, a man old enough to be my father, a minister of many years, was in the audience. When I had finished, he came to the platform and said, "I don't think I understood you." I said, "Didn't I make myself clear?" He replied, "Did I understand you to say that a man could approximate the full-orbed will of God if he would?" I said, "Yes, that's what I said." "Surely you don't mean that!" he said. "I don't believe it." "You don't?" I asked. He said: "No, I don't believe it. There are too many weaknesses, too many frailties, too much inability, too much opposition for anyone to carry out God's will to the full realization." I said: "If that's true, then God is unreasonable. God builds a pattern for my life; God maps out a will for my life that I can't approximate? No," I said, "I can't accept your statement. God is a reasonable God who knows all about handicaps, weaknesses, and frailties when He makes the plan for our lives." God knows all about the obstacles of life, neighbor. He knows all about them before He lays out the plan for your life. That plan is built upon the basis of what is wrapped up within you. You and I may, by the grace of God, approximate God's will in our lives.

An old gentleman by the name of Calhoun had called my father and myself to hold a camp meeting on his ranch. We got into his carriage and drove thirty miles over the prairies, just the wide-open spaces. When we got to his ranch, I was worried about the camp meeting. I asked, "Where is the grove? Where are the people? Where are the tents?" For I looked in every direction and not a building broke the sky line. He said, "Never mind, the people will come. There's a tent down in the corner of the ranch." That night at sundown the people came until it was filled.

One day I was talking to the old man, and he said: "Boy, back yonder while I belonged to the church, back yonder when I loved God, while I had religion, I became so ambitious to make a living, to get money, to pile up gain, that I forgot God, prayer meeting, and Sunday night services. It was easy to slip by my responsibilities. But," he said, "one day God laid me on my back, got my attention, and said, 'Calhoun, you're getting along very well, aren't you?' I said, 'Yes, Lord, I am. Wheat's bringing a good price. I have a good crop, a fine herd, and this year I'll pay off the mortgage and then next year I'll buy the adjoining ranch. I'm doing all right, Lord, if I can shake off this sickness and get back to my ranch.' And the Lord looked at me and said, 'But, Calhoun, have you figured up what it's costing?' I said, 'Yes, Lord. It's costing me so much per acre and so much per rod for fence. But, Lord, I can make it. I have a strong body. I have two boys and two girls. We'll make it all right.' But the Lord said, 'Have you figured what else it's costing you?' I said, 'Yes, Lord, it's costing me hard, long hours of labor, but we can make it.' But the Lord said, 'Have

you figured what else it's costing you?' And I looked up into the face of God as I lay upon that bed and said, 'Lord, what else is it costing me?'

"The Lord pointed His finger at me and said, 'Where's your love for the family altar that you one time had? Where's your love for the prayer meeting and the fellowship and association of God's people? Where's your love for the house of God? Where, where, is your interest in revivals? Where is your interest in the salvation of souls? Where is it?' God pointed His finger at me and said, 'Calhoun, this is going to cost you your soul.' "

My friend, that's too great a price to pay for anything. Some folk are selling their souls mighty cheap. Judas got a better bargain than some men and women, some young people whom I know.

"And God said, 'That isn't all it's costing you.' He said, 'You're instilling the same kind of thing in your boys and girls, so that they have lost their interest in the house of prayer. You are not only going to lose your own soul; you're going to lose their souls.' I said, 'O my God, I hadn't thought of that.' And God said, 'Calhoun, if you'll take My plan, My will, if you'll give your life to Me, if you'll serve Me, I'll save every boy and girl you have. I'll call them into gospel service. I'll let you reap eternal dividends, if you'll take My plan.' "

He called his good wife in and she knelt by the side of the bed and there, together, with tears running down their cheeks, they accepted God's plan. And the day that the old gentleman told me this story he said: "Boy, Mother went to heaven twenty years ago. I'm an old man now. The last thing she said before she slipped into the shadows was, 'Daddy, we've kept the contract together, but promise me you'll carry it on now. Promise me you'll fulfill the contract.' Boy, I promised her, and I have kept my contract. I have two boys in the ministry, one girl a missionary. The other girl is home taking care of me until I pass on, just waiting to prepare for gospel service. I have one boy unsaved, and this morning I was praying back of the corral and God told me He's going to save Charlie in this camp meeting."

The last night of that camp meeting I was singing the invitation song. Father had preached and was making the altar call. Charlie Calhoun hadn't been under the tent so far as I knew. But just as I came to the last refrain of the last song of invitation, out from the shadows came Charlie Calhoun, in his shirt sleeves, and bowed at the altar, and that night Charlie Calhoun was converted and called to preach. I met Charlie just a few months ago in a summer camp meeting in the Northwest, and he said, "I've been preaching the gospel now for fifteen years." He said, "When Father went home to heaven a few years ago, he gathered in the family and children and said, 'I've kept my contract and God has kept His contract.' " Hallelujah!

"A vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use." It pays to take God's plan. It may be revealed just a step at a time. It may be just unfolding a moment at a time. Some of us have chafed and fretted because we couldn't see the entire plan fulfilled, but God is merciful. He gives us just a step at a time. If we will walk in the light and keep pace with God, He will unfold His will and we will find recompense in service as well as recompense for service.

I made my choice. Blessed be God! I made my choice. Hallelujah! I made my choice! Some things I don't know; some things I can't determine; some things I can't understand. But one thing I do know, I'm in the center of the will of God! My life is yielded! How is it with you?

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"Command ye Me"

"Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel... Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me" (Isa. 45:11).

God is still at work in the world. There have been those who conceived of God as One who came to this part of the universe in the dim, dawning yesterdays and spoke this world into being as we know it, set it into operation according to set or fixed law, and then kissed the world a fond farewell and went off to a far-distant part of the universe, there to sit upon a regal throne of splendor, little interested in and little concerned about the immediate affairs of our world. That conception of God which has been held by many, and which too often influences the thought of men today, has been known as the concept of the absentee God.

At the opposite end of consideration there is another conception of God. Some have thought of God so present that He is what He does. That is, God is in every clod and bush and stone and flower and tree. God is what He does. And the doing of God exhausts the being of God until there is no personal God independent of things as we know them in the universe. That conception is influencing, in hidden, subtle fashion, many modern cults and isms today. Mary Baker Eddyism is one of them. Theosophy is another. But neither of these conceptions is the New Testament nor the Christian conception of God.

The idea of a God who came and set the world into being according to certain fixed laws and then went away not to be interested any more, the conception of a God who is a part of all the things that we see and handle---neither of these constitutes the Christian conception of God, the Bible conception of God. The Bible conception of God, the Christian conception of God, is that while God is separate from what He does yet God is still in the world! God is still in the midst of His universe. God is still working out His will and plan and program for men. What is this work of God? What is it that God is so interested in accomplishing? What is the present work of God?

One may go out on a beautiful night and watch the heavens above and see the starlit dome and notice the queen of night as she glides across the heavens in queenly splendor, and say, "This is what God is doing--God, the Creator." One may stand upon a prominence and overlook beautiful valleys, watch hills as they press their lips against the cheek of the skies, notice carpeted valleys and singing birds and blossoming flowers and flowing streams, and say, "This is the work of God." This is the God of creation. You may stand upon seashores and watch the billowing waters as they creep about in the heart of the deep and lay their burdens upon the sandy shore line by the side, then go back to the ocean's heart to join their fellows. You may watch the crests of the waves and say, "This is the work of God, the God of creation." And certainly this physical universe is the work of God. But it is not the climaxing work of God.

Let me ask you, What is the meaning, what is the worth, what is the value, what is the purpose of the physical universe about us independent of man; of human, God-created personality placed in the very center of it? There is no meaning nor glory; there is no value in a starlit sky unless there is a human being to enjoy it. There is no value nor beauty nor glory in the carpeted valleys and towering mountains and blossoming flowers and rolling oceans independent of a personality to enjoy them. God put man right in the midst of this created universe and said: "There it is. I made it for you. It's yours. Enjoy it. It finds its meaning and its end and its value and its glory in your happiness." That is to say, man is the climaxing achievement of the handiwork of God; and this physical universe finds its meaning, end, glory, and fulfillment in our happiness and our well-being. It is ours, Enjoy it.

But just as this physical universe must go beyond itself to find its end and meaning and glory, so man must go beyond himself to find his purpose and glory and meaning and value. He must go beyond himself and find his glory in the purposes of fellowship, in the purposes of service, in the purposes of redemption, the redemption of God Almighty. It is in God that we are to find our meaning. It is in the will of God that we are to find our happiness. It is in the purpose and plan of God that we are to find our eternal meaning fulfilled. It is in God. That is why no man lives unto himself. That isn't real living. You've got to go beyond yourself and rediscover yourself in God.

Suppose I were to come to you tonight, building contractor, and say, "My friend, I am very interested in this building. I am very interested in this edifice that you are constructing." You say, "That's very fine, but we are just getting started, just getting the scaffolding put up." "Say, you're a wonderful, skillful builder. It's marvelous how you have chosen the uprights and braces." "Mr. Nease, I'm glad you appreciate it, but come back later and you'll see the real building."

I come back a few weeks later, and I stand off and admire the continuance of the scaffolding, and I say to the contractor, "You have done marvelously. These sturdy uprights, the wonderful bracing, and the convenient runways--you have done a remarkable piece of work. Why, you may well go down in history as a great scaffold builder."

After I have repeated that a few times, you will look me over and say: "Nease, what's the matter with you? Don't you know that this scaffolding is but temporary? One of these days I'm going to tear down this scaffolding, take down all these uprights, take away all these braces and the runways. This scaffolding is temporary, but the thing I'm interested in and what you ought to be interested in and the thing I want posterity to remember me for is this central building of beauty and convenience that I trust will stand to bless generations after I am gone."

My friend, as beautiful and as wonderful as this physical universe is, it is just the scaffolding! One of these days, we are told, the heavens shall roll together like a scroll and the very earth beneath us shall be consumed with fire. The scaffolding will be done away. But human personality, the central edifice of the plan and scheme and program of God, shall live on and on some place in God's eternity, there to live and love and serve and fellowship Deity forever. Oh, get your chin up. Bless your heart, get your chin up. You and I may be kin to the earthworm as far as flesh is concerned; but God has done something for us, has put something within us that He

never put in the earthworm. God put something within us that may fellowship and associate and companion with Him and His eternal purposes both here and hereafter. One of these days we will lay aside this fleshly temple that belongs to our kinsfolk, the earthworms. We will give it back to the worms, and the real man on the inside will slip his feet through the shadows called death and plant them upon the shores of God's eternity, there to live and love and serve and fellowship. "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

The eternal purposes of God are wrapped up in human personality. God did not die simply to redeem a physical universe that had been touched by the curse of sin, hut God sent His Son to die for the redemption of the personalities of men and women and the eternal possibilities wrapped up within them. So redemption, the building of Godlike men and women, the building of Christian character, is what God is interested in. But, my friend, in the fulfillment of God's plan and this matter of building Christian character in redeemed men that have been touched and blighted by the curse of sin, God proposes to save men through men that are already saved.

God proposes to save men through men that are already saved. God proposes to revive a world through a Church that is already revived. God might have done it some other way. I'll not argue about that. But God proposes to save your neighbor through you who are already saved. God proposes to save the members of that Sunday-school class of yours through that teacher that is already saved. The fact of the matter is, if I am able accurately to divine the plan and economy of God, it is just as important that you and I as Christian men and women should be true to the plan of God in our sphere as it was that Jesus Christ should have been true to the plan of God in His sphere.

I did not say that redeemed men could take the place of the God-Man. For it was only the God-Man that could provide redemption for a lost world. But, my friend, though Christ provides redemption, it is our responsibility as saved and Spirit-touched men and women, it is ours to become the last link in the chain of human redemption. We are to be the contact through which God would operate to bring the provisions of redemption to bear upon a fallen race. How important it is, therefore, that we should be true to God! Let me say it again: It is God the Father's business to justify. It is God the Son's business to provide redemption. It is God the Holy Spirit's business to act as the administrating Head in this generation and to bring all the provisions of Christ and the will of the Father. But it is the Church's business, individually and collectively, to be God's saving agency.

Wait a minute, you say, that's a pretty strong statement. Do you have any scripture that might indicate the background of what you are saying? All right, notice the last verse of the last chapter of James. Notice what James says. James is not addressing members of the Godhead. James is not addressing angels. James is not addressing the saints in heaven. James is addressing the Church. Notice what he says: "Let him know" that means the pastor, that means the Sunday-school superintendent, that means the evangelist, that means every man and woman that professes God--"Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." This is addressed to the Christian. This is addressed to the Church. We are to be God's converting agency. That word convert comes from a Latin word *converto*, which means to turn about.

As a boy I used to go down to the roundhouse and watch them put the engine on the turntable and turn it about. In those days in a little branch of the Michigan Central road that ran up to our home town, it was the event of the daytime to see them run that engine on that turntable. The men got out of the cab and hand-manipulated that turntable and thereby reversed the direction in which that engine was headed. We boys were always mystified by it. My friend, that's what God wants us to be. God wants that you and I should be His convert, his converting agency. That is to say, we are to get souls upon our hearts--young men and young women, unsaved husbands and wives, neighbors and friends--get them upon our hearts. That is what we mean by a burden, soul concern, travail, intercessory prayer, getting men and women upon our hearts, accepting responsibility for their salvation by our tears, testimony, prayers, admonition, Christian influence. Turn them about-face. Start them away from hell toward God and toward heaven. Bring them in contact, bring them in relationship to the forgiving power of the grace of Jesus Christ. It is the Church that is to be the converting agency. God help us!

A young man said to me: "I have a certain individual on my heart. I'm going to do my best to get him to church, to bring him under the sound of the gospel. God has laid him upon my heart." What is it? That young man is becoming God's convert; he is becoming God's turntable, God's converting agency to win that individual to Jesus Christ.

The way to have a revival is not necessarily to call an evangelist. The way to have a revival is not necessarily to plan special singing. The way to have a revival is not simply to put out publicity and advertising matter. The way to have a revival that will justify the singing, that will justify the calling of an evangelist, is to get men and women with a burden of concern, with tears for a lost world, with a sense of responsibility for those that are about them, through the medium of prayer and faith and influence to lead other men and women to Jesus Christ.

How long has it been since you led someone to Jesus Christ? Here is one reason why every Christian ought to line up actively and vitally with some church of his choice. I don't believe in floating Christians. A floater doesn't get much done. I have had a feeling that this floating Christian business was a sort of escape from responsibility. Some Christians have moved to town and have become church visitors and sermon tasters, going about like butterflies, from flower to flower, very pretty but never making any honey. What God wants us to do as Christians is to get in and accept responsibility, get loaded up with a burden, get someone on our hearts and become concerned for a lost world.

Have you ever attempted this matter of winning others and failed? Of course you have and so have I. Do you know what our difficulty is too many times? We have tried on the basis of gift and ability and method and order of service. We've tried to manipulate independently--not willfully but nevertheless truly--independently of the operation of the Holy Spirit. There are a lot of things I don't know, but there is one thing I do know that we need all over the country. We need an opening of the channels that will bring a precipitation of God and the presence of God and the power of God upon us as individuals and upon us as groups until God can work through us to reach a broken, sin-cursed, half-damned world that is all about us. But we've got to be well blessed ourselves before we can hope to do much in blessing others. We've got to be well blessed ourselves.

You notice what Isaiah says in this, passage of our choosing tonight? Isaiah says, "Command ye me." He is saying it as the mouthpiece of Jehovah. Literally and actually, God says, "Command ye me." The first time I read that passage I said, "That can't be true. The idea of the human, limited, finite, commanding the Infinite, the Omnipotent, must be a mistranslation. I'll look up the authorities." And I looked them up, and to my amazement found out that the inspired Word actually says, expressing the will and challenge of God, "Command ye me." How are we to command God? We, the finite, the limited, the human, how are we to command God? Are we to command God as an officer would command troops at his disposal? No, that's too arbitrary. Are we to command God as an employer would command an employee? Oh, no, not like that. Are we to command God as a parent would command children? No, not like that. How are we to command God?

