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FIFTY READY-CUT SERMONS

By Jerry Miles Humphrey

Author Of
Select Fruits
Spiritual Lessons
Fragments From The King's Table
Sermons That Never Die
Daily Guide For The Sanctified
X-ray Sermons
Railroad Sermons
Lost Soul's First Day In Eternity
Soul's First Day In Heaven
Sin's By-Paths
Spicy Pocket Sermons
Impressive Talks
Secret Of Unction
Dew Drops
Divorce-Marriage
The Convert's Guide
Revival Fire In Song
Etc.

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CONTENTS

About This Digital Edition
Dedication
Preface

- 01 -- The Dew
- 02 -- The City Of Refuge
- 03 -- Five Aspects Of Sin
- 04 -- The Stony Ground Hearer
- 05 -- A Hopeless Soul
- 06 -- Making Melody In Your Heart
- 07 -- The Rich And The Poor
- 08 -- The Great Gulf Fixed
- 09 -- We Will Not Come Up!
- 10 -- Losing Canaan
- 11 -- Jonah's Honesty
- 12 -- Hell Delineated
- 13 -- Find You Unprepared
- 14 -- Reason And Revelation
- 15 -- Digging A Well
- 16 -- Peter's Six Downward Steps
- 17 -- The Crime Of The Devil
- 18 -- The Religion Of The Prophets
- 19 -- Not Recognizing Jesus
- 20 -- Lazarus Is Dead
- 21 -- The Sun Is Gone Down
- 22 -- Come Up Hither!
- 23 -- Feeding The Multitude
- 24 -- Fighting Fire
- 25 -- Christ's Death On The Cross
- 26 -- Elijah And The Widow
- 27 -- Sheep
- 28 -- The Last Enemy
- 29 -- Out Of Plumb
- 30 -- The Life Of Christ
- 31 -- Thy Tin
- 32 -- Stephen's Death
- 33 -- Through
- 34 -- Pillar Of Salt
- 35 -- A Worm
- 36 -- A Hedge About Him
- 37 -- Moses The Beginner
- 38 -- Absalom's Mule
- 39 -- What Happens When A Sinner Dies?
- 40 -- Odds Against Death-Bed Repentance
- 41 -- An Uneasy Spirit
- 42 -- Peter In Prison

- 43 -- Why Our Imperfections Will Be Overlooked
- 44 -- Where Is Thy Brother?
- 45 -- Six Ear-Marks Of God's People
- 46 -- This Present World
- 47 -- Help
- 48 -- Envy
- 49 -- The Grave
- 50 -- Why The Church Is Powerless

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ABOUT THIS DIGITAL EDITION

I have elected to indent only once for all parts of the outlines contained in this publication. Doing otherwise, when using the Tab Key for indentations would create some awkward looking arrangements. Thus, I leave it up to the user of these outlines to reset the indentations in his or her own copy of them, when such copies are made for use apart from this document. -- DVM

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DEDICATION

This volume is lovingly dedicated
To my four sisters and five brothers:--

To Pious Eliza,
And Faithful Jul'ann,
To Meek Little Mollie,
And Emma The "Man,"
To Henry And Edward,
The Eldest Son Born,
To William And Harry,
And "Cry-Baby" John.

* * * * *

PREFACE

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." (Ecc. 11:1, 6.)

In keeping with the above words of the wise man I am sending forth this collection of "sermon-outlines." They have been prepared especially for beginners, and also for busy pastors and evangelists, who are too pressed for time to fast, pray, and dig up new sermons.

I send them forth to become public property. Therefore, if they can be of service to you, feel perfectly free to use them without even mentioning the name of the author; but give all the glory to "Him, who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

Yours For The Evangelization Of The World,
J. M. Humphrey
July, 1925

* * * * *

01 -- THE DEW

"I will be as the dew unto Israel." (Hos. 14:5)

Our loving, heavenly Father has used so many vivid pictures from nature to show us what He is, and how anxious He is to help us. In the 84th Psalm, David compared Him to the sun, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield." In Isaiah 32:2 He is spoken of as follows: "And a man shall be a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

In the text He likens the operation of His spirit upon human hearts to the morning dew. "Dew," is like a small rain which, falling upon the ground in the morning, doth keep it moist and make it fruitful. It also waters and refreshes vegetation in times of drought.

God's spirit and Word are to have a similar effect upon his children. In Deut. 32:2 we read these words: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."

Let us hurriedly study the dew and thus more perfectly acquaint ourselves with God's dealings with us.

1. The first lesson we learn concerning the dew is, that it never falls during cloudy weather, but only from a clear sky. This is strikingly true in regard to the Blessed Holy Ghost. His power and blessing only come upon souls when every obstruction is cleared away and there is nothing between the soul and its Maker.

What saith the scripture on this point? "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isa. 59:1, 2.)

Reader, what is that thing or that indulgence that is veiling the face of God from your soul, and thus keeping the heavenly dews from falling upon your life and your ministry?

Remember, just as vegetation droops and dies when the dew fails to fall, just so will your soul wither and die when the blessing of God ceases to refresh your spirit.

2. Scientists tell us also, that dew does not fall during windy, blustery seasons, but only upon a quiet, yielded earth. All nature must cease its struggling and become quiet. The grasses and flowers must all lie still, while the silent showers descend from heaven. So many times in the Psalms we are exhorted to "be still." In James 4:7 we read these words, "Submit yourselves therefore to God." Some people are too restless, blustery and talkative to receive the gentle dew and falling dew.

Like a parent with a restless child, God, in order to give you a better experience and lead you to deeper depths, has to put you to bed with some type of illness in order to cause you to "be still" and receive a fresh supply of the heavenly dew. It is no marvel that some dried up professors of religion never get thawed-out and blessed-up until they are on their death bed. That seems to be the only place where God can get them to lie still long enough to receive a heavy, spiritual dew-fall.

3. A third lesson which we learn from the dew is, that it falls late at night and early in the morning. So it is with the spiritual dew. Some people are too sleepy-headed and lazy to obtain much dew-fall. They have no relish for early morning devotion or frequent entire nights devoted to prayer. They put off their secret devotion until the family is up and breakfast over and the daily paper has been scanned. Hence, by that time the heavenly dew has all evaporated and the spirit of prayer lifted. Israel had to gather her manna early in the morning. Reader, how is it with you? When Jesus was upon earth, his custom was to rise early in the morning and retire to the mountain for secret prayer. By so doing, his soul was kept like a watered garden.

4. I have noticed also, that dew falls without any visible appearances. In other words, it falls in the dark. So it is with the Blessed Holy Spirit acting upon a human heart. After all sin has been abandoned; after the soul has ceased to hold controversy with its Maker; after the seeker has taken God at his word, and the unwavering, trustful step and stand of FAITH has been taken: then and there, the heavens open and the soul inspiring, soul refreshing and soul filling dew falls. Yes, "As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." (Psalms 133:3.)

5. Those who have lived in rural districts or on farms are familiar with the fact, that to retain the dew, nature must remain in the same mood and condition that it was in when the dew first fell. You have noticed that, when the sun came out and the breezes awoke, the dew quietly and quickly slipped away.

This is also true regarding the Holy Ghost. To retain him, one must remain in the same watchful, and prayerful state. The word says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." (Col. 2:6.)

Many years of careful observation have convinced the writer that too much publicity, visiting and lightness grieves away the gentle Holy Spirit and gets the soul out of tune with heaven.

* * * * *

"Then ye shall appoint you cities, to be cities of refuge for you: that the slayer may flee thither." (Num. 35:11.)

Here we have a brief record of God providing cities of refuge for the man slayer. This narrative first gives us a vivid picture of the love of God. Secondly, it beautifully outlines Christ and his offices: and thirdly, makes plain the way that leads to Christ, the sinner's refuge.

Let us notice some of the many ways in which these cities of refuge represented or rather typified Christ, the sinner's refuge.

1. The cities were six in number and were built on both sides of the river Jordan. In this position they were in reach of every tribe, and also within access of strangers, (verse 15). Does not this remind the reader of the blessed invitation in God's word which reads thus: "And the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:27.)

2. The next fact regarding the cities that are brim-full of gospel is, that the gates leading into them were never closed, but open day and night. The watchman was on the look-out all the while for the refuge-seeking soul. This is so self-evident that it needs no comment. However, I will call the attention of the reader to but one passage of scripture to verify this statement. "He that keepeth thee will not slumber, behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." (Psalms 121:3-4.)

3. We are told by the rabbis, that once in the year, or oftener, the magistrates of the district were accustomed to survey the high roads which led to these cities; they carefully gathered up all the stones and took the greatest possible precautions, that there should be no stumbling-block in the way, which might cause the poor fugitive to fall, or in any way impede his progress in his flight for life.

In the New Testament, we are so frequently exhorted to stick to sound doctrine. The reason for this may be seen in the survey of the roads just mentioned. The word also cautions us thus:-- "Take heed, lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak." (I. Cor. 8:9.) Much precaution should be taken at revivals and camp-meetings regarding what the preachers and altar-workers believe and teach. Multitudes have been turned from the royal way into the murky swamps of error as a result of these two classes of religious workers being unsound in their teaching.

Paul extorted Timothy as follows -- " Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard from me." (I. Tim. 1:13.) And to Titus he wrote:-- "Holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayer." (Tit. 1:9.)

No matter how brilliant or gifted a preacher or teacher may be, nevertheless, if his doctrine is false and erroneous, he should not be put up to preach to the people. (II John 1:10.)

4. Tradition also tells us, that all along the road there were hand-posts with the word, "refuge," written very legibly upon them, so that when a fugitive came to a cross-road, he might not need to question for a single moment which was the way of escape; but seeing the well-known word, "refuge," he kept on his breathless course until he had entered the "city of refuge."

All the way from Genesis to Malachi may be seen the hand-posts (in the forms of types, shadows and symbols) pointing to Christ, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29.)

5. The next startling fact seen in the picture before us is that the fugitive was hotly pursued by an angry foe.

Many centuries ago the apostle Peter wrote these age-abiding words -- "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (I. Pet. 5:8.) The apostle Paul also informed us of the fact, that sinner's sins, like a pack of blood-hounds, were following hard on his track and following him to the judgment bar of God. (I. Tim. 5:24.)

6. The fugitive of long ago was not to tarry or loiter by the way, but run for his life. Lot also was commanded by the angel to do a similar thing. Let us notice his words, which are still sounding like the trumpet of doom -- "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain: escape to the mountain. Haste thee, escape thither." (Gen. 19:17-26.)

7. Verse 9, 6 makes it unmistakably clear that the fugitive was only safe while he abode in the city. Notice how it reads, "But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge, whither he has fled, and the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer, he shall not be guilty of blood." (Num. 35:26 and 27.)

There is a similar passage of scripture found in the New Testament, which reads as follows: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." (John 15:6.) These quotations in the Bible do not lead one to think that, "Once in grace is always in grace," as some people teach.

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03 -- FIVE ASPECTS OF SIN -- (Revival Message)

"That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." (Rom. 7:13.)

The apostle here inferred that the gospel was a bright shining light, and that without it, sin could not be seen in all of its awfulness. I verily believe, that if sinners could see sin in all of its awfulness they would cry for help like a man in the grip of a giant serpent:

1. "Sin" is any act, word or thought, omission or cherished desire" that is contrary to the law of God.

2. "Sin" is somewhat of a trinity in unity, having three prevailing principles, namely: character, essence, and development.

- a. Its character is unbelief.
- b. Its essence is enmity to God.
- c. Its development is disobedience.

In this chapter I shall call the reader's attention to five aspects of "sin."

I. The Guilt Of Sin

"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."
(James 2:10.)

a. Guilt breeds fear. "There is no fear in (love; but perfect love casteth out fear." (John 4:18.)

b. Guilt gives rise to torment. This is why the guilty sinner is so grievously tormented when brought face to face with danger.

c. Guilt cannot be successfully concealed. It is like a dead human body in the ocean, it finally comes to the top.

II. The Pollution Of Sin

a. Sin defiles and destroys like leprosy. "The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores." (Isa. 1:6.)

b. Sin with its huge tail dragged down an archangel and polluted his Godlike purity, and filled his heart with all of the elements that are to be found in that lake of fire and brimstone.

III. The Darkness Of Sin

a. Jesus said: "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."
(Matt. 6:23.)

1. The tendency of sin is to put out the eyes of reason and leave the soul to grope in gross darkness.

a. There are, no doubt, men and women all about us who have been blinded by sin, and they are groping their way at noon-day.

2. Sin breeds ignorance and superstition. a. Think of the pall of ignorance and superstition hanging over Africa, India, China and Japan!

3. Sin sends souls out of the world in a topless, bottomless, shoreless cloud of darkness.

a. No wonder that the dying infidel went out of the world exclaiming, "I am taking an awful leap into the dark."

b. Job said, "Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world." (Job. 18:5, 18.)

IV. The Deceitfulness Of Sin (Heb. 3:7.)

1. The way it misleads, like the Jack-o'-lantern's light.

2. The deceptive way in which sin colors high places.

3. The fascinating way in which sin baits temptation's hook, concealing the deadly hook.

4. The unique way in which it clothes ungodliness in the robe of righteousness -- the wolf in the garb of the lamb and the demon dressed as an angel of light.

V. The Wages Of Sin (Rom. 6:22.)

1. Unhappiness.

2. Disappointment

3. Poverty.

4. Insanity

5. Disease.

6. Broken hearts.

7. Eternal death.

VI. The Remedy For Sin

1. "Come let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. 1:18.)

2. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21.)

3. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I. John 1:9.)

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04 -- THE STONY GROUND HEARER

"But he that receiveth the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: yet he hath not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offered." (Matt. 13:20, 21.)

In this beautiful parable the Savior described four classes who hear and accept the gospel. In viewing the parable at a closer range three valuable thoughts are suggested. They are as follows:

1. That out of four people who hear the gospel, one person is deeply affected. It is true, he may not turn from a life of sin and accept Christ immediately, nevertheless, according to the statement of the Lord Jesus Christ, in this parable, they will some time and somewhere bring forth fruit to perfection.

2. The parable goes further still, and at least suggests, or rather infers, that only one out of four, (who believe, accept the gospel and make a start for heaven) go through to the end. What an awful thought!

The parable reveals also the three chief reasons why so many become unfruitful and turn from the way. They are:

a. Allowing Satan to catch away the word out of their hearts. So many people have been impressed while listening to a Holy Ghost sermon and felt convicted to renounce this or that sin and idol. Others on hearing the gospel were impressed to make an open-breasted confession, make restitution, or make some changes in their social and domestic life; but after getting away from under the influence of the gospel message and messenger, they were met by Satan in the form of a relative, neighbor or friend, and the weighty conviction produced by the message was reasoned away. And in spite of all their conviction and good intentions, they finally land in a lake of fire and brimstone.

b. A second reason why so many turn from the way and are lost given by Jesus here, is taking up with a superficial religion. (See verse 5.)

1. The following statement may seem rather extravagant, but yet it is true: False religion is doing the country more harm than the liquor traffic did in its prime.

2. A religion that allows people to dance, get drunk, lie, steal, commit adultery, have two or three living husbands or wives, and dress like the world, etc., is far more detrimental to society than horse racing and gambling. For people who drink, swear and gamble know that they are sinners and are on their way to the pit, but for the preacher to take people into the church without

having renounced these things, and then for him to try to make them believe that they are in the way that leads to heaven, "this," I say, "is wickedness beyond description."

c. The next reason, (given in verse seven), why so many fail and are lost eternally, is that they allow themselves to become too absorbed in worldly cares, thus the word is choked and they become unfruitful.

As time will only admit of our Speaking of the "stony ground hearer," let us place him upon the table and study him from various angles, and thus familiarize ourselves with the things that caused his down fall.

1. Evidently, he believed the Lord, accepted the word, and turned from sin to God.
2. For a while he was greatly enthused and rejoiced in the way. (Verse 20.)
3. The words, "sprang up," lead us to believe that for a while he made some progress.

Let us observe him still more narrowly, and see what or wherein he lacked or failed.

I. He came in on a wave of enthusiasm without having the unfallow ground of his heart broken up. (Jer. 4:9 and ties. 10:12.)

II. He failed to get rid of the "stony heart;" that is, he did not get the rocks of carnality blasted out of his soul. He failed to get the tap-root of his besetting sin eradicated. He only had it covered over with a thin layer of the soil of "good works and good resolutions." (Ezek. 36:25.)

III. He could sing, pray, preach and go on dress parade, but he could not endure the scorching rays of persecution and tribulation. When these came upon him he was ready to give up the way.

According to verse six, he did not drop out suddenly, but withered. That is, his decline was gradual. Gradually he began to lose interest in the work and people of God, and like Peter, began to follow afar off.

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05 -- A HOPELESS SOUL -- (Revival Message)

"And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hath punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; should we again break thy commandments and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? Wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping!" (Ezra 9:13, 14.)

These Israelites seem to have gotten a faint conception of what it would mean to venture too far in sin and be lost. The desire that should be uppermost in every son and daughter of Adam,

is to know where lies the line between God's mercy and His wrath. How true are the words of the poet:

There is a time we know not when.
A point we know not where,
That marks the destiny of men,
To glory or despair.

There is a line by us unseen,
That crosses every path:
The hidden boundary between
God's patience and His wrath.

Oh! where is this mysterious bound
By which our path is crossed;
Beyond which God Himself hath sworn
That he who goes is lost.

How far may we go on in sin?
How long will God forbear?
Where does hope end? and where begin
The confines of despair?

This being such a dangerous point along the highway of human existence, and fraught with such tremendous importance, God has surveyed it and placed here and there a danger signal for the safety of careless human beings who might pass the way.

In this chapter I want to call the reader's attention to some acts that may be performed by a human being that may cause them to be "damned above ground," eternally lost while still they breathe.

1. To continue in any line of disobedience for which we have been often reprov'd, "He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. 29:1.)

2. The next presumptuous act that has been the means of "damning a soul above ground" was officiating and partaking of the worship of the Lord with unclean hands and sin covered in the life. "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them; and they died before the Lord." (Lev. 10:1, 2.)

3. A third act on the part of a human being that is fraught with danger beyond description, is yielding to pride and the fear of man, and withstanding and stanching Holy Ghost conviction. In order to know to what extent this has been done, we would have to consult the books of the judgment or either make an inquiry in that black world of penal fire.

"But they rebelled, and vexed His holy spirit: therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them." (Isa. 63:10.) "And Saul said unto Samuel; I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice." (I. Sam. 15:24.) "And Samuel said to Saul, why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me us? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more." (I. Sam. 28:15.)

4. Still another act on the part of a human being that is often fraught with bottomless, topless woe, is sending away the Holy Ghost and awaiting a more convenient season to get saved, "Because I have called, and ye refused: I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my council, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh: When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind: when distress and anguish cometh upon you then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." (Prov. 1:24-28.)

"I've missed it at last," he repeated,
While the shades of despair gathered fast;
"My hopes are forever defeated,
I have missed, I have missed it at last!"

The Spirit insulted, resisted,
Still plead till the die I had cast,
"I shall 'go thy way" I insisted;
He went, I have missed it at last!"

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06 -- MAKING MELODY IN YOUR HEART

"Making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Eph. 5:19.)

"And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps, and they sang a new song before the throne." (Rev. 14:2, 3.)

God no doubt had a two-fold purpose in exhorting his people to sing and be joyful:

(a.) To convince the unsaved that Christianity was not melancholy, gloomy life, but one of unending gladness. "Rejoice in the Lord always," said the apostle, "and again I say rejoice." (Phil. 4:4.)