Back in my third-grade reader there was a story based upon history. It was about a little boy who was a dreamer. They said he never would amount to much. He just lay before the fireplace all day long and dreamed his dreams as the smoke curled away from the wood and went up the chimney. The neighbors sympathized with the parents because the boy would never amount to anything. He was just a dreamer. But one day the lad was lying there before the fireplace dreaming his dreams, and Mother brought in the old iron teakettle and put it on the end of the crane and swung the crane with its teakettle right over the hottest place of the fire. That little boy kept on dreaming. It wasn't long until, according to his imagination, a giant moved on the inside of that iron teakettle. That giant began to adjust his shoulders to the heavy lid of the teakettle and he lifted up the teakettle lid and "pool!" Out came what we call steam. The giant was challenging the lad. The lid would settle back in place and after a while that giant, so strong on the inside, would adjust his shoulder to the lid and lift it again and "pool!" The giant called steam was getting the attention of the dreamer.

Finally that little fellow awoke to the fact that there was a power generated in that teakettle by the right relationship of heat and water; and if he could just learn the law that governed the operation of that energy, if he could just learn the law, he could make it do something for him that he couldn't do for himself, and there was born one of the first crude steam engines. Today those great engines, hooked onto a hundred loaded boxcars, carry their load of freight across the country forty, fifty, sixty miles per hour, because men have learned the laws that govern the generation and operation of the energy called steam. By obeying those laws they have brought that power to do their bidding. That is what Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Edison have done regarding electricity, That is what men have done with water power. That is what men have done with the very wind and atmosphere about us. We have harnessed the latent energies of nature, because we have learned the laws that govern their operation and, obeying those laws, have made them to perform our bidding.

O Christian, praying men and women, how are we to command God? We are to command God by learning the laws that govern divine operation. If we will learn those laws and obey them, God is just as sure to get to the subject and object of our prayer as He is to remain God. For it is still true that "if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." We all believe that, don't we? All right. How about the next one? "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." "If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth

us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

"In the face of a generation that is forgetting God, in the face of a period in church history when even the Church has forgotten its day of power, God still lives to be operative through the lives of faithful men and women. If we will but open the channels of faith and prayer and intercession, God will get to us. God is still doing business at the old stand. Don't say it can't be done until first of all we have obeyed the law of God and brought ourselves into operation with the divine will. It is God's will to answer prayer, It is God's will to get to the hearts of men.

When I was a boy we lived on a farm outside of Nashville, Michigan. I used to like to go into town on a load of grain. That was back in the days before they sacked the grain. It was dumped in great wagon beds and hauled to the mill. It was a lot of fun to dig a fellow's bare toes down into the warm wheat. I had my ears boxed a good many times for kicking wheat over the sideboards. I used to like to go into the mill. There was something about that mill and the miller that had fascination for me. The dust of meal, the dust of flour, had settled on the miller's hat and in his beard and on his clothing. There was something about the hum and grind of the mill that indicated power, and I knew where the power came from. It came from the Thorn Apple River. Did you ever hear of the Thorn Apple River? Well, where have you been all your life? The Thorn Apple River! It's a strange thing, but I looked it up in our geography, and there was something the matter with the man who wrote our geography, because he had left it out. They put in that creek called the Mississippi and the little stream known as the Amazon, and that one called the Nile, but they left out the mighty Thorn Apple.

One day I crossed the bridge and came to see our miller, and something apparently had happened to our mill. The thing had settled down to a sort of lazy, monotonous whine, a sort of grind that reminds me of some professors of holiness that have been in the way a long while. They usually go to church on Sunday morning, perhaps Sunday night if the weather is fair, but seldom get out to prayer meeting, Oh, they believe in holiness. They believe we ought to have revivals. They think certainly the pastor ought to have revivals. Certainly. He ought to get an evangelist and have revivals. But of course you can't expect them to carry the burdens like they once did. They're kind of settled in the way, retired. A lot of folk are. Just the humdrum and grind. Haven't shed a tear or carried a burden for a lost world in five or ten years--just humdrum Christians.

I approached the miller and said, "What is the matter with your old mill?" "Not a thing in the world." "But there is. Look at it those wheels are so lazy they hardly turn over, and the belt doesn't have the pull that it usually does. And very little meal is coming out of the spout. What is the matter?"

He said, "Oh, the power is down." I said: "The power is down? You are mistaken. I just came across the Thorn Apple River bridge, and there is as much water in the old Thorn Apple River as there ever was." He said, "Yes, plenty of water in the river, but the intake is stopped up." I said, "The intake?" He said: "Yes. Water isn't getting down the runway to the mill wheel. The power is shut down. Come on, boy, I'll show you what I mean. I was just going out to clear away the debris."

We left the mill and walked to the head of the run. He took down a long-pronged rake from the limb of the tree and put that rake down over the grating through which the water came into the run to get to the wheel, and began to pull things out.

Do you know what I expected that miller to bring out? I thought he would bring out a saw-log and a great hunk of sod and a piece of a board or a bale of hay or a shock of corn--something like that. It was the mighty Thorn Apple River that had been stopped. But do you know what he brought out? Just a little handful! Just about a double handful of grasses, a few pieces of twigs and some leaves, some torn pieces of paper--not more than a double handful. Just an accumulation of little things --that's all. An accumulation of little things! No church splits, no open wrangle, no scandal. Just an accumulation of little things. And it had stopped the flow of water as effectively as though it had been a granite wall. An accumulation of little things!

He said, "Boy, run back and see how the mill is going now."

I ran back, and there were the throb of power and the singing of the wheels and the whir of the belts, and the grist was grinding at the usual speed. Just the removal of the accumulation of little things! Little things had shut down the power.

That is what has shut down the power in the lives of some good people I know. It isn't church splits, it isn't an open break, it isn't church scandal. That isn't it. It isn't the hypocrite. It is just an accumulation of a lot of apparently little things that have stopped the flow of divine grace and power and blessing and liberty. If we get the channels open., if we get the channels open., if we get the channels open, God is just as faithful as He ever was to get to the hearts of men and women.

I remember hearing George B. Kulp--a very fragrant, sacred memory! I remember hearing George sing out in startling, full, piercing terms, preaching to the church. He would say, "Quit lying to God, quit lying to God." And I wondered what he meant. He would stand a moment and look at us, his face aglow and his heart aflame, and cry out, "O professor of religion, Christian, quit lying to God!"

What he meant was, Quit telling God that you are wholly His when you have broken vows of better service, more faithfulness, and a closer walk with Him. Quit telling God that your life is committed, that you are an open channel for His Holy Spirit to flow through, when you have allowed an accumulation of little things to close your heart to the Spirit of God and have stopped the flow of divine power with self-made barriers.

O Christian friend, we must learn the laws of divine operation upon human hearts and obey those laws. We must open the channels of faith and obedience and intercession and service. Then God's hands will begin to move, then God's promises will begin to function, and then God's divine power will become operative in reaching the hearts of men and women.

"Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel . . . Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me."

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3

THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN CONSECRATION

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2).

In any attempt to give a full-orbed presentation of truth, one would need to employ both of these verses, for they rightfully belong together. But for the purpose of the moment I wish to suggest a theme and, having done so, to pull down one branch from the tree of truth and pluck fruit for a while. I invite you to think with me along the line of "Christian Consecration." In terms of this suggested theme, note that first verse again: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

It is not in the realm of religion alone that consecration is expected and demanded. In every legitimate walk and department of life's experience, consecration, devotement, is necessary if one would gain any reasonable degree of excellence. True it is that a Jack-of-all-trades may be a handy man to have around at times; but when there is an important piece of work to be done, we search for the man who has devoted himself in a very exclusive fashion to a limited field of endeavor. We want a man who knows consecration.

A few years ago as I sat in a classroom, I heard the professor give this bit of experience. He said that on the preceding night he, in company with a group of other instructors from the university, had been entertained in a very beautiful home on the outskirts of Boston. In that group was the head of the Department of Mathematics. They called him a genius. They called him a master mathematician. His name was synonymous with columns of figures, with work done at the end of a calculating lead pencil.

They were taken into the drawing room of that beautiful home, and gathered into conversational groups and soon were absorbed in one another's friendship and fellowship. At one end of that room was the console of a beautiful organ. Unnoticed and unannounced, this mathematician, the head of the Department of Mathematics at Boston University, slipped away from his group and found his way to the bench of the console of the organ. Seating himself he toyed with pedals and with keys and with stops, and having made adjustments he began to pour out the sentiment and language of his soul on that beautiful instrument. It was not long until this group had ceased their conversation. Soon another group was giving attention to the music and the musician, and ere long the entire party was simply absorbed in the unannounced symphony that was being offered by that man --the mathematician.

My professor, who was relating the story, said that, while he was fascinated by the music, the thought that aroused him most was that of a mathematician producing music. To him it seemed a paradox. Finally, not being able to control his curiosity, he walked quickly across the room and sat

down on the bench by the side of his colleague. He said: "Prof, I did not know there was anything but columns of figures in you. I did not know there was anything in you that had art and beauty and symphony in it. I did not know it. Tell me about it this paradox. Explain it to me--a mathematician producing music."

His friend said: "It is like this. When I was a young man I desired to gain proficiency both in the field of music and in the field of mathematics. I strove with every serious endeavor at my command to develop the musician and mathematician. But," he said, "there came a day when I met the fork in the road and I found that I had to choose between the mathematician and the musician. I could not gain the mastery in both fields. After careful deliberation, after some counsel and advice, music became the handmaiden of mathematics and mathematics became my first love. From that day to this I have given myself primarily, I have given myself outstandingly, I have given my best in mathematics, and have made music secondary. I had to consecrate myself in devotement to mathematics in order to gain excellency and proficiency."

Fundamentally, this is a picture of consecration. If we are going to know anything about excellency in life, we must give ourselves in consecration to one field, making everything else to serve this which we have chosen to be primary. Christian consecration is not a choice primarily between good and evil. Christian consecration is a matter of making God first and therefore everything else secondary.

We have wrapped up in our idea of Christian holiness, in our conception of Christian consecration, so much that is mystical, so much that is unreal. We have been wrong! Consecration is just as real, and is just as normal, and is just as vital, as any other choice or decision of life. It is simply a matter of making God and the will of God forever first in life!

See that young couple coming down the aisle, coming to the altar of the church. Here they come. He comes first, that young man, and stands before the altar, gazing expectantly at yonder door until the lady of his choice makes her way down the aisle. Now they stand together before the sacred altar. They have formed other friendships, but this has brought them to the moment where one friendship must be primary and every other friendship, though legitimate in itself, must be secondary. And that night before the representative of church and state with clasped hands and responding lips they cry out, "Till death do us part."

What is it? Does this mean that they are to maintain ill will toward other relationships? Does this mean that they are forever to forget and disregard other friendships? That is not what is intended. It is rather the consecration of a consummation of friendship until this friendship shall be outstanding and every other alignment of friendship shall be subservient to this which is made primary. This is consecration in love circles.

You remember that upon one occasion certain disciples of John came to the Master. They had been following John, his teaching, his ministry, and that gave them preparation for the teachings of Jesus. They came to the Master and said, "Master, we would be Your disciples." Jesus looked at them scrutinizingly. "You would be My disciples? If you would be My disciples," said the Master, "you must hate your brother, you must hate father and mother, and houses and

lands, and take up your cross and follow Me. Unless you are willing to do this you cannot be worthy of Me."

Hate father and mother, houses and lands? What instruction is this? Does Jesus mean that I am to have ill will toward that dear mother of mine? Is that what Jesus meant? Oh, no, that is not what Jesus meant. For in another place He tells us of our responsibility of love and devotion toward mothers. Jesus is using a comparative expression. He rather means that my love and commitment and devotion to God shall be so first and so primary that even love's responsibility to Mother--if there is to be a choice--as compared to my love and devotion to God, shall be so secondary that it will be as though it were hate. God proposes to be first! God proposes to be primary!

When Jesus said, "Hate houses and lands," did He mean that I am to have no regard for human values? Oh, no! That is not what Jesus meant. Elsewhere in the New Testament He indicates that we are to be the stewards of human values. Jesus rather meant that I and my life, you and your life, your all, is to be so committed to God that if there is to be a choice between human values, between time values and the will of God, there is just one choice to be made -- God is first! God and the will of God must forever be first! The secondary values, the secondary devotions, must serve that which is first and primary. All that I love, all that I control, all that I influence, must be brought under and made subservient to my love of and my devotion and commitment to God and the will of God. This is Christian consecration!

This matter of consecration, primarily, at the base, at the root, means separation. The root meaning of consecration is separation. It means separation from--making other matters that are in themselves legitimate, making them secondary; and it is separation to--that this separation may be primary. Involved in this consecration is, not a choice between good and bad, but a choice between the legitimates of life. It is a choice, if you please, between the better and the best. We must make Christ, we must make God--our devotion to God --primary! We must have a devotion, a consecration, that separates from all else and separates to Jesus Christ, His program and His will!

Note with me, in the second place, not only this meaning of consecration, but I would have you to note the importance of consecration. This is the fulcrum that Paul uses to bring the sense of insistency, the sense of oughtness, the urge, to bear upon Christian men and women --for that is the class of folk that he is addressing here--the sense of oughtness that he is bringing to bear upon believers that they shall give themselves in consecration, in devotion, to God. You know, my friend, there have been some words employed in the yesterdays that are being left out of the vocabulary of modern holiness preachers. Until we can find terms that are just as meaningful, we ought to be employing the terms that the fathers used along this line.

They used to talk about deathbed consecration. What did they mean by deathbed consecration? A man was returning in the early morning hours from the home of a friend who had died in the night, He met another neighbor upon the street and, after having passed greetings, he informed him that their mutual friend had died during the night. The first question asked was, "How much did he leave?" The reply, though commonplace, is revealing, "My friend left everything." That is what men do when they die. They relinquish; they yield; they leave everything. That is what men do who consecrate to God. They turn all they have and all they are, "sink or swim, live or die,

survive or perish," over to God with this abandon--"Let the tomorrows bring what they may; I am God's man, I am God's woman, from this moment on!" Hallelujah! It kind of gives you a comfortable, relaxed feeling of satisfaction when every tie has been severed and cut.

Consecration would become very real to us if we were facing eternity. The true Christian would resign himself wholly to the will of God. The language of the heart must be: "Into Thy hands, Lord, I commit my spirit. I relinquish my grasp upon everything of human possession." Those who get to heaven will have to be thus resigned to the will of God. Ought not adequate consecration for the last day of life be the degree of consecration needed for every day of life? There is safety only in constant and entire consecration to God!

I submit to you that this kind of commitment and abandonment does something for you. The idea of having to renew this kind of consecration every fortnight is erroneous. A man that comes to this kind of crisis, a man or woman that comes to this kind of decision, finds that it costs him all he is and all he has. It does something to him. Leave out the matter of religion. Leave out the matter of his having complied with the requirements for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Leave all that out. If a man comes to a decision like that in business life, or in social life, it does something to him psychologically so that he is a different individual from what he was before. But add to that fact that by that commitment, by that yieldedness, by that giving over of his all to God and to the will of God, he has reached a plane where he has met the requirements of divine favor. My friend, God gets to a man and woman like that! God gets to a yielded heart! God gets to a consecrated life!

Paul brings to bear a foundation for leverage, a strength of beseeching. He says, "I beseech you." Note that he brings to bear, first, all the element of human insistency, all the insistency at the command of a consecrated man, of a holy man. "I, Paul the apostle, who have preached the gospel, and who have suffered much for Jesus Christ, I beseech you."

But wait a minute, that is not all. He says, "More important than this, I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice." My friend, the ultimate appeal for this matter of consecration to God is not to be found in the Church. As much as I appreciate the Church, the ultimate reason for the preaching and teaching of holiness is not to be found in the Church. But the final appeal, if you please, for the demand of Christian consecration is to be found in the very mercy of God himself. "I beseech you ... by the mercies of God."

Now what are those mercies? I wish we had time to turn back to these opening chapters of the Roman letter. Paul enumerates many of them. But I want to call special attention to some that are referred to in the fifth chapter of the Roman letter. Now remember, Paul is saying, "I beseech you, not merely because of any man-made appeal, not because of any insistency that even good men or groups of good men would bring to bear. But," he says, "I make appeal to the highest issue, I make appeal to God, and upon the very fact of the mercies of God."

Here is another argument of the secondness of the second blessing. He is referring to men who have already been touched and reached by the mercies of God. And no man is a candidate for the second experience that comes as a result of Christian consecration who has not first been touched by the efficacy of the mercies of God. What are these mercies of God? This foundation is built upon what God is, what God has done, and how God has done it. And here they are. Note

these in the fifth chapter of the Roman letter. Note the first verse, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God." That is to say, you were one time restless; you were one time at variance with Deity; you were out of harmony with Deity. My friend, I can think of no word in the English language that better expresses the experience that comes to a pardoned man's heart when he is pardoned, and when he enjoys the saving grace of God, than the word peace. Blessed be God! The peace that comes to a troubled, stricken soul; the peace that comes to a soul that has been filled with turmoil and unrest; the peace that Jesus gives!

He says: "Therefore, being justified by faith, you have peace with God. If you have that peace, you have a mercy of God. And if you have a mercy from God, you owe it to God to give what you have and what you are in utter devotion of love and commitment to God and to the will of God without reservation."

But he goes on from there. He says, "We have access." Oh, I like that word. By Christ we have access into this grace wherein we stand. One who had more influence upon my life than any other one man that ever lived--my sainted father--used so often to say in public and private prayer and testimony (I have heard him say it again and again, with glowing cheek and moistened eye), "Thank God for an open heaven and a present Christ!" What did he mean? I think he meant exactly what Paul meant. He said: "A man who had been shut off from the heavens, shut off from the ear of God by the mercy of God, that man, by this initial experience of grace, now has an open heaven and a present Christ. He has access to a throne of grace." What Christian man does not rejoice at the fact of access to the ear of God and access to the heart of God! But Paul says: "Since you have an open heaven and a present Christ, since you have this experience that brings you access to a throne of grace, you ought to consecrate! You owe it to God; you owe it to the Church; you owe it to the world; you owe it to yourself. If you have peace, and if you have an open heaven and a present Christ, you owe it to consecrate your all in utter abandonment to the will of God!"

But the third thing: He says, "Wherein we . . . rejoice in hope." "You who were filled with sadness, you who were one time under the cloud of God's wrath, you who one time had the conscious weight of guilt upon you," he said, "now, while there may be trouble without, you have joy within. The very fact that you have joy, the very fact that you testify to having joy, the very fact that you have that divine enablement that gives you joy--you owe it to God, because of that joy, to consecrate all you have and all you are to God for time and for eternity."

Notice how he is building up the foundation stones over which he brings the leverage, the sense of oughtness-consecration for every Christian man and every Christian woman. In the third verse of the fifth chapter, he says, "We glory in tribulations also." Now he did not say that we glory because of tribulation. I know some folk who I thought were sort of Spartans. They sort of gloried in tribulation for tribulation's sake. I have never got to that place. You may have. I have not made it... as yet. But, my friend, he says: "It is not that you glory because of tribulation, but you have found in the pardoning grace of Jesus Christ that which gives you a glory in the midst of the harrowing circumstances of the tribulations of life." He says, "Because of the very fact that God has given you that inwardness of grace that gives you a glory of sustaining grace--not that which delivers you from temptation, not that which promises a separation from the harassments of battle and disappointment in life, but a divine enablement that makes you to glory while you are going through the battles and disappointments of life--you ought to consecrate."

The Apostle Paul suggests one more mercy of God when he refers to "the love of God . . . shed abroad in our hearts." What a wonderful mercy, what a matchless mercy--the love of God in the human heart! I remember hearing about a Christian farmer who built a big new barn, and on the roof of the barn he placed a weather vane, and on the weather vane in large letters he painted, "God is love." An unsaved, critical neighbor came over and said: "I told you all the while religion had gone to your head. That is what ails you. The idea of putting, 'God is love,' on your weather vane! Do you mean that God's love is as changeable as the weather?" "Oh," said the Christian man, "that is not what I mean at all. I rather mean that it doesn't make any difference which way the wind blows, God still is love!" Of course the winds of hell will blow. Of course the storm and stress of unfriendly worldliness will bring pressure to bear upon you. But, my friends, a man justified will find the love of God sufficient to hold him steady when the storm is on. If you have that, it is a mercy from God.

Do you remember back in those days when shouting was quite in order upon occasion?--and the occasion came often! Some knelt at the altar of prayer, and they got up from that hour and went out the next day and testified that the stars seemed to shine more beautifully. They said the birds sang more sweetly, and the flowers turned their faces more meaningfully toward them. And all of life seemed filled with richer meaning than before. But what was it? No change in the flowers; same flowers. No change in the stars; same stars. No change in the birds; the same songs. No change in life without. The change was wrought in the man! And that man, having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, had a new vision to look out on God's world; it was divine love shed abroad in his heart by faith.

Paul says that because you have divine love you ought to consecrate. Oh, what pressure he builds up here! He says you ought to consecrate, by the mercies of God; and the mercies of God find themselves in the peace that you have with God, the access, the open heaven, and the present Christ; the fact that you rejoice in hope and have glory in tribulation, and the love of God shed abroad in your heart. He says you owe it to God, you owe it to life, you owe it to the Church, you owe it to your home, you owe it to yourself, to give yourself in utter abandonment to God and His will.

Lastly, entire consecration does something to a fellow. God doesn't need my defense, but I get something out of coming to His defense. It just is not true when a man gets up and says, "I have done all and God hasn't got to me." God is at least as faithful as we are. God is at least that faithful! Just as sure as God remains God, He will get to the man who really consecrates!

Consecration does something to you. The very moment a man consecrates, God is on hand to deliver the parcel. As sure as you live, God is on hand. Listen to this suggestion. The word w-h-o-l-l-y and the word h-o-l-y are derived from the same meaning. That is to say, when a man is w-h-o-l-l-y consecrated to God, immediately God is on hand and sees to it that that experience of divine grace comes to him that makes him h-o-l-y. And the man who is h-o-l-y has already given himself over to God w-h-o-l-l-y!

I remember when my dear old mother received the blessing of entire sanctification. I can remember in the days of her prime what a power she was for God, what an altar worker she was.

My father asked grandfather for her hand. You know that was a long time ago. They scarcely ask anybody now. Grandfather put his hand on Father's shoulder, and said, "Will, you come from a good home, have a good name; you are industrious, have a good outlook on life; yes, yes, you may have Agnes. But I expect you to give her a good home and maintain her good name." And Father promised.

After they had been married a year or so, they bowed at an altar in a revival at an Evangelical church, and both of them were wonderfully converted. Well, Grandfather was a Christian man, so that was all right; that was fine. He was glad for that. "Fine, Will; fine, Agnes; that's fine."

But one day when Father was working about the farm, God called him to preach. Grandfather wasn't so sure about that. He said, "That isn't just the way I thought it would be." But Father, after many struggles, obeyed God, and he and Mother took up their pastorate.

But Father found a hunger in his heart for something more. He went away to a holiness camp meeting one day and heard a Wesleyan Methodist preach lust one sermon on holiness. He rushed up to that man--his name was E. T. Jennings. "Oh," he said, "Brother Jennings, my heart has been hungry. I know God has pardoned me. But I felt as I read the Book that there was something for me. And I think this sounds like what I want. Do you have any books to suggest on the subject?" Brother Jennings said, "Yes, Brother Nease, get a copy of *The Better Way*, by Beverly Carradine." Father picked off the bookstand the book suggested and took it back to his little parsonage on the shore of Lake Michigan.

It was a winter morning. Father was sitting by the kitchen stove reading while Mother was washing the morning dishes. He got down to about the middle of the third chapter. He said: "Mother, take your hands out of the dishwater and dry them. I can't go any farther. This is what my heart has longed for. I have to have the experience." And he got down on the kitchen floor and wrestled with God until the Holy Spirit came to him. But wait a minute. Then, you see, Father had on his hands an unsanctified wife, and Mother had on her hands a sanctified husband, and something had to be done about it. Grandfather said: "It was enough" for you to preach; that was enough. But now you have disgraced the family by going off with this holiness crowd. If I had known you were going off like this, you could never have had Agnes." But he had her, you see.

Father took Mother to a holiness camp meeting where C. E. Cornell was the evangelist and Mary Storey, a returned missionary, was the altar worker. Father had about everybody in the camp praying for his unsanctified wife. Along about the middle of the camp, Mother came to the altar, knelt right down at the altar. Brother Cornell knelt on one side of her, and Mary Storey on the other. Mother said it seemed to her that she lost sight of everything and everybody. It seemed to her that God set out right in front of her a casket of consecration. Sometimes I hesitate to tell this, lest someone will be looking for the same kind of phenomenon. But I am telling you how God dealt with Mother in keeping with her temperament and personality. And God will deal with you according to your temperament and personality.

Mother said life came by her in review. The first thing that came by was a five-year-old lad, the one that was then her baby boy, dimple-cheeked, blue-eyed, flaxen-headed, chubby-fisted.

He came by, and the Lord said, "Give him to Me." She said, "Why, Lord, he's mine. You've given him to me." What mother heart would not feel that way about it? The Lord said, "I have plans for him. Give him to Me." Mother said, "I have plans for him too." The Lord said, "If you want this experience, just turn him over to Me." Her heart was so hungry that by an act of will she picked up that boy and put him over on the altar of commitment and abandonment in the casket of consecration to the will of God. She said the next that came by was a fellow two years older--the fellow that had red hair once. And the Lord said, "I want him, too"--and I've always been glad. I've always been glad the Lord wanted that other fellow too. Mother said, "You have my baby"; but the Lord said, "I want him." She said, "But, Lord, I have plans for him"; and God said, "I have a plan for him too"--and I've always been glad. Finally, her heart was so hungry that by an act of will she just picked him up and laid him over on the altar of consecration. Do you know what I'm talking about? A yieldedness, an abandonment, a giving over for time and eternity.

Then she said the next that came by was that curly-headed holiness preacher-husband of hers that had disgraced the family name and the church of which they were a part at that time. They had to move every year because Father preached holiness. And the Lord said, "What are you going to do with him?" And Mother said, "Lord, I don't know; I haven't been able to do very much so far." The Lord said, "You had better turn him over to Me." And so by an act of will she picked him up and laid him over in commitment and yieldedness and surrender and abandonment to the will of God. The will of God! Hallelujah!

She went on down the list and finally she said, "Lord, I guess that's everything." The Lord said, "No, that isn't everything. What about yourself?" She said, "All right, Lord, You have everything. I've given You everything that I have and everything I hope to have; You may as well have me too." She said by an act of will she just climbed over on the altar. And when she had given herself, when she had abandoned her all to God and the will of God, the precious Holy Spirit took possession of her heart in all His fullness and glory and power. Mother was sanctified wholly.

I have tried to tell it in human terms tonight, terms of the everyday, But, my friend, it's a comfortable consciousness to get to the place where everything is laid over on the altar of God. Everything! Go all around it--every shore line cut--every tie has been severed. It has just been turned over to the will of God. I used to think if I ever got religion it would put me on the twist, and I'd have to hold myself in so hard. I used to think if I got sanctified I'd have to hold myself all the time, just keep a tight rein on myself. Neighbor, I was wrong. If you come to right relationship with God, it puts you where you can relax--a place of rest, a place of settledness, a place of assurance. Abandoned, committed, given over to the whole will of a holy God!

"But what if this problem comes?" I don't know. I just know that it's all committed to God. "But suppose things don't go like you think they should go?" Well, it's still all turned over to the will of God. I can walk all about in every direction, and it is all committed, all yielded, all given over to God. Blessed be God! And never forget, God gets to a man or woman like that. Complete abandonment, total yieldedness to the will of God--that's what we need. That's what we mean by Christian consecration. If you were forgiven when you first came, you may come now in commitment and abandonment and dedication and a giving over of all you have and all you are in

utter simplicity, in utter earnestness, wholeheartedly--I'm God's man, God's woman, from this time on." God will satisfy your heart!

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4

THE POWER OF AUTHORITY

"Ye shall receive power" (Acts 1:8).

The greatest event in human history was not the creation of worlds, but the coming of Jesus Christ in human flesh to live and die for mankind. The next greatest event was the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the Church on the Day of Pentecost, and through that outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the Church the spreading of the gospel to men everywhere.

It was no easy task that the Church faced as they came down out of the Upper Room that day. Their Leader had died like a common criminal upon a cross. And they were there to persuade men that He, their Leader, was raised from the dead, and that He was the Saviour of the world. The mission of itself, and left to itself, was doomed to failure unless there could come a miracle power within the Church that would give it a persuasiveness and a penetration that was more than human! And I say the fact that it did not so perish is due to the miraculous element that is within the Church.

It is well for us to remember, in these so-called better days when we are building church plants that are costing up to a quarter of a million dollars, that the Church is not an organization primarily; but it is a movement-it is a movement! It is an incarnation of spiritual power! The Church began in power; it moves in power as long as the power of the Holy Ghost is manifested in it and upon it. Every return to New Testament power in church history has marked a new advance in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Solving the problem of evangelism is not the setting of new goals, is not to be found in the inauguration of new methods; but the solving of our problem of evangelism is the reviving of the passion for a lost world within our own hearts.

The church, and I speak of it not denominationally, the church of America is in a low ebb of spiritual energy today. That is why the church of America has introduced so many other things as a substitute for that which is the vital power and the vital source of power. I don't want to seem to be reactionary, but I think that we ourselves are in danger in this moment of our history. We are in danger of putting undue emphasis upon abilities and skills and learning rather than the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon men. The only time that a call to the sharpened sword of a keen mind and unusual gift is safe is when that sharpened sword is consecrated above those of lesser power about him. The only safe accompaniment, the only safe corollary, of better education and better plants and better methods is a better power and more outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon us[But now that we've used that word power, what do we mean by it?

You hear some people at the altar praying, "O Lord, give me power, power. I want power." God isn't going to give a man power like that. "O Lord, give me glory, glory. I want glory." God isn't going to give you glory like that. Do you know how to get power? If you qualify

before a throne of grace, then go out, hook up to a load that's bigger than you are, and get a hold and pull until your eyes bug out and the cords stand out on your neck. Pull with every ounce of strength there is within you; then God is going to give you power enough to pull the load that is within His will. God is not going to give you power to blow off steam, and talk about it. God is going to give you power to do something--to live holy, to live right, to be right, to do right. It has been a misused term, this term power. But here are five suggestions regarding what we mean by power.

First of all, by power we mean a spiritual energy to produce great saints. I don't think everybody has to conduct his mourners' bench as we conduct ours in order to be right. Sometimes we do some things I wish we didn't. On the other hand, I do believe there is a time element that needs to enter into our altar services that will give men time enough to think themselves and pray themselves through to a conscious yieldedness and acceptance with Jesus Christ. We rush them through and chuck them under the chin and sing a little song. And I believe in what the dear old lady said regarding Uncle Bud Robinson when he went bawling down the aisle toward the mourners' bench. She said, "I think young Robinson is powerfully struck." I like that kind of thing. We need to have power enough in our services that men will be gripped with the Spirit's presence and with the sense of oughtness and conviction until there will be a transforming psychology as well as a transforming grace.

You know you can't get rid of the fact that you are still a psychological being even when you're a religious being. And the thing that really affects you through and through religiously is going to affect what you are psychologically. It will affect what you are in every aspect and relationship. I can't ask a man to shout as I did when. I found the Lord, but I do want a man's emotional life to be so quickened by the power of God when he comes to a mourners' bench that he knows he's been touched from heaven. We need spiritual energy around our mourners' benches. We need spiritual energy in our services that produces great saints.

In order to produce great saints after the transformation at a mourners' bench, we're going to have to give something to them from our pulpits Sunday morning after Sunday morning that will feed them mentally and spiritually. It is sin against God and sin against truth and sin against the intelligence of the people for us to come to a morning service short of preparation to give men a thought of truth from the Book of God. When you come here this morning and sit for thirty minutes, you have given me thirty minutes of your life, You'll never relive this thirty minutes. We've spent twelve of it already. We'll never relive these twelve minutes. You sitting there before me and I standing here before you have accepted a responsibility, and I'm in debt to do my best to give you something that will inspire your thought life and will awaken within you a desire to be a better man and a holier woman than you were before you came --spiritual energy to produce great saints.

Secondly, by power we mean a spiritual unction that will give a heavenly atmosphere to our work, to our homes, and to our lives. This matter of atmosphere, conducive atmosphere in our services! It is not consistent for an evangelist to come in from having run about all day and from a big dinner in the evening and rush into that service at night and expect to breed a heavenly atmosphere. He's not going to do it. And for the pastor to be rushed and hurried about a thousand last-minute things that need to be done, to rush into the pulpit and try to breed that kind of atmosphere---he's not going to be able to do it. We've got to have some anointings upon our own

hearts. We've got to come from the fresh touch of the heavenly upon our own spirits if we're going to be able to create that sort of atmosphere.