(b.) A second reason why God's people are exhorted to rejoice may be, to take the monotony and grind out of life's march. Even the soldiers in colors when on long, dusty marches are refreshed and stimulated by the drum and bugle corps. Birds, when migrating from one clime to another, usually sing as they fly.

"Music hath charms to soothe a savage breast,
To soften rocks or bend a knotted oak.
Call in sweet music, I have heard soft airs
Can charm our senses and expel our cares."

"How music charms? How music warms?
Parent of actions good and brave!
How vice it tames? How worth it inflames?
And holds proud empires o'er the grave!"

The text not only exhorts us to sing, but to make our own melody, that is -- compose our own song. Therefore, we learn from the text, that every believer is daily composing music in his heart, and singing it to God. Who can tell. but that each believer will some day sing the songs that he is now composing, in heaven upon a harp of gold. Glory be to God!

Now, in order to acquaint ourselves with the part which we are playing in the orchestra of God, let us study some facts about "making melody."

1. We have noticed that there are different musical instruments and also different ways of getting music from them. There are: many types of musical instruments, some of the classes being wind, string, and vibratory instruments. Under the latter I would class the drum and xylophone; under the string, violin, harp, piano, etc.; under wind, pipe organ, horns, saxophones, trumpets, etc.

2. On some instruments the strings must be strained to their utmost capacity. The Christian world would doubtless have never heard of Joseph had it not been for the long strain that God placed him under for upwards of thirteen years. The church would not have been blessed with the sweet psalms of David had it not been for the long, peculiar strain that God put upon him for years.

3. Some melodies are created by a series and variety of quick changes. So many of God's dear children have been greatly perplexed over the variety of changeable circumstances God has caused them to pass through. Before they became adjusted to one class of difficulties, God permitted another to overtake them that was still more difficult. As in the case of Elijah, at one time God gave him the spring and a few days later God took it away from him. He then sent him to lodge with the poorest woman in town; and besides that sent great sorrow to the widow, by taking her son. This was a great opportunity for the prophet to get out of patience with God; but behind this dark curtain, the hand of infinite skill was making some quick runs and scales that would gladden the heart of heaven and earth. Perchance, God was preparing the prophet to give the following testimony, or a similar one, in heaven. -- Elijah the Tishbite arose and said: "Most of you are doubtless acquainted with my translation. One day as brother Elisha and I passed onward in the open plain, I beheld an object like a falling star, bright and fearful, cleaving the fields of space, and a chariot and homes of fire rolled up between us. I ascended to heaven in the chariot. The translation was sudden, and glorious. As I drew near the Holy City, new joys beamed upon my soul. I uttered no farewells to field and fountains, but was lost in heaven's opening glory, dissolved in the strong atmosphere of eternity."

4. We have noticed that deep, rich tones are made by strong pressure, and hard strokes. What a sense of depth and breadth we have when the swell is put on, or the keys are struck vigorously! It required some hard strokes on the heart of John Bunyan to cause him to give the world that immortal classic, "Pilgrim's Progress."

5. We have noticed also that melodies are composed or written in different times and measure; namely: four-four time; six-eight; nine-eight, etc. Generally the most impressive music is written in "andante," that is, slow time.

Some of God's saints are required to remain in hard and pressing circumstances much longer than others. Nevertheless we have noticed that those who have passed through the deepest waters, and most severe trials, and remained in the furnace the longest, are the ones that possess the richest experience.

6. Melodies are not all written in the same key, some are in the "naturals," some in the "flats," and some in the "sharps." So it is in the compositions of God. There are no two saints identically alike. We all have different personalities and temperaments.

We still have among us some praiseful Davids, plaintive Jeremiahs, meditative Isaacs, worshipful Simeons, depressed Josephs, and visionary Ezekiels. God needs all of these to compose the "Hymn of Life."

7. In order to make pleasing melody there must be harmony in tones. It sometimes requires many hard strokes, much heavy pressure and long strains to get our souls in perfect harmony with all of the will of God. But the Master Musician will not stop until he has succeeded in this respect -- even though it take years to accomplish such perfection.

8. "Stops" and "rests" are also necessary in composing a melody. "Life's Hymn," has in it many a "stand still," and see the salvation of God; "Be still," and know that I am God; "Tarry" until I come; "Wait" on the Lord. Many of God's children have learned their greatest lessons in the "School of Waiting."

"Though the journey may be long,
Hard and long, hard and long;
We will cheer it with a song,
Of the Kingdom."

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07 -- THE RICH AND THE POOR -- (A Message for a Mixed Crowd)

"The rich and the poor meet together." (Prov. 22:2.)

When we observe the insurmountable wall that wealth, culture, and society have erected between the rich and the poor it appears that the wise man has overshot the mark in his statement. This seems to be so for the following reasons:

1. From birth, one is exposed to hardship, while the other is given the best that earth can afford.

2. In or during childhood, one is sent to the common grade school, while the other is trained and fitted for life in the best equipped, and most finished preparatory school.

3. At maturity, the breach is widened, one is confirmed to an ordinary position, ordinary home, and ordinary comforts of life; while the other has all and more than the poor man's mind can conceive of in the way of the desirable, in position, home and comforts of life.

4. This segregation is also maintained in the grave. One is laid away in the "Potters field," in a common pine-box, with no song, no flowers and oftentimes, no friends. The other lies in state for several days in a mahogany casket, surrounded by a pyramid of flowers; then is carried in a costly hearse, followed by an endless train of mourners to a sequestered spot, surrounded by waving palms, weeping willows, nodding cedars, blushing flowers and placid waters; and is there carefully wrapped in Mother Earth's most dainty blanket and put to bed on the hillside under a snow-white shaft of granite.

Now, in order to see the text from the wise man's point of view, and in its true light, we must change our view-point and make eternity the background.

From this view-point let us notice some planes upon which the rich and the poor meet together.

1. At their birth they meet in the same great highway leading from time to eternity, from the cradle, to the grave. In this great highway, meet all classes, all races, and all ages. Yes the high and low, the great and the small, the literate and the illiterate, the rich and 'the poor. Every child that is born into the world, comes with its heart beating the dead march 'to the grave, and its face is set towards eternity.

"Where goeth this unnumbered throng
Of Adam's fallen race
Who are marching down the road of time
At such a rapid pace?
They are marching to the grave."

2. The rich and the poor meet together in the same great labyrinth of sin. They are actuated by the same pride, filled with the same unbelief, rebellion, hate and revenge. They all possess the same passions, tempers and dispositions, to a greater or less degree.

3. Still again, the two classes meet together and drink of the same cup of disappointment, grief and heartaches. Both have their seasons of weeping; long nights and loneliness; and almost endless years of censure and misunderstanding:

4. The two meet together also in the hazy zone of infirmities, decline, disease, insanity and allied misfortunes. Alike, the bloom of beauty fades, alike their heads grow hoary, alike their eyes grow dim, and alike they become old and feeble.

5. The rich and poor meet together, and stand side by side, at the bar of retributive conscience. Both feel its scorpion-like, burning sting and drink of its cup of bitter worm-wood. Alike they feel its waves of consternation rolling over their souls, and hear its judgment thunder pealing in their ears.

6. Together on the same plane in death's gloomy valley, they likewise grow helpless, become delirious, emaciated and scorched with fever and suffer excruciating pains; then utter the same long, lamentable, dying groans. Alike they depart from this world, empty-handed and alone.

7. Lastly, the two will meet together on the same plane in heaven or in hell. Yes, for in these two metropolises, the pride of knowledge; the blandishment of peace; the insignia of power and the splendor of wealth are unknown.

"The great man he came to the judgment
But his greatness was left far behind;
The angel that opened the record
Not a trace of his greatness could find.

"The rich man was there, but his money
Had melted and vanished away;
A pauper he stood at the judgment
His debts were too heavy to pay."

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08 -- THE GREAT GULF FIXED -- (Revival Message)

"Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence." (Luke 16:26.)

The authority for these words is Jesus Christ, the Son of God; the Maker and Redeemer of the world. This conversation was held between Abraham, a saint in heaven, and Dives, a lost soul in hell.

Since there is so much error afloat nowadays, I want to bring to light from the above text, some vital truths that are not seen by the casual readers. Let the reader of this chapter renounce all prejudice, and read it with an honest and open heart.

1. The first valuable lesson or the first notable fact we observe is, that the saints and the sinners are in separate abodes in eternity. Here, in the text we find Abraham in heaven and Dives in hell. My! what a contrast! "And in hell he (Dives) lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." (Luke 16:23.)

2. We are not only informed by the text that the righteous and the wicked do not dwell in the same abode, but also learn that they will never dwell together or even meet. "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed." (Luke 16:2.6) My! what a blow to the doctrine of "Hell Redemption!"

3. According to verses 24 and 25 the doctrine of "Soul Sleeping" is false; for these verses emphatically teach that the souls of Abraham, Lazarus or Dives were not asleep in the grave, but conscious and very much awake. These verses also teach that the wicked are even at this present time, being tormented, and the righteous comforted. "But now he is comforted and thou art tormented." (Luke 16:25.)

4. The text settles the question beyond the shadow of a doubt, regarding "medium" or "spiritualistic" communication, teaching that it is an utter impossibility for souls to leave hell and communicate with a "medium" or "spiritualist." The words of Abraham are plain, clear and emphatic-note them! "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot." (Verse 26.)

Let us observe them more closely.

It was impossible for Dives to go from hell to earth to warn his brethren. For this reason he requested Abraham to send Lazarus instead, (verse 28). Not only was it impossible for Dives to leave hell and return to earth, but it was not possible for him to go from hell to heaven, (verse 26). This being so, the "Paying and praying souls out of hell" proposition is a glaring falsehood.

5. The text also gives a sure guarantee to those who go to heaven. It assures them that, after once getting there, they can never fall from grace and go to hell. For there is absolutely no passage way between the two places. "A great gulf is fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot." (Verse 26.)

A. We shall now proceed to notice in what sense it is a "great gulf." It is great, because it is too deep, wide, immense, and perilous for Satan with all of his own power and strategy to tunnel, wade, scale, fly or in any way cross. "Neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." (Verse 26.)

B. The next sense in which it is great is, because it is so bounded by Jehovah's ire that the most mighty angel in heaven cannot cross it. Think of it!

C. Still another sense in which it is a "great gulf" is, because it is the boundary line between light and darkness, hope and despair, hell and heaven. It bars all ill from entering heaven, and all the good from entering hell.

D. It is great because it severs all friendship and all the tender ties between the beings in heaven and in hell. There will be no tears shed in heaven by mothers and fathers for sons and daughters who may chance to be in hell. The gulf not only forbids the flight of angels, but also the flight of human affection.

E. Lastly, it is great, because it checks the almost resistless stream of infinite love that rolls over the " battlements of heaven.

a. Think of the love that moved the Savior to leave heaven and go down to earth and hell for sinners.

b. This gulf like the levee at New Orleans checks the tide of divine love. If such surges of love, joy and peace were left unrestrained they would likely cause a revival to break out in hell.

"Depart, O sinner, to the chain!
Enter the eternal cell;
To all that's good, and true, and right,
To all that's fond, and fair, and bright,
To all of holiness and light,
Bid thou thy last farewell!"

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09 -- WE WILL NOT COME UP! -- (Camp Meeting Opening Service)

"And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab; which said, We will not come up." (Num. 16:16.)

The text is a part of the words of a company of rebels who were in the camp of Israel, and who on being summoned to come up to the worship of the Lord indignantly refused.

The great tabernacle, the linen-clad priest, the consecrated Levites and the large company of Israelites, so beautifully represent a camp meeting with its host of ministers and pilgrims.

In viewing the text and its company of enraged rebels in the camp from another angle, we see a life-size photo of the human heart with its host of evil propensities, which on being summoned by Light and Truth to leave sin's haunts and come to Christ, and become His subjects, lift their scorpion heads and flashing eyes, and exclaim: "We will not come up; we will not surrender; we will not obey; we will not confess our sins; we will not make restitution; we will not walk in the light; we will not seek holiness; we will not line up with God's word."

A. I shall now proceed to mention the names of some rebels that may be in the heart of some present, exclaiming with the venom of a rattlesnake, "We will not come up!"

I. The foremost rebel that we hear crying, "we will not come up" may be in a mind brimful of home and business cares.

a. It is true, that you are at the camp meeting in bodily presence but your mind and attention have never left home, the farm, the shop, the mill or the office.

b. Remember, you will not be of any service to the meeting, neither will you derive any benefit therefrom, until your mind and attention are fully put into the meeting.

II. The next rebel that may be lurking on the outskirts of the camp ground, or in the tents shouting, "We will not come up!" may be a resorting, pleasure-seeking spirit.

a. One that likes to go fishing, berry-picking, joy-riding, bathing, etc.

b. But if you would have the glory crown your soul, and also see souls saved, sanctified and healed, this resorting spirit must be caught and brought to the worship of Jehovah.

III. Another may be found in an unforgiving spirit, usually lurking on the outer edge of the camp ground or sitting in a tent and not attending the services.

a. There is a brother or sister on the: camp ground with whom there has been a misunderstanding during the year about the cattle getting in the field, or about the dogs tearing the hogs' ears or about returning borrowed money.

b. Or it may have originated in the church official board meeting, during the reelection of officers or pastors.

c. However this old, sore feeling absolutely refuses to forgive and enter into the spirit of the meeting.

IV. An evasive, dishonest spirit may be the next; red-headed, flashy-eyed, venom-spitting, rebel that refuses to be honest and confess out; and die out; and dig out; and "come up" to the worship of the Lord.

V. A criticizing, faultfinding, rebel may be the next who refuses to "come up."

a. He is too busy criticizing and finding fault with the preachers, the pilgrims, the boarding tent, the prices, etc.

b. Would to God, that this rebel could either be compelled to "come up" to the worship of Jehovah, or leave the camp ground!

VI. A troop of unbridled passions and appetites who absolutely refuse to be denied and restrained ten days, may be the next green eyed, horn crested, forked tailed, split hoofed, rebel that refuses to "come up."

a. He insists on sitting around eating ice cream; drinking soda water, eating big dinners and gratifying fleshly lusts.

b. It would be well for such a fellow to take the Bible and turn to the 19th chapter of Exodus and read the 15th verse over and over again.

VII. Pride too may be one of the grim-faced rebels that refuse to "come up" to the worship of Jesus Christ.

a. I do not mean that type of pride that wears low-neck dresses, transparent hosiery, jewelry, flowers, and bobbed hair, for that belongs in the red-light district.

b. But I mean the pride that is ashamed to stem the tide of public sentiment or bear reproach and take a stand with the people of God.

B. We question, Why do they so sternly refuse to "come up"? The answer will be found in the following:

I. Their spirits are out of harmony with the atmosphere of the meeting. (They would feel more at home at a dance.)

II. They have no appetite for religious services and no passion for souls.

a. It is no marvel that they can go trooping out of a meeting for home, like a flock of black-birds, while scores of seekers are at the altar trying to get through.

III. A third reason why they so sternly refuse to "come up," is because they are out of touch, and are spiritually dried up, having no joy and blessing.

a. They have been getting cross and scolding the family at home and also they have been driving close bargains when selling the hogs, chickens and milk.

b. They have been jesting, joking and telling funny stories while at the blacksmith and barber shops.

1. Therefore, they are dry and do not enjoy the meeting.

2. It is no wonder that such people make so many excuses for not staying until the sermon is finished.

a. Either the weather is too warm, b Or the sermon too long, c. Or wife, husband or children are tired and must be carried home, etc.

C. Lastly, let us notice the dire consequence of these men refusing to "come up."

I. In this defiant act they insulted infinite mercy.

II. They did despite to the Spirit of grace, and stepped cross the dead-line.

III. They were "suddenly destroyed." And it came to pass that the ground clave asunder that was under them: and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and their goods. They and all that appertained to them, went

down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation." (Numbers 16:31, 32.)

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10 -- LOSING CANAAN -- (Camp Meeting Message For Sunday Afternoon)

"And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor... and he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon." (II. Kings 24:14, 15.)

It was a sad epoch in the life of Israel when they failed God at Kadesh, but this seems to be the saddest misfortune that overtook them during their entire history. The reader will notice that it was not only the poor and scrawny who were taken captive to Babylon, but the princes and mighty men of valor.

I. This afternoon there are four classes of people present: Inhabitants of Egypt; Wanderers in the Wilderness; Dwellers in Canaan; and Captives in Babylon. Time will only permit us to speak of one class, namely the captives of Babylon.

My chief effort shall be to speak of how Canaan was lost after so many years possession.

a. It is far better never to have received a blessing, than it is to enjoy it for years, then lose it. Hear what the Apostle Peter had to say on this point.

1. "For it has been far better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." (II Peter 2:21.)

Notice attentively, how Canaan was lost.

1. They became covenant breakers.

a. Because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword." (Kings 19:14.)

b. "They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in His law; and forgot his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them." (Psalm 78:10).

c. Reader, how about your consecration and those promises you made God when seeking His favor?

2. They despised reproof and backed up on light.

a. "But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments. And refused to obey, neither were mindful of any wonders that thou didst among them." (Neh. 9:16, 17.)

3. They became idolaters.

a. "They are turned back to the iniquities of their fathers... which refused to hear my words: and they went after other gods to serve them." (Jer. 11;10.)

b. Judging from the way Christian people of our day are worshipping the goddess of fashion, by wearing jewelry, feathers, laces, and such needless things, it certainly looks as if they too have become idolaters.

4. They compromised with the nations about them.

a. "And the children of Israel dwelt among Canaanites, Hittites and Amorites and Perizzites, and Hivites and Jubsites: And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods." (Judges 3:5, 6.)

1. This is a life-size photo of the Christian people of the present day.

B. 'We shall now proceed to notice some of the great blessings and benefits that they lost, in losing Canaan.

1. They lost a life of increasing triumph.

a. In their first battle in Canaan, they gained the victory by simply marching, blowing ram's horns and shouting. (Josh. 6:1-20.)

b. A little later we find them overcoming their enemies with a trumpet and a lighted torch, (Judg. 7:20.)

c. And a little later still, we find them standing still and "letting God" fight for them. (Josh. 10:10, 11.)

d. Reader, are you still living a life of increasing triumph, or are you gradually letting down and being overcome by the world" the flesh, and the devil?

2. The next blessing that they lost with Canaan was an abundance of corn.

a. In the Bible corn suggests three spiritual conditions namely: strength, fatness and satisfaction. (Hos. 2:8.)

3. A third blessing that was lost with Canaan was an unsetting sun, so to speak.

a. "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light." (Isa. 60:20.)

1. Reader, are you still in that unclouded place in your soul? Have you the abiding witness, still?

4. In losing Canaan, they lost the "upper" and "nether" springs. (Josh. 15:19.)
 - a. The spiritual meaning of "upper springs" is, "unfailing joy." (Gal. 5:2, and I. Thess. 5:16.)
 - b. The spiritual meaning of "nether" springs is "great peace." (Psalms 119:265.)
 1. Joy is love exulting and peace is love in repose.
 2. Reader, are you wanting in these springs?
 5. An abundance of beehives and honey were lost in Canaan.
 - a. The spiritual definition for honey is thee-fold.
 1. A disposition of unfailing sweetness.
 2. The longer kept the sweeter it becomes, or in other words, something that increases in sweetness with age. (How about this, reader?)
 3. It does not have to be kept in airtight cans to prevent its spoiling. Or it can be "treated rough," need not "be handled with care" and it will still retain its' sweetness.
 - a. Reader, how is it with you when you are harshly spoken to and treated unkindly?