My dear old father preached holiness in a day when it wasn't so popular to preach it as it is now. And it wasn't so remunerative either. I can remember when there would hardly be money enough from a campaign to pay the bills in the home and for him to get on to his next meeting. Christmas time or nearing Christmas time, Father wrote a letter home. We were living in Huntington, Indiana, at the time. Father wrote a letter home. Mother called us in. She was reading. She was sitting next to the kitchen door and with the corner of her apron she was wiping the tears from her eyes. She pulled us up to her, my brother and myself, and read this portion of the letter. It said: "Dear Mother, we had a good meeting but there were not quite the proceeds in the offering that I thought. And I have a decision that I am unable to make by myself. I find that I cannot come home and still have money enough after I have paid my fare and paid the monthly bills to give the boys and you a Christmas. But I can remain here holding a meeting perhaps some place. I can remain here with friends, send you the money, and there will be enough to pay the bills and for the boys and you to have Christmas. I can't make the decision. I want you and the boys to talk it over and make the decision and write me." Mother looked at us and said, "Boys, what shall we tell Daddy?" Well, you know what we told her. We said to tell him to come on home. It wouldn't be Christmas without him anyway.

He came on Christmas Eve. Those were the days when we would hang our stockings on the back of Mother's rocking chair. You know that old family rocker. When it went out of the American home, we lost something. Brother and I hung up our stockings and went to bed. We got up the next morning, and came running into the front room, and down in the toe of each stocking was an orange, that and nothing more. We had great times with oranges, for oranges were not so plentiful in our house in those days as they are now, and we had a great time until we went out to see what the neighbor boys received. When we found out what Santa Claus had done for the neighbor boys, we thought he had made a mistake at our house. We came back very disappointed and very crestfallen.

Father was waiting for us, sitting in a chair over by the window. He called us over to him and said, with tears running down his cheeks: "Boys, I may as well tell you now as any time. I hadn't planned to tell you. I thought I'd wait till you were a little older, but I guess this is the time."

With Floyd on one knee, and me on the other, he said: "Boys, I do not mind the sacrifice that comes from the preaching of holiness." Fact is, I used to think he enjoyed it. But he said: "It pains me more than you will ever know to call upon my family to share that sacrifice. And, boys, we may as well face it. There are a lot of things you will never be able to have that some boys have because your father is preaching holiness." He told us what they were. But he said, "Boys, there are three things, so help me God, that you shall have. Three things! First, I propose to teach you what hard work means." He kept his word on that one. That's not so bad. God pity the lad who Comes to manhood and doesn't know the glory of toil and the meaning of a dollar. And he said, "The second thing I propose to give you is the opportunity of a Christian education." He did his part on that. That third thing is what I wanted to say. He said: "The third thing, so help me God, I propose to bring you into the presence of God in the home, and in the church in which we are members--so fully into the presence of God that you will know that it is God you are dealing with

and not your parents and not the pastor and not the people. You are dealing with God Almighty." That's it--that strange presence of God that comes as a result of the living of holy men and women in a close relation to God.

Family altar--it can be skipped over so easily now in some pastors' homes. I don't know how many times I've been entertained in pastors' homes and never once been asked to read or pray. If it was done, I had to initiate it. That ought not to be. When we're too busy for family worship, we're just too busy. Father always had time for family prayer. Fact is, my brother would get nervous and I'd get a bit angry. Father, it looked like, would always read the longest chapter in the Bible. If he would read a psalm at all, it would be the 119th, or it seemed that way. And when we would get down to pray, we would get down on our knees, and Father and Mother prayed until the heavens opened and the glory came. They prayed for their loved ones, they prayed for their pastor, they prayed for the missionaries, they prayed for the revival, they prayed for God to save their neighbors. They prayed until the heavens bent low. It wasn't so much what they said. It was the fact that it left an aroma and an atmosphere. Brother would be nervous and I'd be angry because we had tarried so long, but we would go out from there to our play and school with something we couldn't shake off--that atmosphere.

We need that in our homes and we must have it in our services. We go to our services as though we were grinding sausages out of the mill. We can be as dead and formal as the most formal ritualistic group imaginable. There is nothing so dead as dead holiness -- a pretty holiness, a nice holiness! When we have lost, and in proportion as we do, that spontaneity, that touch, that glow, that coming of God that gives our singing vitality, that gives our messages penetration, we have lost the power of holiness. It's that atmosphere that makes our prayers cling; it's that supernatural something. There may be eloquence without it; there may be a splendidly formed sermonette without it. But, my friends, if it lacks that divine unction, that atmosphere that is born in the heavens, that atmosphere that we must have, we are not going to have the results that God expects of us. That is what we mean by power.

The third thing that we mean by power is that heavenly quality which marks the Church as a divine institution, that which sets it apart as different from other institutions. Moses, on the back side of the desert, saw the bush ablaze. But here was a bush ablaze that was not consumed and he dared not come close. No man is afraid of a pile of ashes. It is only when the bush is ablaze with a consuming power that men step back and recognize that it is God in the midst of the bush. We've got to have God in the midst of our church! We've got to have God in the midst of our Sunday school. We've got to have more than increased enrollments. We've got to have more than increased attendance. We've got to have more than increased efficiency. We've got to have a program that persuades men to a definite crisis with God!

Fourth, an effective energy that makes the Church invincible and fruitful. Oh, this has been said so often! There are a lot of things perhaps we never can have, but, brother, we can win a few souls to Jesus Christ if we will. We can win a few souls to Jesus Christ if we will.

A pastor wrote me and said: "What am I going to do? I have had five evangelists and we have not had a real revival, until my church board does not want to call another evangelist, but believes that we can spend our money to better ends through some other channel. For we've had

five evangelists and not had a single new person at our mourners' bench." I believe that a fellow could bleach his bones and cry his heart out, and die prematurely, if need be, but could get someone to Jesus Christ over a period of five revival campaigns. "Ye shall receive power -- an effective energy -- an effective energy that makes the Church invincible and fruitful!

Finally, power is that divine afflatus which moves the heart and persuades the hearer to repent and believe. I was a pastor in Malden, Massachusetts. I hadn't been out of school too long. You know a fellow's never quite so sure of himself as he is those first months after he's out of college and seminary, and in the process of things a fellow has to go through that. That's a part of it. So be patient with us young fellows. I had prepared my message that morning. I had it--firstly, secondly, thirdly, and finally, my exhausted brethren--I had it all. I had worked all week on it. As I got up that morning and thundered that message, they sat there and looked at me like knots on a log, with not a groan nor a grunt nor an amen nor response. I didn't get over it all day. I went home that night. The evening service hadn't been much better nor much different. My wife, kindly-hearted as she is, knew I was having a battle about my Sunday services. And she said, "O honey, you're just nerved up. Go to bed and you'll be all right in the morning." I said, "Let me alone. This is one time when I don't need the bed . . . one time I don't need sleep . . . one time I need to be let alone." "Oh," she said, "you're just worried. Come on, come on. You'll be all right in the morning." I said as kindly as I knew how but as firmly as I thought the occasion demanded, "Please, let me alone." And she understood and let me alone.

I took off my coat, loosened my collar, and removed my shoes: I went over to my desk, put my head on my arms, and my arms on my desk. I told the Lord that as far as I was concerned I had preached the last sermon I was ever going to preach. Of course, now, you fellows have never done that. I said: "Lord, You know how 'much time I put on that message. You know how I dug out those illustrations. You know that that outfit needed that message I had to give them today. But there wasn't a groan nor a grunt nor a response. Lord, I'm all through. I'm all through."

But you know, the Lord had to work on me until along about morning before He got me to see that it wasn't the quality nor the framework of the sermon that was so important, though it is important. But it was the quality of the spirit and the openness of the channel of the man through whom that message was to be poured that made the difference. God and I had an understanding before daylight. My friends, we need to see and put dependence upon this, that while we're working up here, if we're sustaining the right relationship to God, the Holy Spirit is working out yonder. Hallelujah!

I went to a business firm one day when we lived in Detroit. They told me that there were an active partner and a silent partner. I didn't understand what that meant --a silent partner and an active partner. I had heard the term but I didn't know how it worked itself out. I saw a little fellow flying around the front of that store meeting customers, meeting trade and all. His name was all over that place too. You'd have thought, to have seen that little fellow flying around there, that he had furnished all the capital and all the stock and all the brains and all the influence, but I found out he hadn't. Fact of the matter is, all he furnished was himself. But there was a silent partner whose office was away back with a little name plate on the door. The silent partner never got out to meet the trade. His name didn't appear on the sign of the store at all, but the silent partner who furnished

the capital for it all was away back yonder. When bills had to be paid, when obligations had to be met, it was the fellow back yonder in the office whose signature made the difference.

O friends, there is a Silent Partner in this arrangement. Glory be to God! If we can sense His presence and if we can somehow renew, if we can revive, if we can make more real, our sense of dependency and our ability to draw upon Him! We can't do this job alone. But the Silent Partner can sign the checks that will carry us through the hardest places that hell will bring to bear upon the Church. That divine afflatus, that divine something that will make our word penetrative and our efforts meaningful in reaching men and women for whom the Christ died and to whom we're sent. I know it's a lot easier to talk about it than it is to enact it; but, friends, here are the measure and the channel of our success.

"Ye shall receive power." That word power has so often been wrongly interpreted. It does have a possible meaning of strength, but the better word in interpretation is authority. Ye shall have the power of authority, the Holy Ghost coming upon you! It wasn't that Jesus Christ, when the waves of Genesaret were boisterous, could give a hand and bring every wave to a calm. It wasn't that! That wasn't the kind of power that He had. He spoke the power of authority and there was response! O friends, we've got to have that same kind of authority sent forth in His name, sent forth in His gospel. We must have this authority of a divine accompaniment.

* * * * *

5

THE SUPERLATIVE WILL OF GOD

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (I Thess. 4:3, 7).

There are many matters concerning which we will not immediately find agreement, important matters within themselves in which even sincere followers of Jesus Christ will not at once find agreement. But there is one item concerning which every follower of Jesus Christ must and will find agreement, and that one matter is the will of God.

A man is a sinner because he has refused the will of God. The Bible definition of sin is this: "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." A sinner, in the light of the Book of God, is a man or woman who knows the will of God but refuses that will. That refusal of the will of God brings the frown of God, brings the disfavor of heaven. It brings condemnation to the human heart. But when a man or a woman comes to God, he comes either actually or figuratively with hands uplifted and by that token says: "O God, O God, I have been a rebel against Thee. I have lived in open transgression against Thy love and against Thy favor. But, God, if Thou wilt forgive, if Thou wilt but restore me, that I may be a child of Thine, I pledge Thee that from this moment on Thy will shall be the quest of my life." A child of God is a man or woman who has been forgiven for past rebellion and who now seeks with all the power at his or her command to know God's will, to do God's will, and to experience God's will.

The whole will of God may not be immediately ascertainable. There are some matters that relate themselves to life itself: choices, decisions, companionships, matters vital to living, concerning which we will not immediately be able to ascertain the will of God. But the Bible and the experience of Christian men and women will give instruction concerning how the will of God in these matters may be ascertained. There is, however, one matter so clearly indicated to us in the passage just read that any sincere follower of Jesus Christ should know beyond peradventure of doubt what God's will is so far as this particular aspect is concerned. Notice our passage the directness of the inspired utterance. "This is the will of God." Now if we can find out where that is pointing, if we can find out the landing place, we will know one item in the will of God.

"This is the will of God"; "this is the will of God." That is, there are some people for whom sanctification is the will of God. Now whatever sanctification is, if inspired language means anything, it is the will of God for somebody. Inspired language could not be clearer in its utterance. I wonder to whom this passage is addressed. For whom is the will of God intended? Could it be for backsliders? No. Could it be for lukewarm professors of religion? Perhaps in an ultimate sense, but not in an immediate sense. Could it be that this is the will of God for saints in another clime? Oh, no, this epistle is addressed to living men and women. For whom then is this the will of God?

If I were addressing a letter this morning to all born in the state of Tennessee, some of you would not be included in the salutation of this letter, and therefore the contents of the letter would not have application or meaning for you. I would be addressing it to a certain group of folk, folk born in the state of Tennessee. This passage is as clear in its direction of responsibility as any statement could possibly be. Notice the opening of the first chapter of this Thessalonian letter: "Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus." Instead of putting their signature at the conclusion of the letter they leave no occasion for doubt and put it at the opening:

"Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ . . . We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance . . . And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad . . . how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven."

They believed in the second coming of the Lord. But he said, "O church of the Thessalonians, this is the will of God. You whose faith abounds; you whose labor of love is spread abroad; you who have left idols and turned, though under much affliction but yet with joy, to serve the living and the true God; you who are looking for the return of the Lord, this is the will of God, your sanctification. It is God's will, O followers of Jesus Christ, men forgiven, lives transformed, accepted and acknowledged followers and workers in the church. This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

Now that word sanctification has been too often misunderstood. I was very interested in the Apostle Paul's reference to the fact that where there is high profession there is room for greater counterfeit. The higher the standards of grace and the higher the profession of divine favor, there, my friend, you may look for the keener, more subtle counterfeits of the genuine. There are some fields and some areas that do not leave much room for counterfeit--the standard is already low enough. When I was a boy, I remember hearing a man say that his father had told him that when he was a little boy his grandfather had said to him that an uncle knew a man (that's about how close it comes) that said that holiness people told that if a fellow should receive this experience, whatever it is, that the Book of God designates as sanctification, he could not be tempted, he could not sin, and he could not improve. Well, I've seen a lot of folk that didn't improve much, but I have never laid it at the door of sanctification.

It has been my privilege to be born in a holiness home. It has been my privilege to be cradled in the lap of a holiness mother. It has been my privilege to be raised under holiness influence, and since first I can remember I have heard holiness preaching. I have heard men of almost every denominational label, from the most humble speaker to the most princely pulpiteer. I have heard the men who were accepted exponents of the doctrine of heart holiness. I have heard them since a lad, but I never yet have heard a man from the pulpit in the holiness movement in America make that kind of statement. But if you have been so unfortunate as to hear any such kind of statement, there is just one trouble with that statement--it isn't true.

So long as a fellow is in this country, he is on probation; and so long as we are on probation, we may be tempted. Temptation means nothing at all unless there is possibility to yield to that temptation. Holiness of heart does not give a man or woman perfection of judgment. It doesn't do that. I have often wished it might. I have often thought that if there were a third work of grace, I would like to suggest to the Lord what it might be. I would suggest perfection of judgment. But the Lord doesn't promise that. My father said that when God by the baptism of the Holy Spirit sanctified him He gave him a right heart. He cleansed his motives, perfected his love, and purified his heart. He said He not only fixed up his heart but delivered it by lightning express, special delivery. But he wasn't quite sure when God would get done with his head so that it could be delivered in as good condition. Well, God is still working on most of us too. Heart holiness does not indicate perfection of judgment. But it does indicate an inward purification that will give to us a sufficient outward fortification against the prevailing sin of the day in which we live.

A man said to me one time, "I believe in sanctification all right, but I believe that when we are sanctified we will grow into it." I did not argue. Frankly, I'm not too much concerned about how you obtain the experience, as long as you obtain it. Everybody doesn't have to act as I did at the mourners' bench. I hope you don't. I hope you get along better than I did. I had a lot of things to learn at the mourners' bench. But I would like for you to show me one man or one woman who actually came into this experience through growth and growth alone. If that is the way, somebody ought to have attained it that way.

Somebody else says, "I don't believe that we grow in grace after we have obtained this experience. I believe that a man is sanctified in the hour and article of death." Well, let's look at that for a moment. If I read the Book of God correctly, it indicates that death is the last enemy to be

destroyed. If death is able to do for me what life has been unable to do; if death is able to cleanse my heart, when life has been unable to cleanse it, then I will clasp death to my heart. For it becomes, not my enemy; it becomes my friend. But God says death is my enemy, the last enemy. Death, the Bible says, is the result of sin--the wages of sin. Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Appealing to you on the basis of mere logic, if the result destroys the cause, if death destroys its cause, sin, then the result is greater than the cause. That is illogical.

Let us come back to the Book of God; let us come back to the history of God's dealings with the richest and maturest saints of the ages. Let us take away all the ecclesiastical outer coating and theological definitions, and get down to the heart of it. What do we mean by heart holiness, sanctification, the baptism with the Holy Ghost? Just this: It is the provision of God that will fix up a man so that he can be a good man in the midst of a bad world. If there is no such experience, then there ought to be. If God is unable to provide a grace that will give me victory over sin within and sin without, in this country, upon what shall I base my hope that He shall give me any such experience in any other country? It is here where sin has wrought its havoc, has had its sway; and, glory be to God, it is here where the grace of God has been provided through the death of Christ upon the middle cross, who suffered without the gate that the people might be sanctified. O my friend, it is here in this present world, through all the days of our present life, that God proposes to give us an inward sufficiency that will make us victors over the outward encroachment of sin and hell. Hallelujah! This is the will of God!

My brother, Floyd, and I were high school students attending a little cement-block church situated on Washington Street in Owosso, Michigan. Floyd and I were Christians; we had given our hearts to God; we had sought the experience of heart holiness. They didn't give us any rest around there until we came to a decision about this matter of heart holiness. There is danger in indecision, you know. Brother and I were the janitors of the little church. The revival was to begin the next day. This 'was on Saturday. We were sweeping the floor, working quietly along together.

Finally I said, "Floyd, the revival begins tomorrow." He said, "That's right." I said, "You know, this fellow that is coming [we knew him well, a close friend of Father's, and we knew that fellow was a holiness preacher, and a holiness preacher back yonder used to preach holiness--they don't all do that now], he will be preaching holiness. What are you going to do? Floyd, what are you going to do about this matter of holiness?" I'll never forget what he said. He leaned on his broom handle and said, "O. J., I'm going to seek the experience." I said, "So am I." But I said, "Floyd, let's do it in this fashion. Let's seek the experience of heart holiness at every opportunity in this revival meeting. Let's seek it until one of two things happens, until we either get the experience and get it good or until we just find out that a fellow can't have it. Floyd, if I find out that they're mistaken and that a fellow can't have it, I'm going to get up in meeting and explode the whole business." And, boy-fashion, we shook hands on the whole proposition.

The first morning the evangelist poured out his heart and opened the altar. I don't think he expected anybody, but he had two seekers. Right over there we knelt. I have been partial to that end of the altar ever since. We didn't get through that morning. Back to the altar that night we came, but we didn't get through. We were having two services a day, in the morning at ten and at night at seven-thirty. We were there on Sunday, Monday morning, and Monday night, next morning and next night, the next morning and the next night, and on until ten days and nights had gone by. We had

been at the altar every time. It got to the place where the people didn't come to pray with us any more. They said, "It's just the Nease boys. Poor fellows! Too bad! Why, they're getting to be chronic seekers." My friend, chronic seekers don't worry me. It isn't the chronic seeker that worries me. It is the chronic sitter. There is hope for a fellow as long as he keeps on seeking; but when he settles back and quits seeking, that's what gives the heart of God pain. That is what blocks the onward progress of the Spirit's movement. That's what hinders.

We kept on coming. But one night, all at once I could tell that my brother was praying with a new sincerity. I could tell that he sort of moved over into a country I had been looking toward for a long while. He wasn't making much fuss about it. It isn't the amount of fuss you make. Sometimes the Lord has to let you wear out your "fusser." It isn't the amount of fuss a fellow makes, but it is the degree of inward sincerity and earnestness and total commitment of your all to God. I could tell he was making progress. I quit praying, for I was almost as much interested in his getting the blessing as I was in getting it myself. So I stopped praying and watched him. All at once he threw wide his arms and put them around my neck and said, "O. J., pray on; you can have the experience, for I have it. I have it. Hallelujah!"

Well, we got up and went home from the service and my brother went home scattering Hallelujahs all over the sidewalk. But I just went home, that's all. We shared beds, and it seemed to me that he even snored Hallelujahs! It just seemed he was sleeping the sleep of perfect contentment. But I didn't. I just spent the night there. He had the experience. Next morning when I came down to breakfast, my father said, "Son, I have discovered there's a broken plank on the front step of the porch. Hurry down to the hardware store and get five pounds of sixteen-penny nails before the service." He said, "Hurry, Son," and I thought I hurried. But I was gone long enough to have walked clear around the city.

Father was a man quick of speech, quick of movement. He said, "Mother, where in the world is that boy? Didn't he know I'm in a hurry? We are going to be late for service. Why do you suppose that boy is so slow?"

He looked down the sidewalk and saw me shuffling along slowly with my head down. He came to meet me at a much different pace. Before I was aware of his presence he grabbed me very snugly by the arm and began to shake me, "Boy, where in the world have you been? I'm afraid we'll be late for service." I said, "O Father, I'm sorry." He said, "What's the matter with you? Has something gone wrong?" I said, "No, nothing has gone wrong." He said, "Tell me, Son, something is the matter. Are you sick?" "No, I'm not sick." "Tell your father what's wrong." I said, "Father, don't you know that Floyd and I have been seeking the experience of heart holiness for two weeks?" He said, "Yes, Son." I said, "Father, Floyd got the experience last night," and he said, "Yes, I'm glad." I said, "But, Father, I didn't. I'm sorry about the nails, but I forgot all about them. I'm so sorry, but, Father, my heart is so hungry to have the Holy Spirit come. I need Him so much; my heart is so hungry. O Father, it looks like I will die if the Holy Spirit doesn't get to me soon. O Father, I want the Holy Spirit more than I want anything else in all the world."

Father didn't scold me. We didn't drive any nails that morning. We did some praying. We went to church, but I didn't get through that morning. That night Brother and I bowed at the same place at the altar, only he was on the other side of the altar now. I was praying, and that brother of

mine, with one hand grasping me by one shoulder, was beating me on the back with the other. Now there was no necessary connection between the beating he gave me and the experience I received, but he was expressing himself boy-fashion; for with the earnestness of his heart he was praying, and with the earnestness of my heart I was praying, and all at once, glory be to God, I received the experience! I committed my all; I laid everything on the altar. There was a yieldedness, a consecration, a commitment. The Holy Spirit slipped into my heart that morning in His fullness and took possession. I didn't need anybody to chuck me under the chin. I didn't do any shouting then--I have "since--but the Holy Spirit came and took full possession of my heart. That was more than thirty-two years ago.

There have been dark moments, there have been disappointments, there have been moments when my judgment wasn't so good as it ought to have been. There have been moments of heartbreak and uncertainty. There have been moments when I have faced life as we all have to face it. But I want to testify to the glory of God that the Holy Spirit who came to my heart that night in that little old cement-block church more than thirty-two years ago, with my now-sainted brother beating me on the back, still abides in my heart. Oh, glory to the Christ of the middle cross, who suffered without the camp! All honor to the Holy Spirit! If I ever amount to anything, it will be because of Him, because of Him, because of Him! Unto Him I owe all. I testify to the Holy Spirit and to the glory of God today.

This is the will of God. This is the will of God. O forgiven man, this is the will of God, your inward purification, that you might have a sufficient outward fortification to make you a victor and a conqueror in this present world.

Would you like to know when the Holy Spirit will come to you? I know exactly when He will come. Hallelujah! I know when He will come. He will come when you want Him more than you want anything else or anybody else in all the world. And that homespun way of telling it is what we mean by consecration. He won't come before then, but He will come then. It does seem as though everybody who has ever had any touch of divine grace on his heart at all would want that incoming of the Holy Spirit that will cleanse his heart and give him divine power. It does look like anybody who has ever had a touch of grace on his heart at all would want the Holy Spirit in His fullness.

Oh, bless your heart! Life is as real to me as it is to you. I know what the battles and frailties and temptations and the frustrations of life mean. But I tell you, there is a God who will go with you. There is a God who will hold you by the hand. There is a God who will cleanse you and give you an inward empowerment and enablement. There is a God who is all-sufficient for your need. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification . . . For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

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In the 119th division of the Psalms and the 165th verse of that psalm, you will find these oft-quoted words: "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." If your Bible has a marginal reference, you will note that the margin indicates that the passage may be read like this: "Great peace have they which love Thy law, and there shall be no rock of stumbling, no stumbling block." But there is yet another possible reading of that passage that to me is even more meaningful. It in no sense does violence to the King James reading; it rather enriches it: "Great peace have they which love Thy law, and they shall have the open road."

There is some truth that may well remind one of tree-ripened oranges. All you need to do is to remove the outer coating or peeling, and the truth, like the fruit, divides itself into normal, luscious segments. It is true of the passage we have selected tonight: The Law, the Love, the Peace, and the Open Road.

The first conception of God which I have in memory was very inadequate. I wonder if any conception of God now held by any of us, mature in experience though we may be, if compared with what God is, would be wholly adequate. Our conception of God should unfold and enrich and enlarge as our fellowship and experience with God through the Word and through the Holy Spirit increase along the path of life's experience. That is, we should have a greater understanding of God today than when first we met Him.

As a lad, I thought God was a despot--D-E-S-P-O-T! An absolute monarch who sat upon a regal throne of splendor some place in the center of the universe and there issued law directed toward me in particular--not because He was interested primarily in my happiness or in my well-being, but simply because He had the authority. I declared, "God is arbitrary, issuing law because He has authority but not because He is interested in my happiness or well-being."

They told me that God said, "Be ye holy." And something within me said, "I don't want to be holy." My parents reminded me that God said, "Be ye righteous," and something within me said, "I don't want to be righteous. I want neither to be holy nor to be righteous. Why can't they let me alone? It's my life; I'll live it as I choose." No greater lie ever came out of hell than that thought: It's my life, and I can live it as I choose.

I argued in this fashion: "No one ever consulted me about this matter of being born. I was not consulted. I was just born, and then they told me about it afterwards." I also recognized I had very little to say about this matter of dying. The fact of the matter is, I still don't have much to say about it, for I have always felt like a man of whom I heard, who said he wished he knew where he was going to die. Someone asked him, "Why do you want to know where you are going to die?" "Ah," he replied, "if I knew where I was going to die, that's one place I'd never go." That's the way I felt about it. "I had nothing to say about coming into this world. I have very little to say about going out of this world. All that is mine is this little time span between birth and death. That is mine. Let me alone. I don't want to be righteous. I don't want to be holy. I'll live my life as I choose. Why can't God and my kinsfolk let me make my own decisions and live my own life? God is arbitrary, issuing orders simply because He has the authority."

One day I discovered another arbitrary creature in God's universe, and this other arbitrary creature was a woman, and the particular woman that I have in mind was my mother. As a boy I

thought she was the most arbitrary creature in the world outside of God, and I thought she must have some understanding with God, she was so much like what I thought God to be--arbitrary! Only that isn't the word I used concerning her. The word arbitrary wasn't in my vocabulary those days. My brother and I talked it over, and we declared she was just plain "boss"--boss of the household. Father was gone most of the time in the evangelistic field, and we recognized in her the head of the household.

Can you remember when boys and men and preachers used to wear hats, before we had all gone collegiate? Do you remember? Home from school in the evening you know the place for a fellow's hat, don't you? It's there--provided it reaches there. And the place for his jacket? It drapes the furniture. When Brother and I would get into bed at night, we would no sooner be settled down than we would hear that voice of authority --"Boys." We were asleep---or wished we were. "Boys." "Yes, Mother." "Boys, did you hang up your clothing? Boys, did you put away your shoes?" "No, Mother. No, Mother, but we know right where they are." "Boys, don't you know that it is the law of this household--a place for everything and everything in its place?" Say, I used to wish I could have met the fellow who first said that shortly before he first said it: "A place for everything and everything in its place." "Boys, roll out of bed, hang up the clothing, put away your shoes. You may as well learn first as last." And then after the task was performed, and we got back into bed, I said to my brother, "Floyd, there's not a bit of sense in that, and you know it. I might have been asleep. It's wasting good time. Not a bit of sense in all this hanging-up business. Mother's simply trying to show her authority, that's all. Trying to show who's boss."

Then in the morning we would come rolling downstairs toward the breakfast table with the smell of bacon in the air--you remember when we used to have bacon? --to be accosted with this: "Wait a minute, boys; just a moment. Did you wash?" "No, Mother. But don't you remember? We washed last night. And, Mother, we've done nothing to make it necessary to go through all that performance again. We washed last night." Mother said, "March right over to that kitchen sink." You remember the kitchen sink and the rain-water pump and that cake of Ivory soap and the inevitable washcloth to dig around in nooks and crannies to find material I was sure could not exist. Then Brother and I had to stand for inspection. Mother was always looking for high-water marks.

When we started off to school that morning, I said: "Floyd, it's just like I told you last night; there isn't a bit of sense in this. We waste a lot of good time and energy on this washing and hanging-up business--not a bit of sense in it." I said, "Floyd, when I get a home of my own, I'll hang up what I want to when I want to and wash when I well please--when I get a home of my own." But you know, ladies, I didn't figure there was going to be another woman in this outfit. And so, gentlemen, I'm still hanging up and still washing.

I said Mother was arbitrary, issuing law, not because she was interested primarily in the happiness or well-being of two lads, but just simply to show her authority.

Well, one day I discovered the reason that Mother demanded the standards of cleanness and orderliness among the members of her household. It wasn't simply to make two lads uncomfortable, but the reason Mother demanded the reasonable standards and practices of cleanliness and orderliness was because it was Mother's nature to be clean and to be orderly. It

was Mother's nature. It was her nature to be clean, and so for Mother to have permitted two lads to live in open violation of the reasonable standards of cleanness and orderliness, she would first of all have had to violate the law of her own nature. Mother was being true to herself.

One day I discovered why God Almighty demands the reasonable standards of cleanness (that's holiness) and of orderliness (that's righteousness) among the members of His household. It isn't simply to show His authority. It isn't simply to show Him as the great boss of the universe. That isn't it. Let me ask you. What is the ultimate basis of authority in this matter of preaching heart holiness? You know, the way some people look at it, you'd think it was something invented in a recent generation. The way some holiness people look at it, you get the notion that it is a sort of frosting on the cake of Christian experience. That is, you could have the cake without the frosting. Friend, you're mistaken about that. Holiness is not the frosting, something added to the cake. Holiness is the main ingredient. Without it, the Christian experience can become a sorry, sodden, fallen situation.

What is the ultimate basis? Somebody says it is the church. You're mistaken. As much as I love the church, and I do love it, I must have something more ultimate as a foundation of faith and practice and experience than even the church which I love. Somebody says it is John and Charles Wesley. You're mistaken again; for, as much as I appreciate the contribution that they made to vital and emphatic Christianity, I must have something more ultimate as the foundation of faith, experience, and practice than John and Charles Wesley. Somebody says it's the early Apostolic Church, but you're mistaken. As much as we appreciate the church fathers, we must have something more ultimate as the foundation of faith. I'll tell you what it is.

God says, "Be ye holy"--not because the church teaches it; that's a pretty good reason, but that's not the ultimate reason. "Be ye holy"--not because John and Charles Wesley taught it and not because the early Apostolic Church taught it, but God says, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." O neighbor, if you're having a controversy regarding this matter of heart holiness, it isn't with the ministry of the church, it isn't with the church itself, it isn't with John and Charles Wesley, it isn't with the early Apostolic Church; but if you're having a controversy about this matter of heart holiness, it's a controversy with God Almighty, and that's dangerous business.

Law is the expression of the nature of God. The law of God expresses the nature of God. Therefore, in order to change the law of God, you must of necessity change the nature of God. So when you deal with the demand for heart holiness, you deal with God. I've learned this, that it takes more than law to make a man or woman obedient. It takes more than law. Law only admits the expression of the nature at its best. Law in the nation is the expression of the nature of the nation at its best. Law in the church is the expression of the nature of the church at its best. But it takes more than law in the church and more than law in the nation to make men and women obedient. Don't misunderstand me. I didn't say we didn't need law; I didn't say that. But I do say, it takes more than law to make an obedient individual.

You know, I get a bit weary about a lot of this talk regarding one-hundred-per-cent Americanism. We heard a lot about it during the war. One-hundred-per-cent Americanism. A lot of that talk about one-hundred-per-cent Americanism is the kind that exhausts itself by doffing the hat when the flag goes by, and then will permit that hat-doffer to go out and live in open violation of

the spirit of true democracy and the spirit of true Americanism. I care not whether it's in Washington or in your city, that is un-American. Do you know what it takes to make a good American? You've got to have something in your heart that loves the Stars and Stripes, something in your heart that loves the American way of life, something in your heart that loves true democracy. And if you love it, you won't have any trouble about obeying the law of the land you love. It is a matter of love. And you may build a church manual as large as Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, but it takes more than that to make a good church member. It takes more than a manual, a statement of law, to make a good Christian. You've got to have love in your heart love in your heart for its message, love in your heart for its mission, love in your heart for its method. But if you love its message, its mission, and its method--if you love it, you won't have any trouble about obeying; it's a matter of love.