C. Let us briefly notice the mood of those who live in Babylon; this may help us to see more clearly whether we are residing there or not.

1. They have no song, no praise and no joy. Listen to this testimony.
 - a. "By the river of Babylon, there we sat down; yea we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon willows in the midst thereof. For they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion.' How shall we sing the Lord's songs in a strange land?" (Psalms 137:1-4.)

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11 -- JONAH'S HONESTY -- (Message for the Beginning of a Revival)

"And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you." (Jonah 1:12).

The prophet Jonah has a world wide reputation for being a slacker, both among the saints and sinners. We are pleased to notice, however, that the text rolls away a goodly degree of that

reproach from his name, and gives him the credit of possessing a brand of transparent honesty that is rarely seen in this world of shadows.

At the threshold of this meeting, let us observe him closely and see if we come within a thousand miles of the honesty he exhibited.

I. The sky was inky-black; the lightning ripping open its black bosom at frequent intervals; while the thunders roared loud and long. The winds were blowing from every quarter; the waves rolling mountain high, and Jehovah's displeasure was heavily resting upon the tireless efforts of his brethren.

a. Jonah alone knew the trouble, -- what was blocking things, and why?

b. He was under no obligation to reveal the secret to any one, but could have kept the matter all to himself, as did Achan, Ananias and Sapphira.

c. Every saved person upon earth, like Samson, knows full well, what is required for them to stand or fall. They know to some extent, what is causing them to grow in grace, and on the other hand, what is hindering them.

1. Jonah positively knew what was impeding progress, and so does every believer upon earth.

d. Reader, what is that thing, that you have a faint idea is dwarfing your soul and hindering progress?

1. If you would be judgment day honest and tell the clean truth, you could call its name without the least of hesitancy, whatever.

II. Jonah was too honest to take any part in trying to make the boat go, when he knew that it was himself that was the Achan. (verse 5.)

III. He was too conscientious to offer a public prayer for others, while he himself was out of touch with God and not on "Answering ground."

a. How about this in your experience, reader?

b. Remember, it is just as great a wrong to forge a prayer or a testimony, as it is to forge a bank check. (Acts 5:8, 9)

IV. When Jonah was called into question regarding his condition, he did not evade the truth or in any way try to shield himself, but told the clean truth. (verses 8-9)

V. We notice too, that he was too frank and honest to try to shift the blame or involve any one else in his transgression, but spoke as follows: "I know for my sake this great evil is upon you." (verse 12)

a. Adam tried to shift the blame of his sin upon God and his wife, Eve, like thousands of others are doing today; but good old brother Jonah, though in a blackslidden condition, told the whole truth.

VI. The next commendable feature in the conduct of Jonah was that he did not get offended and offer to fight, while being dealt with by his fellow seamen.

a. Some of our good brethren, who profess to have more grace than did Jonah, would have been ready for a stiff argument.

b. Our good old brother Jonah did not offer any resistance whatever, but like a lamb, allowed the sea-men to pick him up and throw him overboard, without even pouting.

c. Some of the folks, who for years have been criticizing Jonah, will no doubt have to apologize to him when they see him in heaven. And if he were still on earth, many of us would need to go to his altar and have him pray for us.

VII. It is encouraging to notice the good effects of Jonah's honest confession.

a. He was miraculously put back into divine order.

b. He had the honor of holding the world's greatest, single-handed revival.

VIII. Notice what the results would have been, should Jonah have acted dishonestly and failed to confess up and out.

a. His co-workers would have been discouraged and shipwrecked.

1. Many a church has been torn to shivers under a similar circumstance.

b. He would have had a host of lost souls to face at the judgment, whom he had failed to warn to "flee from the wrath to come."

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12 -- HELL DELINEATED -- (Message to the Unsaved)

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psalm 9:17).

"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than, having two hands, to go into hell." (Mark, 9:43).

Usually, before people emigrate from one country to another, they inform themselves to some extent about the conditions and advantages which they might expect there. Now, since so many are traveling sin's easy path to hell, my object in this chapter shall be to give the unsaved a Biblical description of hell, the future home of the damned.

I. Some scholar has refined it thus:

- a. "Hell is truth seen too late."
- b. "Hell is resisted love turned to hate."
- c. "Hell is the sinner's last school room."

1. Dives learned more in hell in five minutes than he did on earth in a half century.

d. "Hell is the abode of demons, fraught with fire unquenchable."

II. We shall now proceed to see what inspiration has to say about the abode of the lost.

a. Hell is a place of uttermost darkness. 1. "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." (Matt. 25:30)

b. The society of hell.

1. "But the fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murders, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (Rev. 22:8)

c. The torments of hell.

1. No mercy. (Luke 16:24)

2. No rest day nor night. (Rev. 20:10)

3. Regret and remorse. (Mark 9:43-45)

4. In a lake of fire and brimstone. (Rev. 20:10)

d. What our friends are doing in hell?

1. Weeping and gnashing their teeth. (Matt. 25:30.)

2. Begging for water. (Luke 16:24)

3. Trying to warn friends upon earth not to come there. (Luke 16:28)

e. What are the dimensions of hell?

1. "A bottomless pit." (Rev. 9:1)

f. The song of hell.

1. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended." (Jer. 8:20)

2. Woe! woe! woe! (This word is found over sixty times in the Bible.)

g. The Despair of Hell.

1. A daily vision of heaven and saved happy loved ones. (Luke 16:23)

2. No hope; not even the slightest, faintest hope of ever getting out for all eternity.

a. "Eternity," dreadful phrase! "It will be written with a fiery pen upon all the walls of hell, and seared into every arch by the lightning's blaze, and sounded through every dungeon by the thunder's horrid breath. 'Eternity' is the motto upon the seal of God which fastens the door of woe."

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13 -- FIND YOU UNPREPARED -- (Message to the Unsaved)

"Lest haply if they come and find you unprepared." (II Cor. 9:4)

We are all familiar with the embarrassment that arises from not being prepared to meet some temporal obligation. This gives us to some extent a faint idea of the indescribable perplexity of the sinner, when called suddenly and unexpectedly by the reaper, death.

It is said, that "to be forewarned is to be forearmed." Now in order that the sinner may get a faint idea of what it will mean to meet death unprepared, I want to draw a few pen pictures of every-day occurrences in which he is likely to be suddenly called by the "grim reaper." While I do this, I want the unsaved reader, in his imagination, to place himself under the various circumstances which I shall herein describe.

I. You are out on the highway, on a business trip, or a joy-ride in your car, and, as you swing around a stiff curve, you are confronted by a machine racing toward you from the opposite direction. You cannot possibly avoid colliding with it. Both machines are exceeding the speed limit. Now, nothing can be seen but the lights, glaring and blinking; then shrieks, a crash, a terrific concussion, and oblivion. See the broken glass! the wrecked machines! the bleeding, writhing, convulsing, dying mass of human wreckage! You are fatally wounded, too ill to be removed from the dusty, gory bed on the roadside. You are conscious, but cannot speak, see, hear or move, -- conscious, only in a spiritual and mental sense. A quivering sensation steals over your frame. Ah! then, and there you will awake to the fact that you are dying, unprepared to meet your maker?

a. It is now, too late to repent, pray and "get right!" Your intentions were good and you expected to "get right" some day, but death came at an unexpected hour and found you miserably and woefully "unprepared."

II. You are taking a little trip on the railroad, to visit some relatives or friends, or perhaps you are going on a business trip. You have gotten nicely seated in the car surrounded by a large company of jolly passengers; some playing cards, some eating, some smoking; while others are looking out of the windows enjoying the flying landscape. Suddenly as the train rushes across country at the rate of sixty miles an hour, a car jumps the track, and instantly the whole train is a heap of splinters; and yourself and hundreds of other, lie mangled, bleeding and pierced through by huge beams of timber and steel rods, some being literally roasted alive by the hot steam that escapes from the engine. There you lie, amid the wreckage; with your hopes, plans and expectations all blasted, and you are dying "unprepared." Oh! awful thought.

a. You believed in Christianity and fully intended to embrace it, some day, but you put it off until too late.

b. You were deferring it until revival time, or until you were older; but death came at an unanticipated hour and found you "unprepared."

III. You are on board a steamer, going abroad or for a few days' recreation. A storm arises, the water rolls mountain high and fills the hatches, and drenches the passengers. Finally, between two surging waves, the boat capsizes and goes to the bottom; while the excited passengers, like so many mice in a cage, are struggling, strangling and dying.

a. Many of them, perhaps, had religious parents and have been reared in church and Sunday school, but failed to put what they had learned into practice. Therefore, they are now going down to a watery grave and a Christless hell, "unprepared."

IV. Neatly dressed and in the best of health, you stroll into the theater some beautiful evening for an hour's amusement. You have gotten nicely seated; the performance has started, and you are enjoying yourself very much. Suddenly, a fire breaks out, the house is thrown into pitch darkness. The crowds become panicky and every way of escape is cut off. As the blaze envelopes the excited throng, and smoke and gas fill the room, you will awake to the fact that your summons to meet God has suddenly come, and you are unprepared.

V. At home in a sickroom, you lie with beauty, health and hope gone. The physician imparts to your loved ones the solemn news that you are dying, and cannot possibly be with them more than three hours longer. Think, how peculiar and strange you will feel, dying unprepared!

a. Think! of having to go alone through death's dark valley. Think of awakening out of death's stupor and finding yourself in the presence of a Holy God, unprepared.

VI. The preparation for this solemn occasion is three-fold, namely:

a. "But except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3)

b. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John. 3:3)

c. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
(Heb. 12:14.)

Reader, take the advice of one who loves your soul, and "seek ye the Lord while he may be found, and call ye upon him while he is near." (Isa. 55:6)

* * * * *

14 -- REASON AND REVELATION

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Thess. 5:23).

It would not be fair to go through a Convention like this and not say something specific on the subject of "holiness," the thing we stand upon. Glory be to God! I like to be definite. The devil doesn't care if you are not definite. He doesn't care if you call it the "old-time religion," the "higher life," the "rest of faith." Those are all tame names. They are all right in their place, but they have not got any teeth. I like something plain and explicit and definite. So if a man says a thing is black or white, I know which it is. There are some adjectives that do not admit of comparison, such as "honest" or "square." There is no such a thing as being partly honest, or partly square. You are either honest, or you are not honest. A thing is either square, or it is not square. So I like to be explicit.

There are two distinct works of grace:

1st. Justification.

2nd. Sanctification.

Hallelujah! Glory be to God! I know when it happened. I was there, and I prayed through until I struck it. My, isn't that wonderful? So now the apostle prays here: "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless." Or in other words, the whole of you.

Notice he does not pray that your whole soul, spirit and body be "canned." No! But preserved. When you can things, they spoil after the top is taken off unless they are used up right away. But things that are preserved will keep whether the top is off, or on. Glory be to God!

Nowadays the greater part of the opposition to holiness springs from three sources. 1st. Prejudice. 2nd. Ignorance. 3rd. Unbelief.

Most of the opposition to holiness springs from these three sources.

Prejudice: To pre-judge; to hang a man before you try him; chop his head off and then have his trial. When a holiness preacher comes to some churches, they are ready to put him out before they investigate to find out what he is preaching about.

The second source from which opposition to holiness springs, is ignorance. It is astonishing to know how much ignorance prevails in the world today in regard to the Holy Scriptures. Someone was telling me about two lawyers down South arguing a case, and one of them had occasion to refer to the Bible, and the other lawyer said to him, "Why what do you know about the Bible? You don't even know the Lord's prayer." He said, "I'll bet you five dollars you can't repeat the Lord's prayer." The other lawyer said, "I'll bet I can." He said, "Let's hear you." And here's the way the lawyer quoted it: "Now I lay me down to sleep; I pray the Lord my soul to keep; if I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." The other lawyer said, "Here's your five dollars, I didn't think you knew it." Ignorance of the Scriptures. I find folks everywhere taking just what the preacher says, not looking in the Bible for themselves. Old manmade Scriptures, such as "We are as sure to sin as the sparks are to fly upwards." Or, "We sin every day in thought, word and deed." That isn't in the Bible; yet folks quote it for Scripture. People who are well versed in other matters are ignorant of the Bible, and the preacher in the pulpit doesn't know any better either. It is actually astonishing that folks will stand by a preacher that pleads for sin. A minister of the Gospel that pleads for sin ought to be drummed out of town. The minister is supposed to be the guide to pilot lost mortals out of danger, and if that man is deaf, dumb and blind, sitting in the tower to watch for God's people, how can he guide others? It is appalling! Think of having a deaf, dumb and blind engineer in the cab to run a train! Yet that is what folks do when they support a flirting, tobacco chewing preacher.

So the greater amount of opposition to holiness arises from these three sources: Prejudice, Ignorance and Unbelief. Why should a man limit God? If God could make a world and pave the milky way with 117 million suns, create the mighty deep and the myriad of green hills -- the God that spake and millions of planets came into existence -- doesn't it seem reasonable that a God with such unlimited power as that could save and sanctify a man and keep him holy here in this life?

Now since we have these three opponents to holiness, "prejudice, ignorance and unbelief," suppose we place three candidates in the field--three witnesses in favor of holiness.

1st. Reason. 2nd. Revelation. 3rd. Experience.

Reason -- Glory to God! Revelation -- hallelujah! Experience -- Praise the Lord! We will put these three candidates in the field and run them on a ticket against prejudice, ignorance and unbelief, and we will vote for them, won't we?

Reason is that faculty of the mind by which man draws conclusions. Now Mr. Reason you stand us here and give us your opinion of holiness, against Mr. Prejudice. Mr. Reason, would God command an impossibility of anyone? Would God, with all His wisdom and power, would He command of us puny creatures an impossibility? Would He command us to be holy, if it were absolutely impossible for us to be so? Would He do that, Reason? When He commands in His word, "Be ye therefore holy, for I the Lord am holy," would He make such a demand if it were absolutely impossible for us to comply with it? No. Now, Mr. Reason, would God be guilty of flirting with us mortals? Would He be guilty of such child's play? When God said for us to be holy, did He mean that we should be holy, or was He talking about something else? What is your answer, Reason? God commands us to be holy. He meant it just the way He said it. Now God is omnipotent, and He has agreed to furnish us the power to be holy. Before God told Abraham to be

perfect, He first introduced Abraham to Himself. He said, "I am the Lord, and I am a holy God, and I want you to be holy. I want you to do business for me, Abraham. I will furnish the cash, I have an unlimited surplus of capital, so make your plans large, Abraham."

Now after such a testimony from Mr. Reason, we find Mr. Prejudice dropping his head and slinking away. But now while we have Mr. Reason on the witness stand, let's ask him another question.

Mr. Reason, if there is such a state of grace as "holiness," could we not serve God better if we had it? I know, folks, we can't be holy, but if there is such a state of grace as "holiness," could we not serve God better if we had it? Yes. Well, if we could serve God better by His making us holy, and He could do it, and we asked Him to, and if He wouldn't do it, then the responsibility would be on God, would it not? Yes.

Mr. Reason, give us another logical testimony. Well if we may be delivered from all sin, why not have the work done? If we can be delivered from some sin, why not all? "His Name shall be called Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins." "Behold the Lamb of God," says John, "which taketh away the sin of the world." If we can be saved from all sin, and you find a preacher pleading for some sin to remain, that fellow is crooked. Suppose you sent a detective to a man's house to look for some stolen goods, and the man of the house let the detective search every room but one closet, would you not naturally conclude the thing you were looking for was in that closet? If you are still pleading for some sin, it looks rather suspicious. The very sin you want to remain may be the most hateful and dangerous thing in the community. A man that pleads for sin is a dangerous man to do business with. Why is it that people say I want, to be delivered from some sin but not all? What would you think of a man who had the small pox going to a doctor and saying, "I want to be partly cured of the small pox, but not entirely cured. I want part of this disease removed, but not all of it?" What would you think of such a man?

All right, Reason, we have heard your testimony.

Now we will call Revelation and see what he has to say against Ignorance. By Revelation we mean God's will as we have it revealed in His Word. If you want to know what God thinks, read the Bible. The Bible is the revealed will of God to man. Folks sometimes say, "I am not going to do this just because it is in the Bible." I won't do it unless God speaks to me about it." Occasionally you see a sign like this in a street car or on the railway train, "No Spitting on the Floor." Then it refers you to the State or City laws, and refers you to the law book, and usually gives you the Statute number, and page, etc. Well the Bible is God's law book, and when you want to know what God's laws are look in this book, and it warns you of the penalty for violation of His laws. So Revelation is God's revealed will to man. In 1st Thess. 4:3, we find "for this is the will of God, even your sanctification." Did you ever read that?

That reminds me of the illustration of Uncle John up in New Hampshire. He didn't have any children, so he made out a will, and named his nearest relatives as the benefactors. Down here in Nebraska he had three nephews, Tom, Jim and John. Then he had two nieces, Sarah and Mary. To Tom he willed that corner lot in Omaha; to Jim he willed that store, and to John that 150 acre farm.

Then to Sarah and Mary he willed five thousand dollars each in cash. Then to Jim \$500.00 in cash, and to Tom \$500.00 in cash, etc., until he had willed all of his property away.

Finally they got word one day that Uncle John had died, and that his will was to be read at a certain time and place. So his nephews and nieces were on hand to see what he had willed them, and according to the will each one received their lawful share.

Brother, someone died back there on Calvary's tree, but before He died He made a will, and there is something in that will for everyone of us, hallelujah! All you need to do is to claim your share of the estate. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Remember, it is in the will, and Jesus died to make it possible. The will would have been of no effect if Jesus had not died. Oh, these preachers who fight holiness, they ought to be drummed out of town. It is His will that we be sanctified. Jesus prayed, "Father, sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth." Now would Jesus have prayed for something that was impossible? Sometimes folks get so inconsistent in their praying they forget what they are saying or who they are talking to. A woman over in Michigan one day was so far away from God, that in her prayer she said, "Oh, Lord, bless the devil." The Psalmist said, "Purge me and I shall be whiter than snow; wash me and I shall be clean." He did not want to be white-washed. He said, "Wash me and I shall be clean." Glory to God! A lot of these fellows want to be varnished. They don't want to be purged; they don't want to be scrubbed; they want to be varnished. They want to look nice on top of the sin.

The next testimony of Revelation is that it was Christ's mission to deliver us from the nature, as well as the guilt of sin. "Who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." So Jesus came to deliver us not only from the guilt of sin, but from the power of sin.

Another witness in favor of Holiness, and we will stop. Our next witness is Experience. Mr. Unbelief says we can't be sanctified, and live a holy life; nobody ever did it; he says he does not believe any such stuff. "The idea of anybody claiming to be sanctified holy." Nobody can be perfect," he says. All right. "Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God," (Gen. 6:9.)

Folks say that doctrine of holiness originated with the National: Holiness Association. That is what some preachers say, because they don't know any better. Others say it originated with John Wesley. Others say that doctrine splits up churches and kills the work of God. The preacher who says that is a dead engineer in the cab. Noah was a perfect man in his generation, the Bible says. But remember, Noah lived in a different generation from that you and I live in. Noah didn't have any Bible; didn't have any prayer meetings as we have; no holiness meetings; no holiness evangelists in his day; no Holy Ghost. I'll tell you Noah did pretty good. You put a man in this mission to clean up the hall and scrub the floor after dark and not give him any light to work by, and see how good a job of cleaning he will do. Then you give him an old smoky kerosene lamp and he will do a little better, but then you turn on the electric lights, and let him go to work and he can clean the mission and do a good job. It was the same in Noah's day. Noah didn't have the light that you and I have. I think Noah did pretty good, and God says, "He was a perfect man in his generation."

"There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; that man was PERFECT and UPRIGHT." Job had the blessing. Glory to God! Job had the experience sure enough, and God said he was "perfect and upright." Did anybody else ever live it? How about Paul? Folks say, "You can't show me one passage in the Bible where Paul said he was holy." Let's see. First Thess. 2:10 reads like this: "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how that holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." Doesn't that sound like holiness?

Did anybody else ever have the experience? Well, there was Zacharias and Elizabeth. "And they were both RIGHTEOUS before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord BLAMELESS." (Luke 1:6.)

There we have the testimony of Experience.

Now that God is holy, and the angels are holy, and the saints are all holy, and Heaven is a holy place, wouldn't you feel somewhat out of place up there without being holy? Is not that reasonable? I will give you a common illustration. Suppose these good brethren here were just fresh from the old country, and none of them could speak a word of English, and they would invite me to a banquet where I was to be the guest of honor, and suppose all of these brethren would try to entertain me by talking to me in the Swedish language, wouldn't I feel out of place and awkward at that banquet? I wouldn't understand a word they were saying, and naturally I would feel very much out of place.

Well it would be the same (only more so) for a man or woman to be in Heaven without being holy. If you would get into Heaven without being holy, and see the millions of holy angels, and the countless millions of redeemed saints waving palms of victory, and see Jesus with His face more brilliant than the sun, and see God face to face, don't you think you would feel a little uncomfortable under those circumstances if you had rejected "holiness" in this life when you had a chance to get it!

"Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord."

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15 -- DIGGING A WELL -- (Message for Seekers)

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." (Isa. 12:3)

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14)

In the two texts that we have quoted, inspiration has compared salvation to a well of springing water. This comparison may have been for the following reasons: 1 -- Water is free. 2 -- Water is plentiful. 3 -- Water purifies. 4 -- Water satisfies. 5 -- Water is necessary for all life.

Since inspiration has compared salvation to a well of water, it is equally permissible to compare the methods by which salvation is obtained to the process by which water is obtained from a well. Therefore my object in this meeting is to dig an old-fashioned well, not the drilled type.

The first thing necessary will be to get the tools on the ground. The inquiry may arise at this point -- "What are the tools?" They are as follows:

- 1 -- The pickax of prayer and fasting. (Mark 9:29.)
- 2 -- The dynamite of sincerity. (Jer. 29:12, 13.)
- 3 -- The bucket and pulley of confession. (Prov. 27:13.)
- 4 -- The shovel of restitution. (Luke 19:8.)

We shall now begin to dig.

I. Down, down, and down we go with the pickax of prayer.

a. "Lo! I have struck something that is barring my progress."

1. -- "What is it? Oh, it is that article that was stolen days, months and years ago, that never was confessed and restored."

(a) "What shall we do about it?"

(1) -- "Shall we stop digging and claim it by dry-eyed faith?"

(2) -- "Come, workers and help me sing" I can, and I will, and I do believe" right over this thing, so I can profess religion and join the church."

(b) "Oh, no brother, let us keep digging and confessing until we get it out of the way."

b. "All right, now I have confessed and got it out of the way. So we shall proceed with our digging."

II. Down, down, down, and down we go.

a. "Look out! Stop! What, is the matter?"

1. -- "I have struck another obstacle, that seems like a block of adamant." (a) "My! What is it?"

(b) "Oh, it is that old outlawed debt that I have been owing for ten or twenty years."

b. "Hurry and promise God" -- Yes I will pay it as soon as I get the money."

III. Again, we proceed to dig, dig, dig and dig.

a. "Halt! What's the trouble now?"

1. "I have run into a stone that looks like granite, but it has a terrible odor, something like carrion."

(a) -- "What in the world can it be?"

(b) -- "Oh! I remember; it is that filthy tobacco habit."

(c) -- "Well, can't you go ahead and profess religion over it?"

(d) -- "I might be able to 'profess' religion over it but I will not be able to strike through to real victory, and obtain God's smile, unless I here resolve and promise to give it up forever. "

(e) -- "All right then! If that is the only way to get real salvation, give it up."

(f) -- "But have you any scripture, forbidding the use of tobacco, if so please quote it."

(1) -- "I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abomination from between his teeth." (Zech. 9:7.)

(2) -- "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (II Cor. 7:1.)

b. "Well, you've gotten that out of the way, so let's hurry so that you will be ready to join the church by next Sunday."

IV. Down, down, down, we go.

"What's the trouble now?"

a. "Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Stop!!!"

1. "Well, I have struck five huge rocks that seem almost impossible to dislodge."

(a) -- "Well, you can pass them if you put a little more pressure on the pickax of prayer and fasting."

(b) -- "What are they?"

(1) -- "The first one is that old grudge that I have harbored for years, against Dick Smith.

(2) -- "Second, I have been living with the woman, who is supposed to be my wife for years and have never been married to her.

(3) -- "Third, I belong to a secret order, and God's word forbids it. (Eph, 5:10-13.)

(4) -- "Next, I have married a second wife and am living with her while my first wife still lives. (I. Cor. 7:11), (Rom. 7:2-3.)

(5) -- "The last stone -- I have broken, the marriage vow several times, and it has come to me while digging this well, that I must confess to my wife, for the Bible says, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." (Prov. 28:13.)

V. "Well, what are you going to do about these things, brother?"

a. "I am going to walk in the light if it kills me."

b. "Say! Say!! Pull me up out of the well quickly!"

1. -- "Why, what's the matter?"

2. -- "Oh, I've struck water, and the pure, clear, refreshing stream is rushing in so rapidly that it almost overcomes me. O, hallelujah to the lamb!"

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16 -- PETER'S SIX DOWNWARD STEPS

"And he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I know Him not." (Luke 22:57)

"This is one of the Bible's most impressive narratives because it so clearly outlines sin's progressive steps in the life of the declining believer." When Peter made the remark that he would die before he would fail the Savior (verse 34) he did not realize the strength of sin and carnality, nor the strategy of the devil.

A. In order to properly forewarn ourselves, let us notice the six successive steps that led to Peter's downfall.

I. Frequently doing and saying things out of the Spirit.

a. On Mt. Tabor Peter spoke hastily and out of the Spirit, so much so, that God had to snatch away Moses and Elijah; and also reprove him by saying, "This is my Beloved Son hear ye him." (Mark 9:5-6.)

1. -- Peter, like many today, tried to mix too much of the human with the divine,

(a) -- "Make three tabernacles," said he. God wanted him to worship Jesus only.

(b) -- Peter's entire actions on the mount were the outcroppings of a fleshy mind.

b. We next find him getting out of the Spirit and rebuking the Savior in Mark 8:32.

c. Again, he allowed his carnality to cause him to cut off the high priest's servant's ear. (Luke 22:32, 33.)

II. His next disastrous step was, becoming self confident and failing to take advice. (Luke 22:32-34.)

a. This is a sure indication of a carnal heart.

III. His third step downward and sinward was, failing to take time for secret prayer.

a. Before Pentecost we read of him fishing, walking upon the water, and wielding the sword, but not once do we read of him spending as much as five minutes in secret prayer.

1. -- Is it any marvel that when the test came he went down so easily?

IV. His next woe-ward step was, yielding to self indulgence.

a. We find him sleeping on duty, at the most trying time. (Luke 22:45.) 1. -- For treason, bloodshed and death were in the atmosphere a mile thick (so to speak) and in the face of it all, Peter slept. Think of it!

b. He is next found warming himself by the devil's fire. (Mark 14:67.)

1. -- What else could be expected, but for him to jump the track in the very near future?

V. The next step that revealed the fact that he was losing ground was, his following the Savior afar off.

a. Whenever you see God's children begin to lag behind; late to meeting, fail to pray and testify, and spending Sunday at the parks and beaches, you may be sure that they are getting away from God and are badly in the need of prayer. (Luke 22:54.)

VI. "The straw that broke the camel's back," in Peter's case was being in bad company. (verse 55.)

a. When people who were once spiritual, commence associating with sinners and formal church members; and engaging in politics and such like things, the next thing you may expect of them is to "curse and swear."

b. Notice a few commendable features seen in Peter's conduct.

VII. He was not at all partial about who preached to him.

a. Whether it was a man or woman, whether they were white or black, whether Baptist or Methodist.

b. He accepted his conviction from the short discourse of a rooster. 1. -- Some people are prejudiced against hearing the gospel in small missions and in the open air, but Peter was convicted by a message delivered from a chicken house.

B. -- The next commendable feature in Peter's experience at this time was, that he did not tarry in the background, neither did he let conviction hang-fire, but went out immediately: not to laugh or jest his conviction off, not to sign a card and take salvation by a dry-eyed faith, but to "weep bitterly."

I. Folks nowadays try to make us believe that there is an easier way to get saved, than crying, sobbing, groaning and praying.

a. -- It seems so strange that Peter, while associating three years with the Author of Salvation, did not make this discovery. We would sooner believe Peter than we would the teachers of the present day.

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17 -- THE CRIME OF THE DEVIL

"Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without: lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (I Tim. 3:6,7).

A. -- The advice here given is not only good for those in the ministry, but for every believer. We are here exhorted to steer clear of three pitfalls.

I. The reproach of the devil, that is, becoming a laughing stock, because of denying the faith and turning back to the things which we once denounced.

II. The snare of the devil, that is, the hidden entanglements.

a. Satan sometimes sets a trap a year ahead of a soul. He, like those who trap animals, anticipates their desires and the places they are want to frequent and sets his trap accordingly.

III. The condemnation of the devil.

a. "Condemnation" is a Greek derivative of the word "krima" from which the English word "crime" is taken.

B. -- In this chapter I shall attempt to write about the "crime" of the devil.

I. "Fall into the condemnation (crime) of the devil." (verse 6.)

a. The verb "fall" suggests three noteworthy facts.

1. -- The most gifted and sainted person upon earth is ever in danger of falling into this crime.

2. -- The crime of the devil can be gotten into without any particular effort.

a. "Fall into," one does not have to put forth any special effort to "fall."

3. -- The crime of the devil has a tremendous transforming power.

a. It quickly transformed an arch angel into a devil.

II. The question may arise at this point, "What was the crime of the devil?"

a. His crime was five-fold.

1. -- "Iniquity was found in him." (Ezek. 28:14.)

(a) Iniquity is the opposite of equity, which is among other things, not lopsided but as straight as a rule.

(b) Equity is as true as a die and unchangeable as the stars of heaven.

(c) Equity is as white as snow, clear as a diamond and honest as an angel.

(d) "Iniquity starts off as straight as an arrow and then gets a touch of moral curvature of the spine, and deviates.

(1) Deviates just a little from strict honesty in business.

(2) Deviates slightly in conversation from speaking or impressing the hearer with the clean, clear truth at all times and under all circumstances.

(3) Deviates a little from, "speaking evil of no man."

(4) Deviates slightly in devotion, that is a growing slackness as regards secret prayer, fasting, tithing, attendance at church, testifying and reproving sinners.

2. -- The next stratum in the crime of the devil was, that he lost his humility and became conceited over his attainments and superior position. (Ezekiel 28:12, 14.)

"This self conceit is a most dangerous shelf,
Where many have made ship-wreck unawares:

He who doth trust too much unto himself
Can never fail to fall in many snares."

3. -- A third stratum in the crime of the devil was, becoming a victim of self-will and carnal independence.

(a) It is amusing to notice how many times he used the expression, "I will," in Isa. 14:13, 14.

(b) How true are the words of Solomon which saith, "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Prov. 16:18.)

(c) "Self-will is so ardent and active," said one, "that it will break a world to pieces to make a stool to sit on."

4. -- Still another feature of Satan's crime, was hypocrisy. (a) He would not own up that he had fallen, but went right along professing to be all right.

(b) His iniquity had to be "found out." He was not honest enough to confess it out, but kept it covered until some one else suspected it and "found it out."

(c) We are sorry to say that Satan was not the last and only created being that has been guilty of covering up his sins, and going on trying to make believe.

5. -- The last stratum of the crime of the devil is mentioned in John 8:44, and reads thus: "He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth."

(a) One of the definitions for "true" or "truth" is, "transparency." Therefore it would not be an infringement on the text to quote it thus -- "He abode not in the clear."

(1) -- Would to God that Satan had been the last and only being who did not remain in the clear!

(2) -- There are those who ran well for a season, abode in the clear for a while, but finally backed up on light and began to indulge in doubtful conduct, and thus caused a cloud of doubt and uncertainty to settle upon their souls.

(3) -- Reader, what was the nature of that thing in which you indulged, or took sides with, which beclouded your spiritual sky? Remember, Satan lost heaven because he did not stay in the clear.

6. -- We notice too, that it was inner trouble that caused Satan's downfall.

(a) The text does not say that iniquity was found in his hands, feet or brain. O, no! but it says, "Till iniquity was found in thee." (Ezek. 28:15.)

(b) It was inside trouble, namely, "fear of man" that ruined Saul, the pioneer king of Israel.

(c) It was inside trouble that destroyed Achan, namely covetousness.

(d) Carnality cannot be trusted even in an angel in heaven; how much less in a puny man, whose foundation is in the dust, and "whose breath is in his nostrils." (Isa. 2:11.)

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18 -- THE RELIGION OF THE PROPHETS

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets." (Eph. 2:20).

In introducing true religion to the world, it pleased God to do so through the prophets and apostles. Therefore, when we speak of "Old Time Religion" we mean the religion that was enjoyed and taught by the prophets and apostles.

It is one thing to talk and sing' about the "Old Time Religion," but altogether another to recognize it and stand by it when we see it in reality. Now in order for us to know whether we are on the right or wrong track, let us carefully observe some of the "sign posts" of the religion of the prophets and apostles.

I. -- It was an experimental religion, not a "hope-so" or "think-so" religion, but it was something that they felt and positively knew about.

a. "And Jacob was left alone: and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. (Gen. 32:24.) This was no dream or myth but a striking reality.

b. "Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." (Isa. 6:6,7.)

c. "And it came to pass, that as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art Thou, Lord? And He said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." (Acts 22:7-8.)

Both of these testimonies sound like realities.

II. The religion of the prophets and apostles was also a radical one in denouncing sin.

a. "Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. (Josh. 7:12.)

b. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3.)

c. "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." (II. Cor. 6:17.)

III. The brand of religion that the prophets and apostles had, prompted them to renounce and denounce false religion and false prophets.

a. The prophets did not invite a false prophet or a man who was in error, into the pulpit simply because he wore a long coat and could read Greek and speak fluently; but they publicly denounced him. (I. Kings 18:40, and II John 1:10.)

IV. The religion of the prophets cried out against pride and worldly conformity.

"In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon. Their chains, and the bracelets and the mufflers, the bonnets and the ornaments of the legs, and the head bands, and the tablets, and the earrings. The rings and the nose jewels, the glasses, and the fine linen and the hoods, and the veils." (Isa. 3:18-23.)

b. "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness, and sobriety: not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls or costly array. But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." (I. Tim. 2:9, 10.)

V. -- The religion of the prophets made no compromise with hypocrites, but took a public and radical stand against them.

a. "And Joshua and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen and asses, and his sheep, and they brought them unto the valley of Achor and all Israel stoned him with stones." (Josh. 7:24, 25.)

VI. -- Furthermore, the religion of the prophets and apostles placed its adherents in the minority.

a. "Straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14.)

b. "Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32.)

VII. -- The prophets and apostles received the greatest amount of persecution and opposition from those professing religion.

a. "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." (John 16:2.)

VIII. -- The religion possessed by the prophets and apostles gave them a passion and burden for souls.

a. "And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin and have made them gods of gold: yet now, and if thou wilt forgive their sin: and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." (Ex. 32:31, 32.)

b. "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" (Jer. 9:1.)

c. "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." (Rom. 9:3.)

Reader, hereafter, when you sing and talk about "Old Time Religion," unless you have reference to the kind you have been here reading about, you are singing and testifying to a lie. Don't forget this!

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19 -- NOT RECOGNIZING JESUS

"And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him." (Luke, 24:15, 10.)

"And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus." (John 20:14.)

"But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus." (John 21:4.)

We have here, three accounts of people having failed to recognize Jesus. So many careless mortals have made this same mistake and closed the door in His face forever. If there is such a thing as regret in heaven, then this will be one of the chief causes of it, both in heaven and in hell.

Jesus occupies so many offices in our life and comes to us in so many different ways that it requires a keen eye spiritually and great spiritual alertness to recognize Him.

A. -- Let us notice a few of His vocations and apply them spiritually.

I. "The Carpenter." (Mark 6:3.)

(a) Yes, He has a plan for every human lot of dilapidated buildings and God has sent Him to:

1. -- Prepare and fit us for usefulness (II. Peter 2:5-9.)

2. -- Build according to specifications

(a) Yes, He has a plan for every human being, and He is sure to work it out, unless we hinder him. (Rom 8:28,)

3. -- Cut every piece of human material here, to fit into the spiritual temple, in heaven. (I. Kings 6:7.)

4. -- Sand-paper, polish, and make perfect here in the work shop.

(a) Reader, do not hinder Him, but let Him have His way.

II. -- He is the "Gardener" though we are slow to recognize Him as such. (John 20:15.)

a. He first encloses His people and thus separates them from the world.

b. He tills and fertilizes the soil.

1. -- This is sometimes done with dim appointments, (our dead hopes being thus made to spring anew) heartaches, tears, losses and diverse afflictions.

c. He prunes and grafts also.

1. -- "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2.)

III. -- He is the divine "Potter." (Jer. 18:2.) a. He is to be given absolute control. b. He is to soften us and make us pliable.

1. This is often done by breaking, crushing and melting us in His crucible or furnace.

c. His office it is, to fashion us on a wheel.

1. This wheel is the various chain of circumstances which rolls out all the wrinkles and imperfections; leaving us with a disposition soft, flexible and even as velvet.

2. To bring this about, He may have to put all our loved ones to sleep on the hill-side, and leave us to face the cold world alone. But what of that, He is fitting us to out shine the sun, in the city of fadeless day.

IV. -- Jesus the "Great Physician." (Matt. 9:2.)

a. He closely examines.

1. "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me." (Psalm 139:23-24.)

b. The Physician sometimes prescribes and administers unpleasant and even bitter medicines.

1. "The bud may have a bitter taste but sweet will be the flower."

c. The Physician also frequently puts his patient on a diet.

1. Reader, you may not understand why He forbids you to partake of this or that harmless pleasure; it may be a great temptation to you because others Can indulge while you cannot, but do not worry, leave it all to His infinite wisdom. He surely knows best.

V. -- Jesus the "Husband." (Isa. 54:5.)

a. The meaning of the word, husband, is "house-band" that is, to keep things together; to provide the necessities of life; to cheer, to comfort, and never to forsake. Praise the Lord!

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20 -- LAZARUS IS DEAD

"And he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave clothes." (John 11:44).

In this lesson we have a life-size picture of a "cooled off" Christian. The lesson is so self-evident that it hardly needs any comment. How, ever, let us scan it from various angles and note the existing similarity between the two.

I. -- This death took place at Bethany, the house of dates or house of bread, which spiritually speaking would mean the church.

a. It sounds rather strange to say that people can die spiritually, in the church -- the Holy sanctuary, but it is true.

II. -- Lazarus, the dead man, once had fellowship with Jesus.

a. We might inform the reader here, that Lazarus was not the only person who died (spiritually) after having had communion and fellowship with Jesus for years.