Ultimately, this matter of obeying God is a matter of loving God; for there's no power even within the law of God, there's no power within divine law, to make a man obedient. You've got to have love in your heart, love in your heart toward God; but if you love God, if you really love Him, blessed be God, if you love Him, then He says "you will keep My commandments." It is a matter of loving God. You can't make obedient Christians simply by adding more law. The thing to do is to get folks to the place where they'll get more love. More love, more love, will solve the problem of holiness. When there's a letdown, a carelessness, in obedience to God and the will of God, you can make up your mind there's a letdown in love toward God, for it is the nature of love to want to obey the will and wish of the one beloved. It is a matter of love. How much do you love?

Notice the third thing he says: "Great peace have they which love thy law." That is, there outflows to the heart of a man or woman who loves God and obeys the law of the God he loves--there outflows to the heart of that man or woman peace. Glory be to God, peace! That is the satisfaction that is gained from the awareness of love, obedience, toward Jesus Christ. If you want to know what the witness or the evidence of being a Christian is, you will find it in that matter of peace with God. It isn't necessarily the fellow that shouts, for I've seen a few folk that shouted that didn't live as they ought to have lived. But it is that abiding assurance of right relationship to God that brings tranquillity and thus assurance to the heart. That is the peace that Jesus gives. And that peace doesn't mean the cessation of activity nor the opposite of being in struggle or strife or storm, but it rather means a rest of soul in the midst of storm when the battle is on, when the turmoil is on. God has never promised that you and I should have an experience in which we should not have battles and struggles and heartache, but He has promised a divine grace that would keep us when the struggle and stress and battle of hell are brought to bear upon our souls. The peace that Jesus gives can come to a man who loves, to a man who finds his delight in obeying the will or wish of the God whom he loves.

Notice that last suggestion. He says, "They shall have the open road." No rock of stumbling, no rock of offense --the open road! That doesn't mean that a man will not meet temptation and opposition and struggle. It doesn't mean that. But it does mean that his love is so set upon God, and the peace of God so holds him in soul poise, that he maintains his sense of direction. His face is toward God and the will of God.

A number of years ago I was in South Jersey in a camp meeting of the holiness association. I received a wire from my sister-in-law saying that her father had died. That was on Friday and, knowing that I was returning home (I pastored in Boston) on Monday morning, she said, "Mother wishes you to come by and take part in the funeral." I was met at the depot on Monday morning by a young minister, pastor of the Methodist church, and at once I saw he was perturbed. I had never met him before, but I could tell he was disturbed. He said, "Mr. Nease, I'm so glad to meet you. The fact of the matter is, I have never been so happy to meet another minister as I am today." I said, "I appreciate that, but what occasions this?" He said, "This woman has been a member of my church for years. They have been faithful attendants and good supporters of the church for years; but now that this bereavement and darkness has come, I can't do anything with her. She refuses to let me talk to her about God or heaven. I hope, Mr. Nease, you can do something with her." When I came to the home, my sister-in-law met me and said, "Oh, I do hope you can help Mother; I do hope you can."

I went to her room. There she sat. I can see her now, sitting bolt-upright in a chair in the center of the room. She pointed me toward a chair and, as deliberately and coolly as one may imagine, she said: "Mr. Nease, I am glad you have come, but don't talk to me about God; don't talk to me about religion. Don't talk to me about God being good. God can't be good and do to me what He has done." And then with teeth set she said, "Mr. Nease, I hate God." Well, you can't argue much with folk when they are blinded with sorrow. They're too dazed for us to bring them out of that situation. But there it was. She had met a stumbling block in her way, and it turned her aside. Nothing that I could say could relieve her blindness.

My district superintendent at that time was a very close friend of mine. His wife sickened. We rushed her to the hospital for an emergency operation. She didn't respond to the operation. And the next morning, just as the sun broke over the eastern hills, he called me to his side, and I stood by the bed of that unconscious and dying woman. The son left the room; the daughter had buried her face in the covers of the bed, and the nurse was administering to her. I put my arm around my friend; but, you know, there are times when words won't say what you want them to, and I've learned that when you don't know what to say it's a pretty good thing to say nothing at all. I put my arm around him and gave him a squeeze that had my heart in it.

In just a few minutes the nurse announced what we already knew was coming, that the good woman had slipped away. I felt that I must say something to break that awful silence, and while I was formulating my thinking my friend moved in my arm. I looked up at him and he was looking away from the bed and the face of his departed companion. He was looking to the ceiling, and there was a glow upon his face. His lips moved, and he addressed me in an affectionate term and said, "Son, it's all right. It's all right, Son. It's all right." He said: "It's going to be lonely. Mother and I have walked together for thirty-six years and fought the battle for God and holiness and raised our family. It's going to be very, very lonely; but, Son, it's all right. For I read in God's Book that the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord; and, Son, all I need to do is to make certain that I am God's good man, and God will take care of the uncharted tomorrows." O neighbor, there came into that death chamber a glow, a Presence and, instead of being the comforter, I received comfort.

What was the difference? There was about three months between those two experiences. One who passed through the hour of bereavement had said, "Don't talk to me about God. God can't be good and do this to me." The other said, "It's all right, Son, it's all right. It's going to be lonely, but the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord." What's the difference? Here was one who had so centered his love upon God that his heart was in alignment with God and with the will of God. In the dark hour, when the hour of sorrow came, he found the open road, It didn't turn him aside. His affection was still set upon things above. But the other love had cooled, obedience had failed, there had come a want of peace and assurance. And when the hour of emergency came, when the stress and strain was on, she found her way obstructed, a rock of offense. She turned aside. She had no assurance.

But is there a way of assurance for me? Yes, it's still here. Romans 8:28 is still in the Bible. The Apostle Paul says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Say, I want to make a confession. I was in my third pastorate as a young minister before I could take that passage. I tried to masticate it, but I couldn't get it down. "Oh," you say, "did you reject it?" Oh, no, I didn't reject it, but I couldn't see it. "Were you an' unbeliever?" No, I was a believer, but I couldn't see that. For though I was a young man, there were a number of things that came my way--misunderstanding and disappointment and disillusionment--that had the trademark of hell on them, and I knew the devil didn't send them for my good. He meant to undermine my faith and turn me aside and damn my soul. But they were a part of the "all things," and Romans 8:28 says, "All things work . . . for good."

I remember one day reading with a mature Bible teacher. We were reading our Greek text, and I asked him about that passage. He said, "Open your text; open it to Romans 8: 28." He said, "Read it," and I read it out of the Greek. He said, "Translate it," and I did. He said, "Do it again." And I did the second time. He said, "Do it again." And the third time I caught it, and I never shall forget. I slapped the covers of my Greek Testament together with a bang. For in the inspired language there is a word that is not translated in the King James Version that makes it read very, very differently. This is the way it should read: "Behold, we know that God maketh all things to work together for good to them that love the Lord." O neighbor, that makes all the difference in the world. God maketh, God maketh all things. And I said: "I was right; the devil did send those things, and the devil did mean to discourage me and turn me aside. But if I'll just take those things that make up the hodgepodge of life's experiences, even the things that the devil sends, if I'll turn them over to God, God will get in the midst of them and realign the things of life until even the things the devil sent He will work out for my good and God's glory." The thing the devil meant to crush me will simply tender my spirit toward God and toward life until the thing that he meant to drive me away from God will but drive me closer to God. And, O my friend, if we will take that attitude toward temptation, toward the battles and darkness and discouragements of life; if we will, then even the devil becomes a man's unintentional friend, for the things that he means should turn you aside will drive you closer to God. The things he means to discourage you will melt you, mellow you, and make you cling more closely to the heart of God.

Oh, I remember as though it were yesterday. We had not been married so long, and one day my wife was working on a piece of embroidery. You know--big hoop and little hoop---and she had the bit of cloth stretched very snugly between them, and there she was, working with needle and different colored threads. I looked over her shoulder. I said, "Honey, what are you doing?" She

said, "Making something pretty." And I got hold of it at the corners and held it up and looked at it. I said, "Something pretty? As far as I can tell, it's all cross threads and knots and loose ends, a clash of colors. I can't see any design at all." You know, a fellow that will say a thing like that is either foolish or reckless or something. She looked up at me sort of indulgently. She said, "Oh, you talk just like a man." Well, how else could a fellow talk? She said, "Don't you know that you're looking at the wrong side? That is why there are knots and cross threads, and all you will see will be the pattern." And bless you, she turned it over, and there was a rose, so beautiful you could almost pluck it. You could almost catch its perfume, the colors blended so beautifully.

Say, neighbor, how many times have you gone through the dark hour, through the disappointment, when your dreams have fallen shattered at your feet? You said, "Why did this all have to happen? Why this disappointment? Life isn't like I thought it would be. Oh, why should this come?" How many have asked that question during the years of this awful war? Young people who had a right to lay their plans for life, to dream their dreams together, have felt the ruthless hand of separation and their dreams have been shattered. Some of them never will be able to rebuild them. And some of them tonight ask me this, "Why? Why? Why all of this?" Young men have come back from the battlefields of the world, disillusioned, undergoing periods of adjustment, and some folk at home haven't been too patient with them. They have forgotten; they haven't had the knowledge; they have forgotten the hell they have gone through.

We have asked, "Why, why, why? Where is God? Why has this had to happen to me?" And in the midst of it, some of us have lost the joy and the love and the peace out of our hearts that we one time had. Some of us have lost the sense of proportion and design and meaning. We have lost it. We have said, "Lord, as far as I can tell, my life is all cross threads and knots and a clash of colors with no design." Say, neighbor, if we will just hold steady, and trust; if we will just love until peace becomes the ballast of our souls, we will find an open way, and one day God is going to make all these matters plain to us.

As a young minister just out of uniform in World War I, in a little pastorate in Texas, I went into my wife's room one evening. The doctor didn't need to tell me. I knew she would not be there tomorrow. And I walked up and down. We were two thousand miles away from her parents and a thousand miles away from mine. I walked out into the horse stable back of the parsonage. It was dark, two o'clock in the morning. I leaned my head up against the side of an empty horse stall, and said, "O God, have You forgotten me. Don't You know where I am? O God, can't You get to me?" You may think it fanciful, but I will always believe that God came in the empty horse stall and said, "Boy, I can't explain it all to you now; but if you'll just hold steady and trust Me, if you'll just hold steady, someday I'll make it plain to you; someday I'll turn over the tapestry of life and I'll let you see the other side."

That night in that horse stall, I made a date with God. Someday He would take me out on the hillside of heaven, overlooking the river of life, and sit down and explain it all to me. There have been a good many things since that hour, I have had to add to that engagement. There are many things I can't understand. There are a lot of things I can't explain. They don't make rhyme nor reason nor logic nor good sense. But do you remember what was said about Job? It was said that in all this he sinned not with his mouth nor charged God foolishly, which, being interpreted, means he

kept his mouth shut. He didn't find fault in his heart. There was something in his heart that so loved that he could trust where he couldn't understand. Amen. That gave him happiness.

Say, isn't that going to be a glorious morning when you and I slip through the shadows called death and plant our feet on the shores of glory and God lets us turn over the pattern of life? We will see a rose, and it will be the Rose of Sharon! We'll see a lily, and it will be the Lily of the Valley. We'll see a star, and it will be the Bright and Morning Star. We'll say, "How does that happen to be?" and God will say, "That's what I had in mind all the while. All those sorrows and heartbreaks and battles and disappointments, all those you couldn't understand or explain--you were just working out a pattern on the other side." Hallelujah! "All things work together for good to them that love God." "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them."

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7

THE INNER COMPULSION OF SERVICE

"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that' he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." These are the opening verses of the ninth chapter of John.

The scene is laid along a Palestine highway. It might have been any highway, for this kind of experience was a usual one in the days of our Lord among men: a blind man asking for alms. There was something about the direct rays of the Palestinian sun, the lack of knowledge concerning sanitation and medication, and the want of knowledge regarding the rehabilitation of unfortunates that made blindness and begging frequent, and practically synonymous. This was not the only time that Jesus had come face to face with a blind beggar. You remember that on another occasion on the outskirts of Jericho, Jesus met a blind man seeking for healing.

Nature has a way of compensating. When one faculty is impaired, many times nature compensates by giving keenness in another field of approach to life. And the keen ears of this blind man, sitting among his fellows, caught the shuffle of sandaled feet along the highway that early morning. Turning to a man more fortunate than he, as far as sight was concerned, he said, "Friend, what means this movement of people on the highway this morning? What occasions it? What is taking place?" And the man to whom he addressed his question said, "Hush, blind man. Be still. This is no time for a beggar to lift his voice, for Jesus of Nazareth, with His disciples, is traveling on the highway this morning."

But that was the wrong thing to have said to that blind man if he expected silence, for, oh, what must have been pent-up within the heart of the blind man! No doubt he had longed for the day when he might come in touch with Jesus. He had heard how Jesus had unstopped deaf ears, how He had healed the sick, and how He had made the lame to walk, and how He had compassion upon the multitudes. Within his heart he had said, "Oh, if I could meet Him, if I could meet Him! One

word, one touch, would bring life, would bring sight to me." And when his neighbor said, "Be quiet, man. Hush, it's no time for the voice of a beggar to be lifted. It is Jesus on the highway," can't you see that blind man gropingly getting to his feet and going out in the direction of that approaching company, crying at the top of his voice, "Thou Son of David!" What a confession that utterance held--"Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me, have mercy!" Do you know what happened? Jesus stopped the whole procession and said, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" And the man just made a request, "Lord, -- that I might receive my sight."

I remember, when I was a boy, hearing my father say that God Almighty would stop the processions of heaven and put the angels on half-rations, if need be, to give heed to the cry of one needy, sincere-hearted man or woman. I'm not certain about that, but I am certain of this: God Almighty gets to needy men and women! The fact of the matter is that God is not so far from us. Some of us have had a mistaken notion about the nearness of God. God is very near to men and women of the needy heart. God is exceedingly near to men and women of the embattled soul.

Our lesson story tells us this truth, "As Jesus passed by . . ." O friend, be encouraged. God is very near to your heart. Whatever your soul cry, whatever the need of your spirit may be, whatever your lack or shortage, God is not very far away. You know how near God is? I'd like to tell you how near I think He is. God is as near as a falling tear. God is as near as an escaping sigh. God is as near as a wholehearted "Yes" to His will, Sometimes I've heard good people kneeling around seekers at a mourners' bench, crying out from the depths of earnestness, "O God, hear him; O God, hear him; O God, hear him." That is a waste of prayer and energy, for it is God's business, it is God's primary interest, to hear men. God doesn't have to be persuaded to hear men. That is the will of the heart of God, that is the heart of the will of God, to hear men! God is very near to men and women of the needy heart. There is an intimacy in this sketch--"As Jesus passed by."

"As Jesus passed by, he saw a man." Others passed that way. I wonder what they saw. One man saw merely the occasion for philanthropy. "Poor fellow, tough to be blind; the breaks of life have gone against him-poor fellow!" He reached into his money pouch, the passing Jew, found a small coin, and flipped it in the direction of the blind man with a wordless gesture which said, "It is tough to be blind, poor fellow! Here's a coin." He saw in him simply an occasion for benevolence to an unfortunate.

But there were others that passed that way who saw in the blind man the occasion of a religious controversy. Notice that second verse. "Master, we have a problem. Let's appoint a committee to run down all the Agags and the Achans and let's locate all the hypocrites now. Who did sin? Where is the sinner, Lord? Did this man or his parents sin?" You see, there was a fallacy of belief of Old Testament times that if a fellow suffered, that was proof sufficient that he was a sinner. In fact, you don't have to go back to Old Testament times for that fallacy. You have heard people say today, "I wonder what I did to bring all this on me," or, "I tell you, that fellow must have done something wrong, the terrible calamities that have been laid at his door."

Do you remember Job and the ash-pile conference? Job was out there on the ash pile with a bit of broken crockery taking care of the oozing poison from his running sores, and probably applying the wood ash as a mild deodorant or antiseptic, and his would-be comforters were sitting about him. The most comforting thing they did took place the first week they were there. Do you

remember what happened that first week? They said nothing at all! And that was the most comforting contribution they made. Incidentally, that is the most comforting thing that some folk today can accomplish just say nothing at all.