III. -- We notice too, that his death was due to the absence of Christ. (Verse 2).

a. What, can people do but die when they lose Jesus; unless like Mary and Joseph, they are honest enough to own up, and then publicly seek until they find him.

IV. -- The next mark of similarity that exists between Lazarus and the dead Christian is, that Lazarus was "in a cave." (Verse 38.)

a. This cave reminds the writer of the "rat" in which the dried up Christian is buried.

1. -- He never seemingly makes any advancement or development, but has the same dry prayer, sermon and form from one year to the other.

V. -- Lazarus' death was not a secret.

a. In just a little while it was known throughout the community.

b. This is also true regarding the dead church member.

1. -- He may be laboring under the impression that no one knows that he has lost out, but he is sadly mistaken, for the thing is even known among the sinners in the neighborhood.

(a) Sinners can see when we have lost our joy and blessing.

Let us observe Lazarus still more narrowly.

VI. -- "He was bound hand and foot."

a. The dried up church member is also bound hand and foot, and that is why he does not believe in demonstration; but wishes every thing cold and precise.

VII. -- Lazarus also had a napkin about his jaw.

a. This napkin is likewise on the jaw of the dead church member.

1. For this reason he cannot pray and testify in public.

2. For this reason he cannot reprove sinners or do missionary work.

3. For this reason they become badly frightened when requested to lead in prayer, lead a meeting or sing a song.

b. Would to God, that we had someone with courage and skill enough to remove this napkin without offending them and causing them to resign from the church!

VIII. -- From the lesson and the character before us, we learn that Lazarus was clad in "grave clothes." In other words, the garments which he wore belonged to another kingdom, namely the "Kingdom of death."

a. How strange one would look on the street clad in grave clothes.

1. All such attire belongs in the cemetery, and elsewhere it would seem entirely out of place.

b. The cooled off church member seems equally out of place, professing to be a Christian, and at the same time clad in short dresses, transparent waist, feathers, flowers, jewelry and face mask-like with cosmetics.

1. Why? Because such clothing belongs to another kingdom, namely: the "Kingdom of the world."

2. "If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." (John 2:15.)

IX. -- Martha said, "By this time he stinketh," that is he has an offensive odor.

a. Dried up church members usually have an offensive influence in the community in which they live.

1. -- This is due to failure to pay the grocer, butcher, milkman, furniture man, doctor, etc.

2. -- They usually have their blessings or are more free at some church where they are not known, for this reason.

B. -- Behold there ariseth a star of hope for dead Lazarus!

a. His friends entreat Jesus to come to his rescue.

1. -- This should encourage us to hold on in prayer for the dead Lazarus in the church.

b. The company was small, but they had Jesus with them.

1. -- What does it matter if the members are few in number and the church small, if Jesus is with us? Praise the Lord!

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21 -- THE SUN IS GONE DOWN -- (Funeral Sermon)

"Her sun is gone down while it is yet day." (Jer. 15:19).

In more than one place in the Bible, inspiration has likened life's ending to the closing of the day. In (Ecc. 12:2) we read these words -- "While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened." In (John 9:4), "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work."

I know not a more fitting text for this occasion, because our precious deceased sister had only reached the early afternoon of life.

Let us study the sun, the king of day, and its going down, and then draw the comparison between it and the life of this godly woman, whose sacred remains lie before us in the casket.

I. -- The sun, notwithstanding the various disorders in the elements, daily runs its course unobstructed.

a. This holy woman in running life's course, met with many an obstacle and difficulty along the way; however, she did not permit them to turn her from the way.

b. But, like the character Job described when he said, "The righteous also shall hold on his way; and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." (Job 17:9.)

II. -- The next feature that we have noticed regarding the sun is, that it shines only for others.

a. So was it with this godly woman. Her life was spent in making others happy; in lifting up Christ to a dying world, and pointing her loved ones to the "narrow path" that leads to the city that "is without grief or grave, marriage or mourning, sin or sorrow; through whose streets creeps no nodding hearse with its burden to the tomb."

III. -- The sunset also suggests that the heat of the day is over and labor is done. O, glorious thought!

After the labor is done,
After the long setting sun
After the great treasure is won:
O, what rejoicing 'twill be!
O, what rejoicing 'twill be!

After the danger is passed
After the anchor is cast,
And we are all home at last;
Up in the beautiful land!
Up in the beautiful land!

IV. -- Oft times the sunset is the most beautiful part of the day.

a. We have noticed sometimes at the close of a dark stormy day that the clouds would part and the sun cast a golden smile upon the verdant valleys, the trembling plains, the woody forests and the granite-crest hill and then disappear.

b. Rather than an hour of dread, the sunset of the child of God is the most glorious event in his life on this side of the river of death.

1. -- The time of conversion is glorious, and the time of receiving the Holy Ghost is still more so, but the day, hour and moment when the careworn, wave tossed pilgrim goes to behold the face of Jesus and worship at His feet is an occasion that language cannot describe, and tongue cannot tell.

c. At life's sunset J. S. C. Abbot wrote thus -- "I am pillowed upon a sick and dying bed. The physician assures me that I am liable at any moment to die. I am happy. I do not know how any one can be more happy out of heaven. I am expecting every hour that a group of loving angels will come and say to me, "Brother, God has sent us to convey you to heaven."

d. Poem

"I am fading away to the land of the blest,
Like the last lingering hues of the even;
Reclining my head on my kind angel's breast,
I soar to my own native heaven.

"My warfare is finished, the battle is won,
To a crown and a throne I aspire:
My coursers are brighter than steeds of the sun;
I mount in a chariot of fire."

V. -- "Her sun is gone down while it is yet day.

a. That is, her death was premature.

1. -- Should she have deferred making her peace with God until the evening of life, death would have found her unprepared, but like the five wise virgins, she was found with a goodly supply of oil and a brightly burning lamp.

VI. -- The sun goes down to shine in another hemisphere.

a. So does the child of God.

1. -- "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13:43.)

b. At life's sunset, the sainted Whitefield, exclaimed -- "I go to my everlasting rest. My sun has risen, shone and is setting -- nay, it is about to rise and shine forever."

"Beyond time's troubled stream,
Beyond the chilling waves of death's dark river.
Beyond life's lowering clouds and fitful gleams,
Its dark realities and brighter dreams,
A beautiful forever.

"Ear hath not heard the songs
Of rapturous praise within that shining portal,
No heart of man hath dreamed what bliss belongs
To that redeemed and joyous bloodwashed throng,
All glorious and immortal."

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22 -- COME UP HITHER!

"After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were a trumpet talking with me: which said, "Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." (Rev. 4:1.)

A. -- I am using the above text for a starting point. At first sight three encouraging thoughts are brought out.

a. That it is no myth but an actual fact, that somewhere in the universe, there is a place called "Heaven," -- the home of Jesus Christ. Oh what must it be!

I. Think of the beautiful homes of the millionaires along the Hudson in New York City; and the beautiful homes in Winnetka near Chicago; and the beautiful homes in Hollywood, Pasadena and Los Angeles, California: but they are nothing in comparison to the home of Jesus Christ.

a. The apostle John saw it, Stephen saw it, and Paul saw it.

II. A second thought made clear is that it is gloriously possible for redeemed humanity to enter this beautiful city.

a. Elijah entered it, Enoch entered it, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob entered it and Stephen entered it; and, the best of all, we can all enter it if we love God and keep His commandments.

III. We are made glad also to know that our absent, saved loved ones are still alive, happy and active in that far off land.

a. The angel, that showed John these things, was a glorified human spirit -- "And I, John, saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then said he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book." (Rev. 22:8, 9.)

B. -- My object in this chapter is to describe the Christian beginning his happy future. Let the reader apply it personally.

I. See yourself (who have been tempted, pressed, grieved and persecuted for years) up beyond the moon, beyond the path long traveled by the sun, beyond the fixed stars, beyond the retinue of ponderous orbs, and safe, at home in the "City of fadeless day."

a. Behold the jasper walls, the gates of translucent pearls: behold the city, paved with gold, curtained with light and frescoed with unfading beauty.

"Angel voices sweetly singing,
Echoes through the blue dome ringing,
News of wondrous gladness bringing:
Ah! 'tis heaven at last!

"On the jasper threshold standing,
Like a pilgrim safely landing,
See, the strange, bright scene expanding
Ah! 'tis heaven at last!"

II. Behold your redeemed spirit arrayed in a snowy-white robe and beaming with the beauty of youth.

a. Your face is not wrinkled, careworn, or sad, but radiant with beauty and with bloom. Every look is tenderness and every word is musical with joy.

III. See yourself, who for many years were pressed beyond measure with cares and responsibilities, beginning a day, a new day -- Without a care. b. Without a pain. e. Without a tear or heartache. d. Without a temptation. e. Without a shadow or a cloud. f. Without an unsatisfied desire. g. Without a sunset.

IV. Behold, even you, yourself, beyond the tongue of slander, censure, blame and misunderstanding; surrounded by millions of happy beings, white as snow.

a. There, none are poor, none old, none ignorant, none homely, none eccentric, none talkative and none disagreeable; but all is harmony and love.

V. You are no longer living in a humble hovel, on a side-street or alley, but up in a beautiful Subdivision of angels, in a mansion of pure light, consolidated into form, and richly decorated with rainbow hues, and surrounded by trees, and flowers that never fade.

VI. Behold yourself, daily unfolding like a flower, and becoming more and more like the pattern of "Infinite Perfection."

a. More and more, like the "great warrior" who maketh the clouds His chariot, weigheth the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance.

"The storms are His frowns, the sunshine His smile,
The earthquake the stamp of His foot,

The ocean a drop on the tip of His finger,
Heaven a sparkle on the bosom of His love,
Eternity the twinkling of His eye
And the universe the flying dust of His chariot wheels."

b. Yes, daily becoming more and more like the great "Architect" who established the rock-ribbed hills, erected the snowcapped mountains: put the firs in the forest, the gems in the hills, the pearls in the sea, and the flowers in the field.

c. Yea, more and more like the great "Architect" who sketched the landscapes, drew the course of the rivers, with His finger; mixed sunlight and mud, and with them He painted the blushing colors of the rose; the blush on the peach and the velvety-royal purple of the plum. He who painted the "rainbow of promise;" gave "Luna" her maiden blush and a brilliant dazzling face to the "King of Day."

d. Becoming more and more like the "Great Musician."

1. -- He who put the tune in the doleful winds; the rippling brooks; and in the meadow lark; the humming bird; the bee, and the cricket. Like Him who set the ocean to serenading the moon and the storm-clouds, and made the thundering tides the bass in the orchestra of nature.

"Shall we meet in glory's morning
After time's dark gloomy night,
Shall we hail it's radiant dawning,
Scattering sorrow with it's light?
Shall we meet where all time's shadows
To oblivion flee away?
Shall we meet amid the brightness
Of an everlasting day?"

* * * * *

23 -- FEEDING THE MULTITUDE

"And when it was evening, His disciples ease to Him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart: give them to eat." -- (Matt. 14:15, 16.)

The fact that we are exhorted to search the scriptures, shows us quite plainly that there are some truths contained therein that are not seen by hasty reading. This miracle, like many others performed by the Savior, is brimful of helpful lessons. I shall now scan it and pick out the nuggets of gold.

I. -- Verse 19 reveals to us the fact that God believes in law and order. The Savior commanded the people to sit down in ranks by hundreds and by fifties. (Mark 6.40.)

a. This should be sufficient proof that the idea advanced by some people, that "we are not to obey man; not to be lead by man; not to have any church rules or discipline," is rank fanaticism.

b. We read from Heb. 13:17, "Obey them that have rule over you." Job 36:10: "He openeth also their ear to discipline."

II. -- The next lesson to be learned from this picture is that man's extremity is God's opportunity.

a. God can provide things even in a desert place, and when no help is in sight. (verse 15)

1. -- He did so for Israel in the wilderness for forty years, and he also fed the prophet Elijah in the wilderness.

III. -- Furthermore, the lesson teaches us to be thankful for small things. (verse 19)

a. As a whole, the human family is so ungrateful to God for the blessings which He daily bestows upon them, so animal like in taking everything for granted. (The pig sees only food and the idiot expects all the things he gets, they both have no more thought or gratitude than a sponge absorbing water or even sweet water.)

b. It is wonderful when we reflect upon the history that lies behind the loaf of bread that comes to our table and it is marvelous to think how long God has had it en route to us and the many factors employed.

1. -- First the soil, that man has not even yet succeeded in analyzing: then the plowman, next the sower and the seed; that still contains in it some part and the characteristics of that seed that was planted long ago: fourth the sunshine and the showers; then the reaper, the miller, the baker and lastly the delivery boy. And yet, hundreds sit down and eat it without once thinking of giving God thanks.

IV. -- The lesson before us, also teaches us economy and conservation.

a. "Gather up the fragments," said Jesus, "that nothing be lost." (John 6:12.)

1. It is astonishing how wasteful we humans are. (a) We throw away enough to evangelize the world.

(b) Again, is there anything upon the earth more valuable than the fragments of time that we throw away? Time which is of such inestimable worth, that God has seen fit to give it to us in fragments.

(c) Truly, we have nothing to waste -- no strength, no money and no time, for it is but a span from the cradle to the grave.

V. -- We are also informed by the lesson or rather shown, how little things become great when surrendered to Jesus. (verse 17,18.)

a. The secret of our "making good" in the Christian life, is not in the quantity we bring to Jesus, but in the complete self-abandonment.

1. -- Think of the boy Samuel, the boy David, the boy Spurgeon and the boy Sammy Morris.

VI. -- We learn in verse 16 that we have not to leave Jesus (depart from his presence -- his way) in the hour of need.

a. Blind unbelief in the disciples said, "Send them away that they may go into the villages and buy victuals." But Jesus said, "They need not depart."

b. No matter how closely pressed we may be financially or how the wolf of want may growl around our door, we do not have to depart from any of our God given convictions and righteous principles, to obtain the necessities of life.

c. O, no reader! We do not have to leave Jesus in the hour of need, even though the world and blind unbelief does say, "Send them away!"

VII. -- Lastly, we learn here too, that Jesus will not forsake those who follow him until the end of life's day or to life's evening. (verse 15) Oh, blessed thought! a. Jesus was never yet known to fail one of His children in the evening of life when life's sun was going down and the long shadows of death's night settling around.

b. When Stephen reached life's evening he looked up and exclaimed, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." (Act. 7:5)

c. John Wesley at life's evening exclaimed, "The best of all, God is with us."

d. Riden Darraeott said at the close of his day, "I am going from weeping friends to congratulating angels and rejoicing saints in heaven."

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day;
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea;
The plowman gladly plods his weary way
And leaves the world for long eternity."

* * * * *

24 -- FIGHTING FIRE

"Pulling them out of the fire." (Jude 1:23.)

For the reader to be properly impressed by the text, he must see with the eye of imagination a large factory building enveloped with flames, while hundreds of employees are there entrapped and are struggling between life and death, amid smoke, fire and gases.

Hear the fire gong ringing and the shriek of the siren, feel the ground rumble and shake. then streak after streak of red, as the fire trucks answer the call. "What is the trouble?" "A fire! A building is on fire!" "And hundreds of women, men and boys are there entrapped: Come and lend us a hand in 'pulling them out of the fire.'"

What a vivid picture inspiration has given us of the sinner and his perilous condition!

A. -- At first sight the following facts are suggested by the text.

I. -- The sinner needs the sympathy of every one who can pray, for he is in a more perilous position than the man trapped in a burning building.

II. -- There is need for immediate action.

a. Think how rapidly men rush to deliver perishing ones from a fire.

b. What is to be done for the sinner, must be done quickly or it will be too late.

B. -- Since inspiration has compared sin to fire, let us notice the points of similarity,

I. -- Fire increases so rapidly.

a. The Chicago fire was caused by the explosion of a lamp, and in just a few hours it had spread over almost a quarter of the city.

b. It is only a few weeks after sin has entered the heart and life of an innocent boy or girl, until they are on the way to a drunkard's grave and a harlot's hell.

c. Purity, virtue and innocence are destroyed at the first outbreak of sin's fire.

II. Fire is hardening.

a. It soon turns the lump of soft clay into a hard building brick.

b. Equally so does sin harden one and destroy the former properties of modesty, sympathy, a tender conscience, leaving one defiant and impenitent and unapproachable.

III. -- Fire leaves a life-long scar upon its victim. a. In this world we can get saved from the power of sin, pollution of sin, guilt of sin, and penalty of sin but not from the effects of sin. And while on this earth we suffer wrecked nerves, poor health, various diseases or better a thousand diseases and infirmities because we have been singed by sin.

b. The drunkard may get saved from strong drink, nevertheless in many instances they go to the grave with and even as a result of badly imparted stomachs and systems.

c. The adulterer may be forgiven but "his reproach shall not be wiped away." (Prov. 6:33)

IV. -- Fire quickly consumes even fine edifices leaving only ashes. a. Sin in the soul is like fire to combustible matter, it wipes it away. Beauty, purity and loveliness cannot endure the scorching effect of sin's presence.

V. -- If we could see from God's view point, we would see sin's consuming flame enveloping every sinner we meet, -- yes as if they had been soaked in gasoline and then set afire.

"O, pull them out of the fire,
Ere they sink in endless despair;
O, save from the curse of the wine-cup;
O, save from this cruel snare.

Pull them out, pull them out
Of sin's destructive flame:
Lend a hand this very hour!
Pull them out in Jesus' name.

* * * * *

25 -- CHRIST'S DEATH ON THE CROSS

"And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross."
(Mark, 15:29, 30).

The life and death of Jesus is like a flower, in that the more it is examined, the more beauty is seen and the more one is made to marvel. He is not only our Redeemer but He is also our "Pattern." His life contains some helpful instruction for every saint or for every state of sainthood.

His crucifixion is representative of that crucifixion which believers must undergo to become holy like Himself. (Gal. 2:20) The challenge, to "come down from the cross," that the world hurled at the Savior, is similar to the one it makes to every soul who has taken the cross and resolved to follow Jesus.

How cruel and heartless the world is! Think! Just when His suffering was the greatest, the pressure the heaviest and His sky the darkest, these cruel words, like barbed arrows pierced His sinking spirit.

Let us notice some facts connected with His crucifixion that are similar to the experience of all who are crucified to self and carnality.

A. He, Himself, had to give consent to His death every step of the way.

I. There was no time along the way when it was not in His power to stop the whole program, and neither suffer nor die. (John 10:17, 18.)

B. He was stripped of His raiment and hung up before the world to die, a spectacle of shame.

I. Every soul who would die out to calamity, get on the resurrection side with Jesus, must undergo this shameful experience.

a. "Hung up nude, before the world," that is, made a public laughingstock; criticized by worldlings and carnal minded church members: because of going to the altar or for the way in which you "give up to emotion" -- and weep, pray or shout. Or because of the way you dress, or because of your religious associates, etc.

b. So many of God's children lose courage at this point and "come down from the cross" and spoil God's plan.

C. The Savior rigidly withstood self-pity. (Matt. 27:34)

I. When they offered Him vinegar and gall to drink in order to deaden His pain, He refused. In other words He absolutely refused to die an easy death.

II. Some people would be willing for their "old man" to be crucified, if it were possible to drug or chloroform him spiritually. But when it comes to being hung up as an object of public censure, scorn and criticism, it is too much for them.

D. The Savior welcomed every thing that was severe and hard on the natural man.

I. He did not flinch from the spitting, the buffeting, the thorns, the scourging, the nails and the spear.

II. Reader, this is the best and quickest way to die out to self and to all people, both bad and good.

E. The Savior died without receiving one act of kindness from a friend, while on the cross. He died in their presence, it is true, but they could not help Him.

I. How often our sympathy goes out to help seekers, who are being crucified; but despite our sympathy and prayers, they must be left to die alone.

F. The Savior also died beneath an eclipse. That is, from all visible appearances, there was no light in His face, no joy in His heart and no glory on His brow. He seemed utterly forsaken.

I. However, He did not draw back but went through.

II. It is to be remembered, that there is a stage reached, by those dying out to carnality, and going clear through with Jesus, where all light, joy and glory is apparently withdrawn and the soul is left empty, stranded and in the dark.

III. It is at this strange trying, crucial point that the world throws out her challenge, --
"Come down from the cross!"

a. "Come down and end your suffering."

b. "Come down and explain yourself."

c. "Come down and win our friendship!"

G. Notice, from the bottom round of condescension came the words of triumph -- "It is finished!"

I. The soul never strikes oil until it strikes the "Blue rock" of condescension.

II. Stopping on half-way ground never brings the shot of triumph. Jacob never obtained the, "Sunrise blessing," until his thigh was thrown out of joint.

"Hallelujah! it is finished,
Crucified with Christ I am,
Now I'm cleansed from all defilement,
Through the all-atoning Lamb."

* * * * *

26 -- ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW

"Arise, get thee to Zarephath, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee" (I Kings 17:9.)

Of all of the Old Testament saints, Elijah seems to have been the most sublime and seraphic; for this reason it seems to please God to make him a type of the Holy Spirit.

His experience with Elisha on the eve of his translation has a striking resemblance to the Holy Spirit's dealing with the believer. (II. Kings 2:9-14) It was there that Elisha received "the double portion blessing" and the "mantle" of "power". "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," said Jesus (Acts 1:8)

Elijah's experience and dealing with the widow subsequent to his dealing with Elisha typifies the Holy Spirit's dealing with the sinner. Let us prayerfully study Elijah and the widow at this point and see how perfectly the two workings coincide.

I. -- Elijah was commissioned of God to go across-country, passing hundreds of other people, to speak and deal with that particular person. In other words, this widow was given a special visitation.

a. No doubt, when we get to eternity and glance over the books of human conduct upon earth, we will discover the fact that every man and woman, somewhere along life's highway, received a special visitation, a time when the Holy Ghost made a specific effort to get them re, yield to Christ and live.

1. -- Many of them, like Felix, felt almost persuaded to yield to these strong impressions, but because of a friend, or an idol in their life they refused and thus were forever given up and left alone.

"Ye would not, ye would not,
And now ye cannot come;
Behold, your house is' desolate,
And mercy now has flown."

II. A second feature concerning the widow. which is identically the same in the case of every sinner whom the Holy Spirit visits, is this: Elijah found the widow "gathering sticks" and clothed in rags.

a. Some sinners may be gathering larger, longer, brighter and more attractive "sticks" than were those which the widow gathered; nevertheless, they are sticks, and will be seen as such when the sinner is entering death's gloomy valley and taking his last look upon the fading things of time. -- Yes, money, bonds, stock farms and corner lots, will then appear to be nothing but "sticks."

III. -- Thirdly, Elijah found her, "at the gate."

a. A gate represents the option of two ways, -- one leading in and the other leading out. That is, every sinner is brought up to the point of decision, where he is to freely and deliberately choose to go to heaven or hell.

b. After he is thoroughly awakened, it is left wholly with him to decide. (Jos. 24:15)

IV. -- The prophet found the widow without open.

a. Notice her expression in verse 12: "I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

b. No matter what the surroundings of the sinner may be, or how wise, influential, wealthy or healthy he may be, he is without hope in the world. (Eph. 2: 12) As he looks toward eternity, there are no happy anticipations gladdening his heart, "But a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." (Heb. 10:27)

V. -- The prophet on approaching her, made his first appeal to her obedience.

a. "And he called to her, and said, "Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink." (Verse 10)

b. Except the sinner is willing to obey the gospel message that comes to him, he cannot be saved.

c. As the prophet has so fittingly said -- "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel ye shall be devoured with the sword." (Isa. 1:19, 20)

d. The first command that comes to the sinner is to repent and believe the gospel. This is his only hope, and if he refuses to do so, his case is an hopeless one. (Mark 16:16) and (Luke 13:3)

VI. -- The man of God did not tell her everything at once, but graded his requirements.

a. His first request was to "fetch him a little water," (verse 10) and when he saw her willingness to obey at that point, he added, "Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand." (verse 11)

b. The Holy Ghost does not reveal to the beginner, all of the requirements of God in the first meeting he attends, in the first sermon he hears, but gives it to him in broken-doses.

1. -- Jesus said to the disciples -- "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." (John 16:12)

c. "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." (Prov. 4:18)

1. -- We make a great mistake when we try to force seekers to see all of the truth and light in one or two meetings. He that winneth souls must be wise.

VII. -- The widow had to radically withstand that type of human pride which rudely protests people in coming to God. She Aid so by frankly and clearly confessing her need. (verse 12)

a. Many a woman would not have been so honest and outspoken in the matter and stated that she was in a destitute condition -- having practically nothing to eat. The average woman would have tried to make the prophet believe that the grocer-man neglected to come that day, or that the house had been burglarized during the night, or some such subterfuge. But the widow was judgment day honest and told the plain truth.

b. This is what every seeker has to do, who finds God. 1. -- "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9)

VIII. -- It appears that the whole program hinged upon the obedience of the widow, for as soon as she had fulfilled the prophets request, the oil and meal began to increase. (verse 15, 16)

a. It is so in every case, when we unhesitatingly obey God.

1. -- When the priest's feet touched the waters of Jordan the water divided.

2. -- When the lepers were on their way to show themselves to the priest, they were cleansed.

3. -- When the man with the withered arm stretched it forth, it was healed.

4. -- When the impotent man, lying at the pool, took up his bed, he was healed.

IX. -- God did not send the widow several car-loads of meal and oil, to be stored in a warehouse, but sent the supply daily.

a. He did not even fill the barrel and cruse that she had in use, He simply kept a sufficient supply on hand for each day and each meal as they came. In other words, the same amount of faith had to be exercised at dinner-time that was exercised at breakfast-time. And when supper-time came, the same degree of faith was necessary as at the other meals.

b. God in giving us springs of water, did not give it in ocean-quantities, nor in a reservoir, but in a small stream, and in a small cavity in the earth; and no matter how many people drink or how much is drawn out, it keeps filled all the while. Even then, it never enlarges into an ocean, but remains a "spring."

c. So it is with the life of the believer -- "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." (Deut. 33. 25)

X. -- Immediately, God began to teach her new and strange lessons in the "Primer of providence." (verse 17)

a. We are sometimes greatly perplexed and confounded over the new and strange things that God permits to come into the life of the newly converted soul -- the domestic trouble, the opposition, and this or that peculiar test. We sometimes wish that God had held these things back for a while until the soul has become more established.

b. But as in the case of the widow, He permits Satan, disease and death to enter the home and play havoc with our loved ones.

c. We do not realize that these things are blessings in disguise: for their mission is to introduce God to us more fully, and also to acquaint us with the unexplored resources that He has placed at our disposal.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain:
God is his own interpreter,

And he will make it plain."

* * * * *

27 -- SHEEP

"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matt. 10:16.)

The Lord Jesus was a great out-door man, this is clearly seen from His illustrative preaching. In one sermon He spoke of a "vine and its branch"-- and in another sermon of a "grain of corn;" of a "mustard seed" and of "wheat and tares."

In commissioning His disciples and sending them forth, He compared them to sheep in the midst of wolves. This may have been done for the two following reasons:

a. To give them a faint idea of the treatment which they might expect to receive from the world.

b. To inform them of the spirit and disposition that they were to exhibit and manifest toward their persecutors in return.

Let us study the nature and disposition of a sheep and then apply it to our own lives.

I. A sheep is a dependent animal having no means of protecting itself.

a. A dog may bite, a horse kick, a goat butt, and a cow gore but a sheep does not even have upper front teeth as a means of defense.

b. Listen to the words of Paul the apostle -- "Do all things without murmuring and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." (Phil 2:14, 15)

II. -- Sheep must have a shepherd or they soon go astray and are destroyed.

"And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd; they became meat to all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them." (Ezekiel 34:5, 6)

III. -- A sheep is a creature of simplicity, it never tries to make a display or put on airs. (I. Cor. 13:5)

a. "Charity doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own."

b. "He who goes the lowest builds the highest."

IV. -- There is something in the nature of sheep that makes them love each other and cleave together.

a. Hogs and goats when turned in a pasture soon separate and scatter all over the field, but sheep will keep together.

b. It is not difficult to keep those who are really saved in the church, and if for any cause they are dismissed, they will not rest until everything is straightened up and they are restored again.

V. -- A sheep is a creature of frankness.

It travels and grazes in the bright day-light. Wolves, foxes, minks and tigers are secretive animals and travel in the dark, but with sheep it is not so. (Eph. 5:8)

VI. -- A sheep is not noisy or boisterous but is a silent sufferer and an unflinching burden bearer.

a. "He shall not lift up his voice in the street." (Matt. 12:19)

b. "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." (Isa. 53:7)

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28 -- THE LAST ENEMY

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (I Cor. 15:26).

"What man is he that liveth and shall not see death?" (Psalm 89:48).

Our chief object in launching this meeting is to get people properly armed to meet this last enemy. The subject is not a strange or foreign one, for the long line of deathbed scenes, caskets, funeral services and fresh hillocks in the cemetery have thoroughly introduced it to us all.

The death here spoken of is the cessation of physical life, the separating of soul and body.

Were it possible to communicate with our friends in eternity, doubtless our first inquiry would be, "How does it feel to die?"

"One spot there is, now on the earth somewhere, waiting for us; one pathetic little reach of land, six feet by two, which is to grow solemn with the charge of our dust lying in it in expectation of the final judgment. One moment there is, drawing near on the dial, which is to be awful with the weight of our solitary experience -- when it is to bear away the last breath from our nostrils; yes, when we take our upward bound or downward leap."

Let us spend this quiet evening hour considering some noteworthy facts about our last enemy and grim foe.

I. -- The nearness of death.

a. David said, "There is but a step between me and death." (I. Sam. 20:3)

b. God said, "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils," that is -- at the door, ready to depart. (Isa. 2:22)

c. The many death-dealing instruments that are now in the world make it almost impossible for any one to be assured of life for twenty-four hours.

1. -- When we consider the auto accidents, the railroad and steamboat accidents: the accidents caused by gas and electricity, for one to continue life seems a miracle.

2. -- It was once a saying that, "We are here today and gone tomorrow." but now it is, "Here today and gone today." Healthy, hale and hearty on the street one hour, and the next broken, mangled and dead in the morgue.

II. -- The impartiality of death.

a. He has no favorites, neither does he observe any marks of distinction.

1. -- He stops at the gilded mansion with his muddy spade, scythe and dart; walks down its costly carpeted corridors and into its dreamy bed room and steals away the proud money king.

2. -- Death also halts his funeral car at the door of the humble hovel, and there enters, amid poverty, filth and sorrow, and steals away his victim.

a. His iron heart cannot be touched by the tears and entreaties of the broken-hearted widow or the friendless, homeless orphan.

III. Death is appalling.

a. Its dread attendants make it terrible -- the cold death-sweat, the quivering, failing pulse, the darkened vision, the dying agony and the utter stillness, helplessness, and rapid decay of the body from which life has departed.

b. Death is appalling when viewed only as the separator of the soul from the body; also when looked upon as sundering the ties of human life, and breaking us off from all the scenes and interests of the present world.

c. Think of bidding an everlasting farewell to earthly friends; to think of mingling no more in the social scenes of life of closing the eye forever upon the light of day: yes, look upon

ourselves as the silent, lonely tenants of the grave -- the gloom of our habitation cheered by no companionship save such as make the grave terrible; its solemn silence broken by no sound."

IV. -- Death is a Conqueror.

a. Yes, far greater than Caesar, Alexander or Napoleon, who were themselves claimed by death.

b. He carries a black flag and takes no prisoners. He digs a trench across the hemisphere and fills it with carcasses. What a cruel conqueror! What a bloody king! His palace is a huge sepulcher; his flowers the faded garlands that lie on coffin-lids; his music the cry of desolated households; the chalice of his banquet a skull; his pleasure-fountain the falling tears of a bereaved world."

V. -- Death closes life's day and finishes our work on earth, be it good or bad.

a. Death is that "night which cometh when no man can work." (John 9:4.)

b. "Death is tonight marking his victim. There are some here who are within a hand's breadth of the grave. Beneath the seat on which you sit is a trap-door leading to heaven or to hell." If I were to say that some sharp-shooter, hidden, would launch the fatal bullet into the midst of this assembly, with what terror would this whole company rise? And yet death stands with bow drawn back to the uttermost, and the arrow is just on the string that will speed to some of you."

VI. -- Death blights human beauty, vigor and strength.

a. Yes; he makes us all fade as does the leaf. He steals away the bloom from our cheek, the flash from the eye and the vigor from our bodies.

VII. -- Death is the custom-house officer, who stands at the brink of Time's dark river, to prevent human spirits from carrying any of the things of time across.

a. All material things must be left on the Time-side.

b. Job said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." (Job. 1:21)

c. Paul the apostle said, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." (I. Tim. 6:7)

VIII. -- Death is the operator of Time's black curtain, and the revealer of things eternal.

"O Eternity, let thy ages tramp, thy cycles roll, but thou canst not crumble or scale the wall of hell, or rust and break its locks, or silver the hair of God, who has sworn by His eternal self that the sinner shall die. The pendulum of thy horologe over the gates of woe vibrates through all eons, and says, "forever, and ever" -- "forever, and ever" -- "forever, and ever" -- "forever, and ever" --

its sounding bell striking off the centuries -- the ages, -- the cycles. The appalling monotony of its pendulum -- going -- going -- going -- repeating still, "forever, and ever" -- "forever, and ever" -- "forever, and ever" -- O Eternity! God has wound up thy clock and it will never run down -- and its tickings and beatings are heard by all the lost -- "forever, and ever" -- "forever, and ever" -- "forever, and ever."

IX. -- Death is the warden that unlocks the human cage and lets the lost soul go bounding on its hell-ward flight.

"See it yonder -- yonder -- yonder. It goes that way: Lost! lost! lost! lost It comes this way, shrieking, lost! lost! lost! lost I till our hearts stand still with horror. Scream on, and fly on, cursed and ruined spirit: no battlemented walls of towering jasper will ever meet thy gaze, or furnish a resting place for thy weary pinions. Fly on, lost soul, forever; no angel of mercy will ever cross thy solitary way, or overtake thee in thy wanderings.

"Lost spirit blackened with the curse of thy God, fly on, and repeat in despairing cry the chorus of thine own horrible death march -- "lost, lost" where no echo will ever mock thy misery. Immortal soul! lost in boundless, bottomless, infinite darkness, fly on, thou shalt never find company till the ghost of eternity will greet you over the grave of God, and thou shalt never find rest till thou art able to fold thy wings on the gravestone of thy Maker."

"Fast by the side of this unsightly thing Another was portrayed, more hideous still: Who sees it once will wish to see it no more. Forever undescribed let it remain! Only this much I may or can unfold. Far out it thrust a dart that might have made the knees of terror quake, and on it hung, within the triple barbs, a being pierced through soul and body both. of heavenly make original the being seemed, but fallen, and worn and wasted with enormous woe. and still around the everlasting lance, it writhed, convulsed, and uttered mimic groans; and tried and wished, and ever tried and wished to die; but could not die. Oh, horrid sight! I trembling gazed, and listened, and heard this voice approach my ear: "This is Eternal Death."

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29 -- OUT OF PLUMB

"Judgment also will I lay to the line and righteousness to the plummet." (Isa. 28:17).

I am simply using this text as a starting point -- a rest. The reader is no doubt acquainted with the fact that builders and mechanics use plumb-lines and plumb-levels in order to build straight and perpendicular. Sometimes they begin on the opposite corners of a (150 ft.) building and build to the center, and when they meet the building is as straight as an arrow; but if for any cause it should be out of plumb, the work is condemned and the building torn down, regardless of the cost.

We as Christians, belonging to different denominations, are in that respect building for eternity from different corners; nevertheless, if we are building by the plumb-line and

plumb-level-which is God's word, when the mist and fog of time is cleared away and the spiritual house is revealed in the light of the judgment, it will be straight, (I. Pet. 2:5) from every angle.

In the cities and towns of our country all buildings when completed must be inspected by an authorized inspector from the building department. So it will be with the spiritual houses which we are now building, and like the buildings of this world, if they do not pass inspection (that is, meet the approval of the building inspector) they will be condemned and demolished. Christ the Chief Inspector is to put the plumb-line on our work in that final day. (I Cor. 3:13) Reader, are you daily building with that thought in view?

Now since the same old Bible that we have in our midst today is the plumb-line the Chief Inspector will use on that heart-searching, rein-trying day, let us examine ourselves by it, and see if we are "in" or "out" of plumb. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know if not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (II Cor. 13:5)

Let us now examine the various strata of our building. (Luke 13:3)

Does it contain the following material:

1. -- Godly sorrow for sin, (II. Cor. 7:10) and the tears of contrition? (Luke 22:62)
2. -- Turning face about, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him." (Isa, 55:7) Yes -- turning from lying, stealing, dancing, fighting, quarreling, and all uncleanness?
3. -- Does it contain the mixed concrete of confession? "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." (Prov. 28:13)
4. -- Does it contain the standard brand of restitution? That is, paying old bills, returning stolen articles and making wrongs right. "And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." (Luke 19:8)

II. -- Secondly, how about your "new birth" and witness of the Spirit?

- a. "Jesus answered and said unto him; "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)
- b. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (I John 5:10)
- c. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." (I John 3:9)
- d. "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." (I John 4:13)

e. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (Rom. 8:9)

III. -- Have you the standard brand of victory, that is, on top of every opponent?

a. Victory over all sin, all habits, tempers and passions?

b. "For whosoever, is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (John 5:4)

IV. -- Fourthly, is your righteousness of "The Christ-life" brand?

a. "Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous." (I John 3:7)

b. "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." (I John 2:6)

c. "The oath which He sware to our father, Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life." (Luke 1:73-75)

V. -- How is your love?

a. Do you love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength? Do you love your neighbor as yourself? (Mark 12. 20) Do you love the brethren better than yourself? (I. John 3:16)

b. Is it the kind that "suffers long and is kind envieth not, is not easily provoked. thinketh no evil; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things and never faileth." (I. Cor. 13:4-8)

VI. -- What of your spirit of forgiveness? Remember, there are two brands of this material, -- "Custom" and "Scriptural."

a. The "Custom" brand bears the following marks or rather may be detected by the following tests:

1. -- It forgives the offender but does not care to have anything more to do with them.

2. -- It will forgive but will never forget.

3. -- It will forgive but will never place confidence in the offender again.

b. The "Scriptural" brand forgives from the heart -- so thoroughly and complete that it loves, believes and trusts the offender the same as it did before the offense was committed.

"And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." (Matt. 18:34-35)

VII. -- Will your holiness stand the test?

a. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8)

b. "Be ye holy for I am holy." (I. Pet. 1:16)

c. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14)

d. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48)

e. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world." (Tit. 2:11-12)

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30 -- THE LIFE OF CHRIST

"And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them." (Luke 2:51).