Finally, when the week was up, they looked at him with accusation. "Job, haven't we been here a week, and haven't we heard the reports come concerning your losses--loss of flocks and herds, and houses and lands, and your family? Look at you. You're afflicted and troubled. We have the goods on you. Make your confession. We know you are wrong. God is against you. You're wrong." And then Job made his mistake. He began to argue. And, neighbor, most arguments generate more heat than light. Finally they got Job in a corner, so far as the philosophy of the was concerned, "Job, you've sinned. God is against you. Suffering has come. You're wrong. Make your confession." But Job, with his back to the wall, made his appeal to God, and that's where he ought to have made it to begin with. Out of his heart he cried to heaven, "I can't understand this, and I can't understand all the questions you're putting me through; but this much I do say, that, though God should slay me, yet will I trust Him!" You can't defeat a fellow like that.

This fallacy of Old Testament times that if a fellow suffered he must have sinned was in the background of the disciples' training and thinking, and so they said, "Master, let's appoint a committee. Let's find out who is the sinner. Let's run down the fellow that's wrong." Now notice what Jesus says in that third verse. "Boys, you missed the whole point." You read it. I think that's what He means. "You missed the whole point." When I was a younger preacher than I am now, I made it my job in attempting a revival campaign to straighten out every mess and every misunderstanding. As a result of straightening out other people's messes, I got messed. So I made up my mind a long while ago that I'd better let God Almighty take care of these matters in His own way. There isn't much chance of my doing anything about them.

It is God's business to locate sin. That's God's business, and God will take care of His business. Jesus said, "You missed the point: that the works of God might be made manifest. Here is a broken man. Here is a man who has been touched by suffering. Here is a man who is helpless; he has a need. But," He said, "here is an opportunity for God to work, that the works of God might be made manifest in him. Here is an opportunity for faith to be operative. Here is an opportunity for the church to do something. Here is an opportunity for grace to be brought to bear upon human need." The work of God finds its center and its heart and its climax in coping with the need of broken, sin-cursed men.

You know, we become too accustomed to this matter of human suffering, in whatever form. We get accustomed to finding men blighted and cursed and half-damned by sin. It doesn't challenge us as it once did. It does not challenge us as it should. Nearly thirty years ago I was walking the streets of a Northern city with my dear old father, arm in arm. We were talking about matters of the day when we came upon a fellow with limbs crippled, sitting on the sidewalk, leaning up against the front of a store building with a cap in his hand and a few lead pencils in his hat. We stopped long enough for Father to say: "God bless you, old fellow. Sorry to see you in this plight. I trust you are a Christian. But if you're not a Christian, give your heart to God. God bless you." And we passed on.

We hadn't gone too far, perhaps two or three blocks, till we came upon a blind man with a fiddle tucked caressingly under his chin, grinding out a few tunes, a tin cup with a few coins in it strapped around his waist. Father stopped, reached for another coin, dropped it in the tin cup and said: "God bless you, my friend. Sorry that you're unfortunate. Sorry for your blindness, but I trust you are a Christian. Being blind, you have missed a lot here, but don't miss heaven. If you miss heaven, you've missed everything. Don't miss heaven. God bless you."

And on up the street we walked until we came upon a little old woman sitting on a stool near the curb. I can see her now in her bonnet with the strings tied under her chin and an old plaid shawl around her shoulders such as my Scotch grandmother used to wear, and an apron across her lap. On the apron was a pile of newspapers which she was selling. Father came right up in front of her, got another coin, threw it in her apron, and said, "God bless you, Grandma; God bless your heart. Are you a Christian?" We'll never forget the look on her face. Those wrinkles began to shine and she lifted her eyes to meet ours. She forgot about her business, her stock-in-trade; she forgot about making a living. Looking Father in the face, she said, "Young feller, I'm a Christian." And Father said, "Mother, you won't have to sit on the street corners of heaven selling newspapers. Mother, I want to meet you in heaven." She got her hand up toward heaven and with her face aglow said, "Young feller, that's a date; I'll meet you in heaven." As we traveled up the street, we could hear the echo of her promise, see her face aglow and her hand still in the air: "Young feller, that's a date; I'll meet you in heaven."

We walked a little farther up the street this was thirty years ago -- and I stopped Father, put my hands on his shoulder, and said: "Father, I want you to quit this nonsense [remember I said this was thirty years ago] --I want you to quit this nonsense. Three times since we have been out together this morning I've seen you give your money away. Father, you don't have too much money, and your money comes the hard way. You need what money you have. Most of these folks are unworthy, and you don't have time to stop and investigate their worthiness. And if they are worthy, the city will take care of them. Father, keep your money in your pocket. You need it. Somebody else will look after them."

Father backed me up against the front of a store building, put his finger under my nose, and preached me a sermon that has lasted me thirty years. I'll never forget what he said. "Boy," and tears came to his eyes, "boy, you may be right. It may be that some of these folk are not worthy. That may be true. But that is their responsibility, not mine. I must give not only to help the other fellow, but I must give to keep my heart open and tender and touched and responsive toward a broken world, a world sin-cursed and half-damned. I have to keep my own heart open and tender." O my friend, it's so easy for us to become inured to the heartbreak and the heart cry of a broken world.

"The work of God must be wrought." In our broken world there isn't time for discouragement. The fact that wicked men have grown worse and worse, the fact of the soon return of the Lord, allows no time for us to slow down. I labored on a certain district as a young minister with a man who maintained that the coming of the Lord was so near that there was no time to do anything. And he was not doing anything.

But the Book of God doesn't talk like that. As long as the Holy Spirit is in the world, as long as we are in this Holy Ghost dispensation, God is going to be faithful where the gospel is preached and men and women are faithful in service and labor and importunity. The Holy Ghost is going to be faithful to get to the hearts of men. This is no time to let up or to let down. Now and then I hear somebody say, "Oh, that God would send us a Martin Luther! Oh, that God would bring back John Wesley! Oh, that God would send us some of the fathers of the Church who have gone to their reward!" My brother, that is the language of unwitting cowardice. That is the language and the cry of weaklings. God isn't going to fight today's battles with the dead heroes and heroines of yesterday. God expects us to fight the battles of righteousness, and the Holy Ghost is in the midst of God's people enabling us to have victory if we will claim the victory.

The first verse of our text is the record of John. The fourth verse is the language of Jesus. Now catch it. John says, "As Jesus passed by, he saw." Jesus says, "Seeing, I must... I must work." I remember talking to a certain pastor about a certain situation regarding a certain group of good people, and out of a heart of earnestness he said, "The difficulty is to get good people to accept responsibility for the service of God." That's just about the situation everywhere. They are good people, of course. But the battle of this age, this period of the Church, is to get good people to accept responsibility. But you say, "I am not called." Who said you were not called? "I have no particular gift." Who said you have no gift?

When I was in Knoxville, Brother Bill Elkins and I were sitting on the front lawn of his lovely home, which overlooks a little valley. A highway runs through that bit of the valley, with hills in either direction. We were sitting there talking one beautiful afternoon, when we heard a rather startling rapid-fire explosion that sounded like there might be a motorcycle up on the hill. We didn't think much of it until Brother Elkins' little daughter came running in the yard, red-faced and out of breath, and said, "Daddy, Daddy, come quickly. An accident, come quickly." We jumped into our automobile and rushed up the hill. A man had been backing out of a driveway. The motorcycle, with two young men on it, was speeding over the hill, rammed the rear of that car, and shunted off into a deep ditch.

There those boys lay in the bottom of the ditch among briars and brush, bleeding, broken, groaning, and that hot, smoking motorcycle was on top of them. What do you think we did? Did we stand there and say, "Why doesn't somebody come?" Those boys were crying, "Take this motorcycle off us. Straighten out my leg." Their heads were bleeding profusely. "Somebody help us!" Did we just stand there on the bank? Of course not! We sent someone to a telephone to call a doctor and then we got down into that ditch, pulled that hot motorcycle off those boys, and cut away the brush. We knew enough about such things to know we shouldn't move them too much. But we straightened out their limbs, got the brush away from bleeding temples, made them as comfortable as we could, and stood by them. Listen! Suppose we had stood on the bank and called for nurses, doctors, an ambulance, and said, "This is not our responsibility." Those boys would have bled to death. Society would never have forgiven us. Society would have said, "You could have done something. You could have done something but you didn't. And the little you might have done could have meant the margin between life and death."

O my friends, there is something we can do! There are a lot of things perhaps we can never do. We may never sing like some of these beautiful voices in the choir. We may not be able to

preach as some gifted ministers of the gospel do. But there is something we can do, There is something we can do in order to reach a world broken and half-damned by sin and the works of sin.

Jesus said, "I must." There was a blind man passing that way. And Jesus, seeing him, said, "I must . . .," with the inmost sense of compulsion. "Here is an opportunity. Here is a man in need. There is something I can do, and therefore I must do!" Oh, this matter of a burden! We used to hear more about soul burden, soul travail, than we do now. I spoke at Denver, Colorado, a few months ago to an audience which was made up very largely of Christian workers. A number of them gathered about me afterwards on the platform and said, "O Brother Nease, we believe in what you said, but tell us, how do you get a burden for a lost world?" If you do not know, I want to tell you how to get a burden.

When World War II broke out, I wasn't too much concerned about it. I said, "It's another one of Europe's quarrels. They have always had them and I guess they always will. It's just another one of Europe's quarrels." But one day Pearl Harbor came and our precious boys began to go. One of our neighbor boys went. I said, "God bless that mother and father, those brokenhearted parents." But I still felt no particular concern. It hadn't gotten to me yet.

But one day I was in Akron, Ohio, in a revival campaign. At two o'clock in the morning the pastor's phone rang. He came and knocked on the door, but before he ever knocked I knew what it was. He said, "Brother Nease, there's a long distance call from California for you." And on the other end of that wire was the trembling voice of my boy. He said, "Dad." "Yes, Son." "I told you I'd call you." He said, "I really shouldn't have called you, but I couldn't go without talking to you once more."

He said, "We're pushing off tomorrow. Dad, it's all right; I'm just another American boy, and it's as much my duty to go as any other American boy. I'm not worried. God can take care of me in the South Pacific as well as in America. And yet," he said, "I am not immune, Dad, any more than any other American boy. Dad, my wife and two babies--it's pretty hard to say good-bye to them. The reason I called you is this, Dad. You've loved me like a real dad. All I ask of you is this: If I shouldn't come back, would you love my wife and two babies like you love me? Would you, Dad?" I said, "Certainly, Son. But I believe you're coming back." He said, "Oh, don't talk about that part of it. That's all right, I just wanted to hear you say it, Dad. Will you take care of them, will you love my babies and my wife like you love me?" I said, "I will." He said, "Dad, I've got to go now. I shouldn't even be here, We're pushing off tomorrow. God bless you, Dad. Good-bye."

I could hear him breathing twenty-five hundred miles away. He didn't hang up the receiver for the longest time. But finally the receiver clicked. I'll never forget it. It cost me \$16.85. Since he's back I've held that bill against him. But I'm going to tell you the truth, that night I'd have paid it if it had been a hundred dollars. But listen, the pillow didn't feel good that night. Sleep had gone out the window. Next morning I came down to breakfast. They said, "Brother Nease, did you get bad news?" "No." "Brother Nease, won't you care for more toast?" "No, thank you. I wouldn't care for more toast." "Brother Nease, I fixed these eggs for you." "No, I wouldn't care for eggs." What was it? Brother, I got the burden! After that I listened to the radio with renewed interest. After that I scanned the headlines with a purpose. I wanted to know where that outfit was located with which

my boy was identified. I didn't need any urging to buy war bonds or to pay my taxes. It was my boy. I had a burden. Do you see what I mean?

This matter of getting a burden isn't settled by getting down on your knees and saying, "Lord, give me a burden." But it comes by an awakening, by a realizing that here is our responsibility. These are our boys and our girls and our neighbors and our unsaved loved ones. The task is ours! We are going to have to meet the consequences of misspent lives. The wages of sin is death. Sin plays no favorites. The devil would as soon have your boy or mine as anybody's boy. He would just as soon have your loved one as any other man or woman. O friend, if we could get that consciousness that it is our loved one, our friend, that redemption is our responsibility, we would have no trouble about prayer then, no trouble about getting folk under the sound of the gospel. This is our responsibility!

Perhaps I wouldn't be preaching this sermon, but Jesus says, "I must work." There is no easy road to a revival. You can't just put a banner out on the front of the church and an ad in the newspaper and call somebody with scholastic degrees and someone who has a beautiful singing voice, and expect a revival to blossom. This matter of winning a lost world, this matter of burden, is personal. Jesus said it is work. Jesus found it sweaty business in the garden and bloody business upon the cross. You and I are going to find it sweaty business and bloody business to stop that world in its mad rush.

"I must work." Work spells toil. It means perspiration and it means sacrifice. It is going to mean the acceptance of responsibility upon the part of each and every one of us. It is going to mean a burden that finds outlets in service and expressions in tears and prayers and toil and sacrifice for these boys and girls and men and women who need God.

I believe God wants to give us a revival. I believe God is going to give us a revival. I believe the old ways are our ways. I come to you with open heart and extended hand, and I say to you, brother and sister, here is my heart and here is my hand to stand with you in prayers and tears and earnest proclamation and invitation to make it as hard for men to be lost and as easy for them to be saved as is within our power. "I must work the works of him that sent me."

* * * * *

A PERSONAL PORTRAIT OF MY FATHER

By Orval J. Nease, Jr.

This is an informal portrait of my father. I do not intend that it should be complete, just touching the high points in my memories of him.

This biography is, of course, personal. It is a portrait of a man seen through the eyes of his son. I can write of him only as he appeared to me, his son, in the too brief years in which we lived in the same world.

Dad And His Home

In the early years of my childhood he was "Daddy" in the home. Our home was always full of sweet affection and gentle good humor. Our "Daddy" was just naturally, without meaning to be, the center of everything.

He seemed the most generous man I ever knew. His greatest delight and satisfaction was in giving to others. He enjoyed bringing surprise gifts home for Bob and me. If he saw a dress in the window that particularly reminded him of Mother, off the rack it came. Mother was constantly and happily astonished at the unending generosity of her husband.

We enjoyed traveling with him to his conventions and camp meetings and assemblies. We had real family fun in the car. Dad had willing answers to our innumerable questions concerning strange towns and buildings and the changing scenery of our travels.

We laughingly played the traditional alphabet and guessing games that consumed the miles of travel. We sang all the songs we knew from "When Father Put the Paper on the Wall" to "Whisper a Prayer in the Morning." It was regular routine to have our devotions while the car sped down the highway. For a long time it was an enticing mystery to me how my father could pray so long and still keep the car on the road . . . until one day I peeked.

Dad was a lover of the beauties of nature. He took special notice of the blooming flowers. He was delighted with the rich growth of grains and the changing soils as we traveled across the country. Perhaps the mountains held the greatest attraction for him. He built his California home at the foot of Mount Wilson, and provided spacious window views of his favorite mountains. In fact, he made the statement that he would someday like to be buried at the foot of those mountains. And he is.

Dad had an intense love for his home. He was a loving husband and father. The simple conversations of the fireside and mealtime were enriching experiences. Our home was casual and warm. It was easy for our guests to feel at home. We were just . . . folks.

To have loved ones or friends drop in on us at dinnertime or even late in the evening was never an intrusion. They were as welcome as though we had planned their arrival for weeks. Dad was never happier than when he was surrounded by his loved ones and friends.

If Dad harbored an unkind thought about any man, we never knew it at home. I don't remember one solitary word of unkindness ever expressed in my home. Everybody was as good as we were. Dad taught us to esteem strangers.

Dad enjoyed working around the house in his old clothes. A worn pair of pants, sport shirt, his sweater with buttons down the front, an old hat, and his slippers were typical. His experience in building houses to support himself during college days stood him in good stead across the years. He could fix anything fixable.

There was a joviality about our home that was uplifting. My father's sense of humor always involved a sense of fair play. He maintained a generous sympathy that gave his sons the benefit of the doubt. He could be completely trusted with our deepest secrets and direst faults.

He was tenderhearted even in disciplining us. How well do I remember the days of the razor strop! It was well used in our home for purposes other than sharpening razors. My father was a strong and healthy man with a firm hand that also found the place of correction with resounding understanding. But I always knew that he loved me, even at the times of discipline.

He was easily accessible. It didn't matter how deeply engrossed in studies or conversation, he had a moment for his sons' most trivial problems. Nothing was ever "his." It was always "ours." Everybody seemed first.