Some one has well said--

"The fullness of heaven is Jesus Himself,
The duration of heaven is the eternity of Jesus.
The light of heaven is the face of Jesus;
The joy of heaven is the presence of Jesus;
The melody of heaven is the name of Jesus;
The harmony of heaven is the praise of Jesus.
The theme of heaven is the works of Jesus;
The employment of heaven is the service of Jesus."

This is not only true in heaven but upon earth. Often, when people become shiftless, indolent and lazy, and do not wish to do certain legitimate duties, they try to use the life of Jesus for their authority. Now, since there is so much lopsided religion, and so many fanatical ideas are held regarding what Jesus would do and what He would not do, I want to call the reader's attention to four different aspects of the life of Jesus.

A. -- The Domestic, (verse 51)

I. Heretofore we have noticed the Savior delivering sublime sermons, stilling the storm, commanding devils and calling back human spirits from eternity, but now, let us study his home life, since home is usually the place, where we manifest our real selves most, that proves who we are and what we possess.

1. -- We learn here that He believed it was right to have a home and home comforts to a reasonable extent.

a. Some people teach, that if we are holy and Christ-like, we are to abandon our homes and families and go tramping through the country sponging upon people who do have homes.

II. We learn furthermore, that the Savior esteemed His home above all other places on earth, therefore "He dwelt" there.

a. It was not only a place to sleep, but the abode of His affections.

III. He not only dwelt there but He was subject to the rules of the home and to those in authority.

a. It is true. He was the Proprietor of the universe, yet He humbled Himself and became "subject" to those who had the ruling over the home.

1. -- This would be a good lesson for that class of people who do not believe in being led or ruled by "man," as they term it. Their argument is, if we have the Holy Ghost we are not to obey or be led by man; but on the contrary we learn from the example of Jesus that "He became subject to His parents."

B. -- The Social side of the life of the Savior. (John 2:1)

I. The text informs us that He made His home in Nazareth -- a town. Hence He was not altogether a recluse, but lived where He was surrounded by neighbors.

a. Undoubtedly, He must have been peaceful and agreeable with His neighbors, or it could not have been said of Him that, "He increased in favor with God and man." (verse 52)

II. We next find Him attending a wedding. (John 2:1) He was there as one of the guests and yet, while there, He kept His eye single to the glory of His Father. Wherever He went He was on the alert for any opportunity to glorify His Father and bless humanity.

a. We as His followers are not to go any place where we cannot do likewise -- we should not go where we would not be wining for death and the judgment to find us.

C. -- The Industrial side.

I. "Is not this the carpenter?" (Mark 6:3) Think of Him, who carpeted the earth with emerald, roofed it with azure and lighted it with ten thousand suns; humbling Himself to do manual labor!

a. We learn from the industrial side of Jesus that: a. Laziness is not Christ-like. b. Work can be made sacred. c. Work when properly done, will not interfere with our communion with God.

D. -- The Religious side.

I. We find that He loved secret prayer and rose early in the morning that He might have abundant time for that pious service.

a. "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." (Mark 1:35) Reader, go and do likewise.

II. We find Him a regular and punctual attendant at the temple of God.

1. -- "And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and as His custom was He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read."

(a) He not only attended religious services in the synagogue, but took an active part.

2. -- It is not only necessary for us to attend religious services to avoid getting dry in our souls, but we, like Jesus, are to take an active part in them.

* * * * *

31 -- THY TIN

"I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge thy dross, and take away all thy tin." (Isa. 1:25).

In describing a true character, inspiration has used the following expressions: 1. -- "A white stone." (Rev. 2:17) 2. -- "Tried Gold." (Rev. 3:18) 3. -- "Fine Linen." (Rev. 19:8)

And in speaking of Carnality and a false character, inspiration has used such symbols as: 1. -- Decayed fruit. (Jer. 24- 2) 2. -- A half baked cake. (Hos. 7:8) 3. -- Well without water. (II. Pet. 2:17) 4. -- Common tin. (Isa. 1:25)

Now, since the inspired writers have compared true gold and faulty tin, I shall contrast the two, so that both the reader and the writer may know which class they are in.

I. -- Tin is cheap and can be obtained at comparatively little cost, while gold is scarce, hence dear, and can be obtained only at a great sacrifice and by diligent search. This is why false religion is so plentiful and the true so scarce.

II. -- Tin compared to gold is very unstable.

a. Tin left in an acid over night will have dissolved and changed its properties by the morrow, while gold when treated likewise will not be affected, or moved.

b. Cheap religion is easily turned in any direction and led to take any course, but the true religion is steadfast, and stable; it does not take up with everything with which it comes in contact, is not wishy-washy.

c. If you cross the tin religion you will soon notice it change, as does a piece of tin in an acid, (quite a little reaction sometimes takes place and in some acids the test tube becomes hot from the reaction, gas passes off and the liquid boils over.) -- It will bristle up -- become cool and even boil over -- showing a different, a changed spirit altogether, but the gold, the true religion will not be moved.

III. -- We have noticed too that exposure and hardship causes tin to tarnish and lust, while on the other hand the same ill usage causes gold to shine brighter.

Cheap religion will not endure privation and persecution without in some way showing a spirit of resentment. But the more the true is opposed, the brighter it shines; the more it is pressed the higher it flies; the more it is crushed the more flagrant it becomes. Reader, search yourself!

IV. -- The ratio of value between gold and tin is so great that it is difficult to compare the two.

a. One tenth ounce of gold in a ton of ore .may be recovered at a profit.

b. The amount of money required to purchase a genuine gold ring, set with a diamond, will purchase a carload of tin. The ring can be carried in a man's vest pocket, while the tin would need to be drawn by a steam engine.

c. This is why some church edifices must be built so much larger than others. A church that admits tobacco chewers, lodge members, drunkards, card players and gamblers, movie fans and such folks or characters must needs be larger than a church of humble holy people.

1. -- The farmer always needs more barn-room or floor space for his hay and straw than for his wheat.

V. -- Tin is malleable but not flexible and if heated over (2000) or cooled below (400) it becomes brittle. Gold is the most malleable of metals and at the same time flexible enough to be spun into threads and made into leaf only (0.00000 gram in thickness.)

a. The tin-religion must be "handled with care" or it will "fly off the handle" or leave the church.

b. The true-gold religion is the only one that will stand great pressure, sudden heat or cold, and that may be spun into cloth for the bride -- Christ's bride.

VI. -- Because it is easily attacked by acids, precaution must be used in handling fruit canned in tin or one will be poisoned.

a. Hence, it can be seen that the wise one -- preserving his soul for eternity will buy the gold vessel, at any cost -- lest his religion, his soul, be tainted at the judgment.

VII. -- Tin in its natural state would never be mistaken for gold -- but we have an alloy, stannic sulfide, called "mosaic gold," used for gilding.

a. The tin religion, cloaked with self righteousness and piety might pass for the true, if unmolested, handled with velvet and not rubbed the wrong way -- but no longer. A gild or anything gilded is only surface deep, it can be detected without the acid test; it need only be scratched.

III. -- The tin-can filled alleys and vacant lots in our cities verify the fact that tin soon loses what little value it had and becomes a "castaway." But gold ever increases in value.

A. It is inspiring to read of the many uses of gold in heaven.

1. -- It is a city of pure gold. (Rev. 21:18).

2. -- The street is paved with gold. (Rev. 21:21)

3 -- The Saviour wears a golden girdle. (Rev. 1:13)

4. -- The city was measured with a golden reed. (Rev. 21:15)

5. -- The apostle saw there the golden candlesticks. (Rev. 1:12)

6. -- They wear crowns of gold. (Rev. 4:4)

The word of God forbids His people wearing ornaments of gold in this world but not in the next. (I. Tim. 2:9) (II. Pet. 3:3)

* * * * *

32 -- STEPHEN'S DEATH -- (Funeral Sermon)

"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." (Acts 7:55, 56.)

Here we have the brief testimony of a saint passing the last milestone, and undergoing life's last trial. Dying is such a strange ordeal that Satan uses it as a scare-crow, with which to frighten

God's children. However, to alleviate their fears God has applied the following mild terms to dying: "sleeping" (Acts 7:60), "resting" (Job 17:16), "awakening from a dream" (Job 20:8) and "a setting sun," (Jer. 15:9).

God has not only used these mild terms to alleviate our fears but He has also given us some examples to show us some of the ways a saint may die.

1. The greatest saint that has ever lived or ever will live, died on the roadside, nude and nailed to a tree.

2. We have Jacob for an example of a saint dying with old age and ripe as a sheaf of wheat. (Gen. 49:33)

3. We have sainted Elisha, dying from a contracted disease.

1. -- By this we are made to see clearly, that it is not a sin to "fall sick" and not get healed, but die. (II Kings 13:14)

4. In Stephen's case we have the description of how a saint may die a violent, immature death.

We are glad to know that the religion of Jesus Christ paints the grim face of death with beauty; places a light in the grave, and drapes the hills of Eternity with the verdure of immortality.

It is by the light of death's lantern that we see the unseen, hear the unheard and know the unknown.

Let us notice some helpful lessons that we learn from the text.

1. We learn from verse 55 that life's darkest hour, and most lonely, is the place that God has chosen to turn faith into sight, and reveal the long, unseen Jesus to the naked eye.

The believer, during his life-time, loves and believes on Him whom he has not seen; but at life's river brink, the walk of faith ends and all things are clearly seen in the unmitigated light of eternity.

2. The verb, "standing," reveals the great love and concern that the Lord Jesus has for His dying saints.

a. -- Never before was He spoken of as "standing" at the throne or right hand of God. (Mark 16:19) and (Acts 2:34)

b. -- We are encouraged to know that Jesus on our dying day, will not forget or be too occupied to meet us at the river. Praise God!

3. This further assures us of the fact, that the same Jesus that was down here is up there.

Yes, the same tender, loving, sympathizing Jesus; and He still has the same degree of loving concern that He had upon earth.

IV. -- We find here also, that God gives His children a special unctionizing to die, just as He does to preach, sing or exhort. (verse 55)

a. Ordinarily, under such trying circumstances, a person would feel greatly depressed and down-cast; but God who knows just when, and where to encourage, strengthen and pour in the fresh oil, gave Stephen a special unctionizing for this occasion. Therefore it was as easy and delightful for him to die as it was to shout, sing, pray or preach.

b. Reader, if you are a child of God you need not fear death, for it will be one of the most glorious experiences you have had during your enamored walk with God.

V. -- We learn here also, that at death the power of recognition is immortalized and accompanies God's children to heaven.

a. Stephen said, "I see the heavens open and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." (verse 56) He had no doubt seen the Saviour when He was upon earth, therefore he quickly recognized Him in heaven.

b. By this, we are made to know that we shall know each other there. Yes, "shall know as we are known." (I. Cor. 13:12)

VI. -- Lastly, we learn from Stephen's expression -- "I see the heavens opened" -- that notwithstanding the fact that evil spirits and powers of darkness throng the heavenlies, (Eph. 6:12) yet, when a saint is to be called up, the track is made clear all the way from the sick room to the gates of pearl.

They are given a clear track, and every devil and evil spirit is kept at bay, while the emancipated saint leaps heavenward at the rate of fifty worlds at a bound.
O, glorious thought!

"Smooth, easy, swifter than the winds of heaven
Our flight was. In the twinkling of an eye
We brushed the mantle of a silver cloud
That floated in mid sky.
Like flames of fire,
We mounted upwards."

* * * * *

33 -- THROUGH

"We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22.)

The adverb, through will be the foundation for my theme, since inspiration has seen fit to use it so frequently. In (Isa. 67:10) it is "through the gate" in (Isa. 43:2) "through the water and fire," (Heb. 13:20), "through the blood" and "through much tribulation," in (Acts 14:22)

Webster defines the word as follows:

- a. "To go from one end to the other."
- b. "To go in at one end and come out at the other."

For some unknown reason it has pleased God to make suffering one of the chief factors in preparing mankind for heaven. (II. Tim. 2:12), (Heb. 2:10) All are called upon to suffer before they enter heaven, even the innocent babe in his mother's arms.

In the Bible, different characters represent different stages of Christian experience, of which all believers are partakers. God does not lead His children over, under and around, but "through" the strongest tests and most severe trials.

A. -- Let us scan the life of some prominent Bible worthies and take note of the truthfulness of this statement.

I. God led Abraham through the strongest test of faith possible.

He did this in order to make him the "Father of the faithful." Notice the strong demand upon his faith.

a. God promised him a son after his wife was ninety years of age and Abraham one hundred. (Gen. 17:17)

b. When the child had reached the age of twenty-five, God told Abraham to slay him and offer him fox" burnt offering. (Gen. 22:1, 2)

c. He is afterward called upon to wait a whole lifetime for the fulfillment of a promise -- and then died without seeing it fulfilled. (Heb. 11:39)

God did not take him over and around but He took him "through."

II. God took Ruth through the most forceful test of forsaking all.

She had to leave her home, her relatives, her country and her God; her consecration vow reached all the way to the door of eternity.

III. God led David through a strong and most heartbreaking test with his children.

a. His daughter is seduced by her own brother.

b. One son murders his brother and afterwards dethrones his father. This was surely a trying circumstance for King David, but God held him up and took him "through."

IV. God led Daniel and the three Hebrew boys "through" the lion's den, and "through" the furnace. (Dan. 3:33) (Dan. 6:16)

V. God was also pleased to lead Joseph "through" the strongest test possible to yield to sin and gratify a carnal desire, every way was clear and everything was in his favor. The temptation was as strong as hell could forge, but God supplied grace for the occasion and took him through. Praise the Lord! (Gen. 39:11-12)

VI. God did not think it best to take our afflicted brother Lazarus around, under or over his dire circumstances but led the test of privation and loneliness.

This was God's way of preparing him for the angel-undertakers and a place in Abraham's bosom. He was surely amply paid for going through.

VIII. God led Mary, the Mother of our Blessed Lord, through the strangest and strongest test of misunderstanding that her frail constitution could stand.

In doing this He made her the most honorable woman that did ever, and will ever live.

B. -- God's object in taking us "through" is twofold:

I. To magnify His power to the world. (Matt. 5:16)

II. To test our love and loyalty. (Deut. 13:3)

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34 -- PILLAR OF SALT

"But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." (Gen. 19:26.)

The reader has no doubt seen many marble and granite shafts, lifting their white-capped heads in the parks and cemeteries: they are more generally known as monuments and are erected for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of persons or events. The reader has no doubt seen "Bunker Hill" monument in Boston and "Grant's tomb" on Riverside drive in New York City or some other as prominent, through the country.

The text tells us of a similar monument erected by Jehovah in the misty days of long ago. In the reader's imagination or with the reader's imagination, I want to go back to the plains of Sodom and take some lessons from this "Monument of Judgment."

As we near Sodom, we notice that the overhanging sky seems red and glowing like an oven. Upon drawing nearer, our attention is arrested by a strange noise in the clouds; such a wail! like a thousand human voices united in one swelling, piercing despairing cry. Nearer, still, we notice that the buildings are all aflame, the trees a ball of fire suspended in the air, the cattle are on fire, the people are on fire, the ground is on fire, a city is afire! O, what a horrible sight!

As we look away from Sodom, across the plain, we notice in the hazy distance a glistening column; a human figure, but it is standing motionless, as if petrified by what it sees. Upon drawing nearer, we discover that it is a human figure -- the body of a woman turned into a pillar of crystalline salt. It is as natural as if wrought by some super sculptor, it seems uncanny it is so life-like, the features are perfectly clear and so expressive, yet the whole is a solid mass of salt.

Let us pause here, and fixing our eyes upon it, study it thoughtfully and seriously and profit by the lessons that we may learn.

I. As we gaze upon its glossy head we are reminded that it was once a saved woman, one who had Jehovah's smile, angelic visitations and divine guidance. Think of it!

II. The bleak form of this pillar of salt reminds us afresh of the tremendous transforming power of sin.

Is it any marvel though, that sin has transformed angels into devils, blighted fair Eden, polluted man, wrecked earth, and dug hell and filled it with fire and brimstone?

III. As we gaze into its time-worn face we are reminded that obedience is the supreme test of discipleship all the way from Earth's Plains to the Hills of Heaven.

a. It was disobedience that put Adam out of Eden; dethroned Solomon and landed Saul in the pit.

b. No wonder the Savior said to His hearers, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams." (I. Sam. 15:22)

IV. We also learn from this rueful object before us, the doleful result of God's children associating too frequently with sinners and idolaters.

a. Mrs. Lot had no doubt been too sociable and familiar with the people of Sodom. At first her intentions were good, but close association, lightness and much talk soon caused her to lose her spirit of prayer and grip upon God. So when the final test came to leave them, she found it too great for her.

b. Reader, be careful how you associate, entertain and yoke up with sinners and tame religious folks or they may cause you to be turned to a pillar of salt.

c. Many a Christian has been turned to a pillar of salt spiritually, by entertaining some unsaved person or as a result of marrying an unspiritual person, even though they did profess religion and unite with the church.

V. As we gaze upon this "Monument of Judgment" we are reminded of the fact that it does not require a thousand sins to ruin a soul. It was only "one act" of disobedience on the part of Mrs. Lot that caused her doom; only "one thing" that sent the rich ruler away from Christ forever; "only one lie" that damned Ananias and Sapphira.

VI. As we continue to observe this memorial, we are reminded of the fact that people may travel with God's saints for years, but unless they get delivered-from carnality -- their "besetting sin" -- it will spring up sometime, somewhere, and capsize them.

Who knows but what Mrs. Lot's besetting sin for years was entertaining too great an appreciation for the luxuries of Sodom. It requires a very great amount of grace and wisdom to frequently associate with worldly minded people; handle much money and partake of much luxury and not become seriously affected thereby.

VI. We learn too, from this memorial, that it is possible for even a child of God to perish on "half-way ground."

a. Mrs. Lot did not perish in Sodom, neither had she reached the mountain.

b. People may be as soundly and genuinely converted as the most holy saint, but unless they keep pace with light and truth, and go on to "Perfection," that is be sanctified wholly; they too, will perish on "half-way ground."

1. -- "Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
(Heb. 12:14)

2. -- "For if ye do these things ye shall never fall." (II. Pet. 1:10-13. -- "When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered." (Ezek. 3:20)

VIII. We learn furthermore, from this solitary pillar of salt, that it is possible for a church with even a small membership to have one, two or more members in it who will not die out to pride and the world, pay the full price and go all the way with Jesus.

It would have been such a great blessing to the church if old Sister Lot had been the only and last one to try to keep pace with the saints of God, without utterly dying out to sin and the world.

IX. As we gaze more narrowly and closely upon this mark of divine judgment, we are awakened to that fact that sin, when indulged in, whether publicly or privately, instantly severs our fellowship with both God and His people.

No sooner had Mrs. Lot looked back, than the thunderbolt struck her soul and the separation was made. Yes, a breach as wide as the world!

At this point we will let the black curtain fall, and end this drama of death.

"From vanity and lies,
From mockery and snares,
From disappointed hopes,
Pass down to thy doom.
The home of the lost."

* * * * *

35 -- A WORM

"How much less man, that is a worm." (Job 25:6.)

When the scripture would represent to us a person that is weak, mean, and despicable in this world, it compares him to a worm of the earth; because nothing is found more contemptible than this creature. On the other hand, man is such a haughty, self-conceited being that God has to use some striking illustration to convince him of his insignificance and helplessness.

The reader will notice that there is no discrimination made here but the application is general; all mankind is included -- the high, the low; the rich, the poor; the white, the black; the great, the small; the literate, and the illiterate. Now that the high-minded sinner might see himself as God and angels see him, I want to mention some qualities and characteristics of a worm.