My father was a man of prayer. His habit of praying was never offensive to his growing children; it was rather compelling. Our family altar was refreshing. His prayers reached around the whole world in loving concern. He prayed with soul poetry. He prayed until the flow of God's presence permeated the very atmosphere of the room.

I don't know much about his secret prayer life. I do remember peeking into his study many times and curiously listening to his earnest conversation with his Heavenly Father while his head was bowed in his hands on the desk. He always knelt by the side of his bed before retiring. I remember being awakened on a few occasions in the middle of the night hours by his quiet groanings of burdened prayers for the souls of his loved ones and for the weighty problems of the general church.

My home to me was without disturbance. It seemed that love ruled. It seemed that we loved everybody and that everybody loved us. Peace was always the undercurrent.

Christmas Day was a highlight: It was Dad's birthday. Yet he gave more than everyone else combined. He put on the big apron and helped prepare the sumptuous Christmas breakfast. He provided the means for the heaping gifts around the Christmas tree. He led the traditional Christmas family devotions. He was Santa Claus.

God gave my father the love of two wonderful women. Mother Emma must have been a sweet and beautiful young lady: She won my father's love in college days. But God saw fit to take her Home when I was three days old, March 11, 1919. About two years later Dad traveled to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, to receive into his heart and life one of the dearest college friends of his departed loved one.

Mother Katherine has been God's chosen companion for Dad across the years. She never asked for the limelight, she just wore well with everybody. She gave her husband a silent devotion and steady courage across the years that would build greatness in any man.

Her life, summed up, has been an unselfish, unassuming service to her home and church. She was God's appointed handmaiden who beautifully completed the life of the man who leaned heavily upon her love across the years.

During Dad's last two years, when he fought the losing battle for his life, Mother expertly took over everything. She cared for him day and night. She attended to the details of finances,

helped with correspondence, and made appointments. She shielded him tenderly from any unnecessary exertion. She cherished every moment of her time with him.

Since Dad has moved into the other world, Mother has masterfully adjusted to her great loss. She feels, not so much that she has lost, but that she has given.

She was true to her husband . . . in sickness and in health, in prosperity and in adversity. She was, with magnificent simplicity, his wife!

Dad And His Parents

Dad was closely attached to his own mother and father and to his two brothers and one sister. He never missed an opportunity to fellowship with his family. He loved them dearly, and each one equally.

His father, William O. Nease, was a rugged holiness preacher of the old-fashioned variety. He was a young and successful Michigan farmer when he was first converted, and God called him to preach. His wife, Agnes, gave her heart to God, and they became staunch workers in the United Brethren church.

They both received the glorious experience of the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit. They were sanctified Christians. Grandfather so persistently preached the message of this experience that he was brought to church trial. He demonstrated such a magnanimous and victorious spirit throughout the trial that the bishop and all of his opposition were confounded.

With the vigorous determination that characterized the pioneer holiness movement in America, Grandfather and Grandmother kept their faith, and soon, in the beginning of the twentieth century, found themselves directed to the Church of the Nazarene.

Rev. William O. Nease was a fearless and enflamed second-blessing holiness evangelist who loved God with his whole heart and hated sin as strongly. He went to heaven at the age of sixty-nine with the fruits of his labors scattered across the United States.

Mrs. William O. Nease beautifully and courageously obeyed God across the years; and today, at the age of eighty-two, she portrays a saintliness that combines the venerable heritage of old-fashioned godliness in its simplicity and dignity with a refreshing optimism of faith in the present and future.

The influence of these parents in the life of my father cannot be overemphasized. He was the first child of this home. His brother Floyd was two years younger. Orval and Floyd were inseparable. They attended Pasadena College together, and were ordained elders in the Church of the Nazarene on June 23, 1918, by General Superintendent H. F. Reynolds, in Pasadena, California.

They preached their first sermons and held their first revivals as companions, and were college presidents at the same time. Floyd W. Nease died unexpectedly at the age of thirty-six

while he was president of Eastern Nazarene College. Death cut short the promising future of a godly and scholarly young man.

Byron and Elizabeth were much loved by Dad, and were intimately fastened to his heart even through the closing moments of his life. These family ties were extraordinarily important to my father across the years. The affection and understanding of this family was a stronghold to him. A portrait of his life would not be complete without the inclusion of these close relationships.

Dad And His Sons

To my father I am indebted for my first understanding of the meaning of the Fatherhood of God, and my first trusting in God's love. Dad lived everything he preached.

He was intensely interested in the needs and ambitions, the hopes and fears of his two sons. If a human father can generate so much love and affection for his sons, how much more must our Heavenly Father love and care for us!

I remember his talking to me about my brother, Bob. He talked in such glowing and considerate terms. He was keenly sensitive to the spiritual strides that Bob was making.

Dad was a great pal to me during my college days. His faithful letters of Christian counsel and encouragement became treasures of sacred value. When he visited the college for speaking engagements, he took the time to visit my dormitory room and to watch the college athletic contests in which I participated.

I never remember being embarrassed by him. When I saw him coming down the street or down the aisle, a mountain of loving pride welled up within me. He was my dad. His heart seemed large enough to take in everyone with room to spare. People loved him, young and old. Dad was a good sport when he was inconvenienced. If life dealt him hardships no one was aware of them.

When we were with him in a series of speaking engagements, he would encourage us to stay at home, if we preferred, while he was preaching. But his suggestion worked inversely, for I considered it an opportunity to hear him preach again and again.

My adult relationships with him were enriching. He loved my family. My wife, Ann, was never an "in-law." He enjoyed introducing her as "my only daughter." He loved to hear her sing, and would send new music to her from all over the country. When his grandchildren arrived, his delight knew no bounds: Had he lived longer he would have bound Joan and Sharon to his heart.

I remember one occasion when he visited our home after months of travel. We were sitting around the luncheon table, and he shared with us an illustration which he had recently heard one of his colleagues use. He put his heart into the telling of that simple story until all of us were shedding tears as the impact of his sincerity gripped our imaginations.

His viewpoint was always sane, careful, positive, courageous. He detested cheapness and sensationalism. He lived by soul attitudes. He seemed utterly unconscious of himself. He never posed. His life was beautifully simple and natural. He was truly humble in the best sense.

Dad And His Church

He loved the Church of the Nazarene. He loved to be with our people everywhere. As he wrote us from his district assemblies in each section of the country it seemed that the people in that section must be his favorites. But I finally concluded that he loved all of our people across the denomination equally well.

He loved the doctrines and standards of the Church of the Nazarene. The church Manual was unquestionably second only to the Word of God in importance to him. Dad loved all of the institutions and departments of the Church of the Nazarene. It is difficult to determine which emphasis of the church received the greatest portion of his personal devotion.

He loved the colleges of the church and gloried in their increasing strength. He was thrilled with the advance of the Nazarene Theological Seminary. He rejoiced in the outstanding development of the Nazarene Publishing House. He was a staunch friend of the Good Samaritan Hospital. He watched with enthusiasm the rapid growth of the "Showers of Blessing" radio program.

He was keenly aware of the Nazarene youth program everywhere. He held a special attachment for the young preachers of the church. On one occasion he said, "Our church has nothing to fear with its future in the hands of the young preachers that I know."

He was strongly Sunday-school minded. The cause of home missions and foreign missions captured his fervor as the ever-expanding frontier of the Church of the Nazarene. His trip to the Orient revealed illuminating horizons to him that became the keynote of his last two years of ministry.

Mother received frequent letters like this: "The missionaries are doing a wonderful job. The opportunity is flattering. If we can get the church awakened and united in giving . . . the next ten years will mean a gigantic harvest on our mission fields."

Dad wept and prayed earnestly over the deplorable conditions in China and Korea and the Philippines and Japan following his return from those fields. He talked often of his desire to take Mother with him on a return trip before the 1952 General Assembly. In his sleep he would plead for missions. Not long before he left us he said with much compassion, "Have I done all I could for them?"

Dad loved to preach. He loved the cause of holiness. He loved the work of the general superintendency, although his greatest love was the pastorate. He was master of the assemblies over which he presided. He was an evangelist, an expositor, a teacher, a shepherd. The theme of his life was "The Love of God."

Dad And His Departure

During the last few months of his life, with all the pangs and physical stresses he endured, his life hung by a thread. He was continuously cheerful and undaunted, stricken in body but quite undisturbed and even unaffected in spirit. He was in love with his labors. He rejoiced in his brethren. To be at his task was the breath of his life.

That last day of his life was both tragic and beautiful: tragic because of the heartbreak of our loss, but beautiful because of the unusual atmosphere of the hospital room. It was the most exquisitely peaceful atmosphere I have ever experienced. There was a relaxed hush about the bed that was compelling. Dad was there, and yet he wasn't. All the force of his loving personality gripped us in a breathless quiet. All the godliness of his living seemed to speak to us from his strong, kindly chin to his broad, fair brow.

Oh, the intense desire to talk to him once more; to counsel with him concerning those problems that only he could answer; even just to say good-by and, "I love you!" But his only words, in one brief moment of articulation in which he expressed the very center of his life, were, "God, God, God!" I held his hand as the angels of heaven took his soul.

I thank God for a Christian father, a holy man, "a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

A Sister-In-Law Speaks About Dad

Mrs. Floyd W. Nease writes these words, which are so fitting:

"Words fail me when I endeavor to tell what the life of my husband's brother, Dr. Orval J. Nease, has meant to me and my family. Orval never seemed a brother-in-law to me, but rather a brother and a father. When Floyd changed his residence to heaven, leaving me bewildered and wondering in a strange, cruel world with a five-year-old boy and a ten-month-old girl, Orval's understanding of my problem was beyond comprehension. In fact, in my dilemma, Orval's judgment seemed almost divine. I prized it.

"Our two families were greatly separated in distance; his on the west coast, mine on the east; but there was never any separation in spirit. I was ever confident that he had our welfare at heart, and I could contact him at any time, no matter where his work as college president, pastor, or general superintendent called him. He visited us every chance he could get, always coming as one returning home, laden with gifts for us all. Nothing was too good or too expensive.

"Not only are we grateful to God for what Orval meant to us as a family, but I could never begin to thank God for what he has meant in the lives of my children. They were very young when their daddy left; but the fatherly counsel and attentiveness of their uncle, even though he was an extremely busy man, made them watch for his coming as they previously had for their father's.

"Much of what my children are today is due to the kindness and prayers of this man of God. On his visits when he prayed he touched God, and we felt confident of similar prayers even when

separated. My son, too young when his father died to understand the full meaning of it all; was present at his uncle's funeral in Pasadena, and said to his cousin, Orval, 'Now I know what it means to lose my father.' There is nothing I could say which could even begin to sum up, at all adequately, my deep appreciation of my brother, Orval J. Nease."

A Friend Speaks About Dad

Dr. Russell V. DeLong, dean of the Nazarene Theological Seminary, writes these words about the man whom he knew as a friend from young manhood:

"His ability as a pastor is evidenced by the growth of churches under his leadership, such as Malden, Massachusetts; Columbus, Ohio; and Detroit, Michigan.

"As a young man Orval Nease was not only a youth leader and successful pastor; he was a religious educator, serving as chairman of district church school boards, which was finally climaxed in his election as editor in chief of the church school publications of the entire denomination.

"He was also a Christian educator, having served as professor and president of Pasadena College.

"Orval Nease was a well-rounded person. He was active in every phase of church work, which finally resulted in his election as general superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene.

"He received his early education in Pasadena College, and later enrolled in several universities, finally receiving his Master's Degree from Boston University. He was abreast of the times and cognizant of world problems.

"Orval Nease was a man's man. He was an extrovert: active, dynamic, sociable. He loved people and he loved good nature.

"As a camp-meeting preacher he was unexcelled. He was an evangelist carrying a real burden for souls.

"As a friend Orval Nease was superior. He was a pal, never losing his dignity nor becoming common.

"He was a man of vision and action. An example of these qualities is the erection of the Administration Building of Pasadena College.

"Orval Nease detested insincerity and duplicity. He was a straight shooter himself and expected the same from others.

"No doubt his highest qualities were revealed as a husband and a father. He was always thinking of nice things to do and buy for his wife and boys. He lived for them and thought of them

continuously. Orval Nease was a highly talented, well-educated, symmetrically developed, radiant, dynamic, and spiritual personality. He died too young, but his works follow after him."

Poetry Speaks About Dad

Poet-Evangelist Charles Hastings Smith wrote this poem after learning of the home-going of my father:

He has answered the silver bugle
From across the river wide and deep,
And there is sunset for a soldier
And sunset for us who weep.

But effulgent though the shadows
Where the mystic river dips--
The splendor of a golden vessel anchored
In the harbor of the Apocalypse.

There is music like Niagara
Thundering down from heaven's dome,
Coronation music--crown awaiting--
Another pilgrim has come home.

I knew him as a leader
Blest with attributes strong and brave,
And his influence cannot be harnessed
To the dimensions of a grave.

For in the vineyards where he labored
And told the news of God's sweet peace
Nazarenes will perpetuate the memory
Of a man named Orval Nease.

My father's sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Herrell, wrote this poem to her brother, based on one of his sermon illustrations:

Needlework is a curious pastime;
An amateur can't quite understand
How the one who handles the needle
Knows the stitches, the ply of the strand.

Who can tell the way of the pattern,
Where this line begins, that one ends?
What a confusion of threads, knots, and tangles!
No plan, no perspective of artistic blend!

Such is the view when seen from the wrong side:
Wild clash of colors and unfinished seams;
Nothing but loose ends, what havoc of effort--
Surely this can't be a great artist's dream!

But, oh, the one who guides the needle
Knows always the pattern, the way of the line;
Here color, there shadow, threads blending and ending,
Now change of stitches the work to define.

The Hand that weaves the skeins of life
Knows which colors never fade,
Knows the tensile strength of each thread,
Knows just how the pattern's made.

The same Hand severs the mortal strand,
Rethreads in immortality,
To complete the eternal vision
Of the Weaver of life's tapestry.

It is He who bids us look up--
Look with faith beyond our tears,
To the pattern's finished beauty.
It's perfection then appears!

* * * * *

HIS MEMORIAL SKETCH

The following memorial sketch was prepared by Dr. Sylvester T. Ludwig for the memorial service held at 2:00 p.m., Friday, November 10, 1950, at the First Church of the Nazarene, in Pasadena, California, where nearly two thousand of Father's friends were in attendance:

"Orval J. Nease was born at Nashville, Michigan, on December 25, 1891, and was called to his eternal reward at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, November 7, 1950. At an early age he was converted and later sanctified wholly. He soon felt the divine call to the Christian ministry and gave himself earnestly to preparation for it.

"Dr. Nease graduated from Pasadena College, Pasadena, California, and took his graduate degree in religion from Boston University. He took additional graduate studies at Ohio State University, seeking always to prepare himself to be an effective servant of God. Along with his brother, Rev. Floyd W. Nease, who preceded him in death, he was ordained as a minister in the Church of the Nazarene at Pasadena, California, June 23, 1918, by the late General Superintendent H. F. Reynolds.

"On June 26, 1917, he was united in marriage to Emma Spring, to which union one son, Orval J., Jr., was born. Mrs. Nease passed away March 11, 1919:

"On August 29, 1920, Dr. Nease was married to Katherine Miller, who has been his faithful companion until his death. To this union one son, Robert, was born.

"Dr. Nease's service to the Kingdom and the Church of the Nazarene extends over a period of thirty-five years as pastor, evangelist, college president, church school executive, and general superintendent. He held pastorates at Phoenix, Arizona, First Church; Meridian, Texas; Malden, Massachusetts; Columbus, Ohio, First Church; and Detroit, Michigan, First Church. From 1928 to 1933 he was president of Pasadena College, Pasadena, California.

"In 1938 Dr. Nease was elected as editor in chief of church school periodicals and executive secretary of the Department of Church Schools for the general church. In this area he rendered distinguished service to the cause of Christian education. In 1940 the General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene elected Dr. Nease as one of four general superintendents. He served in this capacity until 1944. He was re-elected as general superintendent in 1948 and served as such until the time of his death.

"Although Dr. Nease had not been well for some time, his home-going came as a distinct shock to the church. He had just completed his last district assembly at Miami, Florida, on October 19, and was at home resting from his recent labors. He suffered a relapse on Monday, November 6, and was taken to Huntington Memorial Hospital in Pasadena, where he passed away.

"The life and ministry of General Superintendent Nease were characterized by a passion to win souls for Christ and a loyal devotion to the Church of the Nazarene. He was an able minister of the Word and an effective exponent of the doctrine of holiness."

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THE END