With your mind's eye, behold an earth-worm half-covered with dust, crossing the road. This is a picture of weakness, beyond compare.

I. A worm is perfectly helpless, having no means whatever of defense.

What is man? His foundation is in the dust, his beauty-skin deep and he is a creature of circumstance. Alone, he is as helpless and defenseless as the worm.

II. The worm has no shelter, but is exposed to the fury of the elements. Yes, to the heat and cold, frost and snow, wind and rain. And at the mercy of animals to be devoured or trampled upon. Daily it is walked upon, crushed beneath wheels, but no one laments its fate, "it is only a worm."

a. Notwithstanding all of man's conceit, pride and attainments, from God's point of view he is as insignificant and empty-handed as the worm. There is nothing upon earth he can claim as his own, not even the food he eats. He must rob the animals and mother earth for the necessities of life.

b. The birds, the bees and the ants can, without a moment's training, and after they have been upon earth less than six months, build a home to perfection. But poor, vile, helpless man,

cannot successfully build himself a house to live in after he has been on earth a quarter of a century.

III. A worm is one of the most contemptible creatures in the world. It is repulsive, and loathsome, even to dogs.

a. We see people with dogs, cats, birds, and even monkeys for pets, but we have never seen any one with a worm for a pet. Why? Because it is too despicable and loathsome.

b. It is astonishing how soon the best of us become repulsive and loathsome to our friends. Five minutes after our sun of life has set, our friends are afraid of our cold, lifeless form; the hollow cheek, the pallid face, the sunken eyes and the foul odor makes them anxious for the undertaker to carry us out of their sight.

c. No slimy worm, crawling in the dusty road, was more repulsive and contemptible to us than the loathsome, decomposing body of our dearest friend.

IV. The lifetime of a worm is so brief. At best they seem to live but one season.

So it is with man, his time upon earth is so limited, that he only receives orders from God to remain here one second at a time. God does not issue any five, ten, fifteen, twenty and ninety-nine year leases on life. O, no! It is one second at a time O reader, your stay upon earth is so brief! -- one heart beat at a time.

"Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a fast flitting meteor, a fast flying cloud,
A flash of lightening, a break of the wave,
Man passes from life to his rest in the grave.

"The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around and together be laid;
The young and the old, the low and the high,
Shall molder to dust and together shall lie.

"'Tis the wink of the eye 'tis the draught of the breath,
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud,
Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

* * * * *

36 -- A HEDGE ABOUT HIM

"Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" (Job 1:10)

A. -- The speaker here was Satan, who had traversed every foot of territory between earth and heaven, hence he might be considered an authority on the subject of the road to heaven. And when we call to mind the many snares and pitfalls that lie along the Christian's homeward path, it is encouraging to know that God has assumed the responsibility of getting us through.

I. At the very threshold of the text, the following thoughts confront us.

a. Satan cannot assail Or tempt a child of God without God's permission.

1. -- He could not even molest a hog without the permission of Jesus. (Mark 5:13)

b. We will never backslide if we remain on the safe side of the hedge.

1. -- "If ye do these things ye shall never fall." (II. Pet. 1:10)

II. A hedge is a fence formed of bushes set close together. It is often used for the purpose of keeping the sheep on the inside and the foe or wolf on the outside.

a. God has placed this hedge of protection around every one of his children.

b. The words "garden, vineyard and field" all suggest an enclosed plot of ground-private property.

1. -- "I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge." (Isa. 5:5)

2. -- "He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out." (Lam. 3:7)

3. -- "Ye are God's husbandry." (fold) (1 Cor. 3:9)

4. -- "And thou shalt be like a watered garden." (Isa. 58:11)

B. -- In this chapter I shall attempt to describe some features of this hedge, which God has placed about His children.

I. God's word, which sheds light upon every phase of human conduct, forms a part of this hedge, which He has designed to keep us out of the hands of the Wicked one.

a. David said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet." (Psalms 119:105)

b. "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light." (Prey. 6:23)

II. Another part of the hedge is formed by imparted knowledge of what is right and what is wrong.

a. One does not have to go far in the ways of the Lord before he knows full well, what is required to stand or fall; that which brings peace, and that which brings condemnation.

b. "I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds will I write them." (Heb. 10. 16)

III. The next little member that constitutes a part of this hedge is, that monitor, "conscience," this God has placed in the breast of every child of Adam. Some one has defined it thus--

a. "A watch dog in the heart. b. A mirror to reflect danger ahead. c. The compass needle of the soul. d. The eye of God. e. A thousand witnesses in one. f. The champion of Justice."

IV. The checks, prompt, restraints and reproofs of the Holy Ghost form another link in this barrier.

1. "And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and" of righteousness, and of judgment." (John 16:8)

V. The reproofs and convictions of the Godly also form a part of that placed around to keep us in His will.

a. David said, "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head." (Psalms 141:5)

b. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, "ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." (Gal. 6:1)

c. "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." (Rom. 14:15)

d. Any thing pertaining to one's conduct, that the most spiritual and Godly people, as a whole, disapprove of; that thing is wrong and should be avoided.

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16:19)

VI. The misfortunes and downfalls of others or rather the experience gained thereby, is another part of the hedge.

a. God has used the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah; and the fall of Achan, Gehazi, Saul and others as danger signs along the road.

The Psalmist said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned."

2. Even cattle are reluctant to enter a shed where one of their kind has been slaughtered:. How much more careful should intelligent man be at this point?

If the opposite sex ruined Samson; if the love of power and position damned Herod, is it not prudent for us all to watch that we do not follow in their footsteps?

VII. Our acquired knowledge of how radically and impartially God has dealt with sin and punished sinners in past ages, takes a fitting part in composing this hedge of God's.

a. "Even Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example; suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." (Jude 7)

VIII. Lastly, a promised reward at the end of life's road, is the next act of God, in composing this hedge.

a. Like an earthly parent, God has thrown out several inducements to His children to be good.

1. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

2. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (Rev. 22:14)

" 'Twas not apostasy alone
Damned me: this sealed my ruin: but my life
Was one rebellion, one ingratitude,
God would, but could not save me 'gainst my will,
Moved, drawn, besought, persuaded, striven with,
But yet inviolate, or else no will,
And, no man -- for man by birth is free.
Yes, He would, I would not, further space
Would but have loaded me
With deeper guilt."

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37 -- MOSES THE BEGINNER

" By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." (Heb. 11:24-25)

The experience of Moses is such a beautiful picture of the convert. It contains just the instruction that beginners need. Let us place him upon the table and study him as a beginner from all angles.

I. At the start of his ministry God made things unmistakably clear to him, regarding the course in life which He wished him to pursue. (Exodus 3:2-3)

a. God will not leave us in doubt regarding our calling, if we give an attentive ear to the voice of His Spirit.

b. The person who does not know what his calling is, had better tarry in the "Round House" until he receives definite orders or he may "make shipwreck."

No time is to be considered lost that is spent in waiting upon God for "running orders."

1. -- It sometimes proves just as disastrous for a train to run ahead of time as behind time.

2. -- The person who runs ahead, runs without the message, and the one who runs behind time, runs with a dead message.

What would be the use of turning in the fire alarm after the building has been reduced to ashes?

II. At the very threshold of Moses' ministry he met stiff opposition. (Exodus 4:25)

a. This is the case with every one who starts out to follow Christ and live for heaven.

b. "And that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22)

III. We notice too, that Moses was assailed with the same old, "lack of ability," temptation which attacks every God-called worker. (Exodus 4:10)

IV. Like all others, he too arrives at the fork of the road, between "Worldly honor" and "The reproach of the cross."

V. As all who follow Christ must do, he had to make a cool-headed, deliberate, choice, as to which way he would go.

a. The expression -- "when he had come to years" shows us quite clearly that it was an individual choice.

b. He could not choose for his uncles, aunts or cousins, but for himself. In other words, the things he felt convicted to do, he had to do regardless of anyone else. (Verse 24)

VI. In order to stand firmly after he had made his decision, he had to look beyond the fading, transitory things of time, and fix his gaze on things eternal. (verse 26)

VII. We notice moreover, that before he could be of much service to God, he had to become fearless.

a. "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured as seeing him who is invisible." (Verse 27)

b. God cannot do much with a man until he gets the fear out of him. It is amusing; the unique method God used to cure Moses of fear.

1. -- It was by making him do the thing he was afraid to do. This is an excellent remedy for fear, even at this present day. When Moses threw down the rod and it turned into a serpent, he was afraid to take it up, but fled before it, until God commanded him to take it by the tail. (Exodus 4:3, 4)

2. -- From this point on, we never read of Moses yielding to fear and running away from the rod of God.

c. It would surely be a great blessing to the church and humanity, if God would in some way "round up" this generation of tender-foot, ease-seeking, money-loving, cross-shirking, pulpit dudes who are palming themselves off on the public for preachers of the gospel; and take the fear of man out of them, and give them a backbone of steel, a face of brass, a heart of love, and a tongue of fire.

VIII. Out of all his attainments, nothing was so mightily used of God as the thing he possessed when God first called him, namely the "rod of power."

a. It was by swaying this rod that Egypt's waters were turned to blood, her dust to lice; her fields and houses filled with frogs; her sky clouded with locust and flies; and her day made darkness at noon.

b. Reader, culture and refinement are good in their place" but nothing is to be compared with the anointing of the Holy Ghost that God bestows upon His ministers before sending them out. And the man who goes into the ministry without the Holy Ghost cannot be anything else, but a failure, no matter how gifted he may be.

"Is not thy grace as mighty now
As when Elijah felt its power;
When glory beamed from Moses' brow
Or Job endured the trying hour?"

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38 -- ABSALOM'S MULE -- (Message for Young People)

"And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak and his head caught hold of the oak and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away. (II Sam. 18:9.)

Inspiration has given us a mint of spiritual wealth in types, shadows, symbols and word-pictures. The first thing that I wish the reader to see with the eye of imagination, is a noble and kingly attired young man, riding proudly and furiously upon a mule, through a dense forest. He is pursued by foes and his life is imperiled at every hand. However, he is confident of his fleet-footed mule. But lo, as he bounds through the forest whipped by the dense shrubbery on every hand, his hair becomes entangled in the boughs of a large oak; is caught up and the mule sweeps out from under him. See him suspended between heaven and earth by merely a few strands of hair. Awful picture!

Here we have painted in vivid colors a rare and animated picture of the sinner, as he furiously rides through the forest of time.

I. Let us notice a few of these mules that slip from under the careless sinner -- these philosophies of life; things on which the sinner has staked his all; hobbies which he chooses to ride rather than submit to capture by the army of God. Yea, he rides these philosophies and hobbies confidently, in Satan's territory, even though he is continuously lashed by the dense undergrowth.

a. The mule of human friendship.

1. How soon do worldly friends desert the sinner when he is caught up by disease, poverty and sorrow. a. His friends may have been numberless when he was in good health and had plenty of money to spend, when he was in every way an asset -- but when he is caught up by misfortune and is left stranded and penniless they go away. b. The mule of pleasure and good time. c. The mule of success and prosperity. d. The mule of chance. e. The mule of human self-sufficiency, and human philosophies.

II. Let us notice some additional facts regarding Absalom's mule and himself.

a. The mule deserted him just at the time he needed it most.

b. The mule left him suddenly and unexpectedly.

The sinner may be given lots of latitude and defy God and despise His law for a long time, but some day and somewhere sudden destruction will fall upon him. (Prov. 29:1)

c. From the moment that Absalom mounted the mule in the morning, its gentle pace, soft canter, and bounding gallop were taking him on, on, and on, to the death-trap.

1. So it is with the sinner -- ever since he stepped upon the stage of time his mule has been carrying him gently and silently on toward a Christless death-bed, a sinner's grave, a rein-trying judgment day, and an endless hell.

2. It is true, that the sun of pleasure has been shining brightly; the balmy breezes of success fanning his cheek, and the flowers of delusive hope blooming along his pathway: nevertheless, he has been bounding deathward and hellward all the while.

d. We learn from verse that Absalom's chief idol caused his ruin.

1. He was favored with the finest suit of hair that was possessed by any man of his day.

(a) When he went to the barber to have it trimmed, the barber cut away six pounds and still there was an abundance left. (II Sam. 14:26)

2. Like all other young people, he gloried in himself he was immensely proud of his hair, and took great delight in it, but his idol proved his destruction.

(a) So it is with the careless sinner. The dance and fashion are the idols of some young women, but sooner or later they rob her of her honor, her virtue, and her home, and send her to a harlot's den, an untimely grave, and hell. Often the drink, the cigarette, and gambling, form the young man's idol, but they soon destroy his health, his good name and end in the gallows, and a lake of fire and brimstone.

e. The mule on going out from under Absalom did not put any substitute under him but left him stranded, in the hour of need.

1. So it is with infidelity and skepticism, they can undermine and destroy the sinner's belief in God and Jesus Christ; but when the chilly waters of death creep upon him, they leave him comfortless and stranded.

2. After an eventful life of eighty-three years of faithfully serving his country and society, Talleyrand exclaimed when the mule of time and his self dependence were rapidly going out from under him, and eternity was looming up in sight, "Behold, eighty-three years passed away! What cares! What agitation! What anxieties! What ill-will! What sad complaints! And all without results, except great fatigue of mind and body, and profound sentiment of discouragement with regard to the future, and disgust with regard to the past."

3. Lord Byron, when the mule left him stranded in the tree of failing health, and nearing that dark world, from which no traveler ever returns, exclaimed, "I have had but eleven happy days upon earth."

4. Russel, when asked on his death-bed, "How stands the case with your soul?" replied, "I don't know, God knows."

Reader, remember, "The mule that was under Absalom, went away."

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39 -- WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A SINNER DIES?

"He shall, be driven from light into darkness and chased out of the world." (Job 18:18).

If we should judge from the funeral sermons that we hear nowadays, nearly everyone who dies, no matter how wickedly they have lived, goes direct to heaven.

My purpose in this chapter is to mention some of the many things that the word of God says takes place when a sinner dies, no matter how wealthy or wise he may be.

Let us first notice him upon a dying couch, breathing his last. Behold his sunken eyes, his hollow cheeks, his pallid face! See the death dew on his brow and behold his glassy eyes; his bony hands and fever-cracked lips! He is wealthy, wise and prominent in the world, but he is now leaving it all. See, he is getting quiet and still! Lo, he is gone! The undertaker comes and wraps him in a silken shroud and places his remains in a rosewood casket.

Behold the long line of carriages following his remains to the quiet city of the dead! There we leave him under a white granite shaft that reaches high into the air.

But, pray tell us from God's Bible, what took place when he died?

1. He died in his sins: that is, unforgiven. (John 8:24)
2. With him all light went out and his spirit plunged into eternal darkness. (Job. 18:5-6)
3. With him. all hope died and he entered into the zone of despair. (Prov. 11:7)
4. He went to his own place -- that is a place prepared for sinners: and evil spirits: (Acts 1:25)
5. Not to sleep or rest, but to immediate torment. (Luke 16:23)
6. He will always be conscious of his ruin. (Luke 16:25)
7. His doom is forever fixed. (.Luke 16:26)

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40 -- ODDS AGAINST DEATH-BED REPENTANCE

"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." (Luke 23:42.)

Here we have a very wicked man getting saved in his last hour in the world. Evidently, it was his first opportunity.

An improper interpretation of this passage has no doubt landed many a soul in hell. People take it for granted that if the thief got saved at the close of life, they can also. They do not seem to realize the fact that this was, most likely, the first and only opportunity the thief ever had.

Since most people are planning to get saved or sanctified on their death-bed, I wish to call the reader's attention to the odds that are against death-bed repentance, and leave you to decide for yourself.

I. Thousands are taken away unexpectedly and do not have any prolonged illness on a deathbed. Think of the many accidents that occur daily:

II. Some people lie unconscious for hours and days before departing this life.

III. Physicians nowadays do not tell their patients the truth. They make them believe that they are feeling fine, looking fine and doing fine, when they are fully convinced that they will be a corpse in less than twenty-four hours.

IV. Religious people are often not admitted to the room of the dying sinner. The physician says he is too nervous to be annoyed with prayer and singing. Therefore, the sinner slips into hell within a stones-throw of the church and Christian people.

V. It is on the death-bed that Satan puts up his strongest fight -- his hope of getting that soul being the greatest at this time.

VI. It is so difficult to pray and concentrate one's thoughts at such a critical hour, hence this is surely a very unseasonable time for one to choose to settle up the affairs of a life time.

VII. God does not give any encouragement through His word that He will answer a sinner's prayers in the last moments. (Prov. 1:24-26)

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41 -- AN UNEASY SPIRIT

"And when it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand. So Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." (I Sam. 16:23).

We have read of burglars entering stores by night and stuffing the mouth of the night watchman with rags, to drown out his cries for help.

In the lesson before us we have a backslider trying to stifle the cries and groans of his own uneasy spirit. He is unhappy, restless and melancholy. He is in this sad condition because he is out of touch with his Maker and out of his spiritual element. He is trying to reap joy where he has sown despair, he is in the zone of disobedience.

In the character before us, we also have a life-size picture of every backslider upon earth. Their souls have been accustomed to something higher, deeper and more satisfying; but because they are not willing to humble themselves and meet the conditions, they proceed daily to stifle and silence the cries and groans of their uneasy, unhappy spirit.

There are many methods used by the backslider to accomplish this unpleasant task, to gag his spirit. Let us notice a few of them.

I. Diving more deeply into pleasure with the hope of wearing out and drowning out conviction and former light and knowledge of God's will.

II. Silencing the gripping of conscience, by breaking away from a few heinous sins -- but not going to the bottom and praying clear through.

III. A third way of trying to drown out the cries of an uneasy, unhappy spirit is, trying to give it a hope of heaven by taking up with an easy-going false religion.

IV. Another way still, is by measuring themselves by others who are in the same condition as themselves.

V. Again, by putting the wrong interpretation on scriptures that condemn them in the course which they are pursuing.

VI. Giving money and doing charitable work rather than doing that one thing.

VII. A final way of trying to silence the cries of an uneasy spirit is by frequently changing from one denomination to another, from one religion to another; trying to satisfy the soul on fine churches, large memberships, operational singing and chaffy preaching. But lo, and behold, their spirit within them is sad and gloomy all the while. Why so, may we ask? Because it feels in some degree the terrors that await it in everlasting burnings.

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42 -- PETER IN PRISON

"And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains." (Acts 12:4-7.)

A. -- Peter's imprisonment and deliverance is the most perfect picture in the Bible of the condition of the sinner. The resemblance is almost perfect.

I. Peter is so securely held.

a. The huge stones composing the wall are twenty feet thick and thirty feet in length; and a huge iron door bars the entrance. Before this door stand two soldiers heavily armed, and on the inside of the gate stand two others likewise well armed.

b. Just beyond the first wall is another wall and a door of thick panels, studded with bolts and guarded by four soldiers.

c. Further still, is the door to the inner prison, which is also guarded by four soldiers. The inner prison consists of stone walls, stone floor and ceiling, and Peter lies here on the floor chained to two soldiers. My! my! how can he ever get out?

d. This is identically the picture of every sinner in the world.

1. He is daily and hourly closely guarded by demons and evil spirits.

2. When he enters a religious meeting no doubt a troop of demons throng about him, and sit in the seat with him filling him with a spirit of criticism, frivolity, pride and unbelief.

II. Peter's death warrant was signed, and he only had a few hours to live.

a. Hear the clock ticking, ticking, ticking, Peter on to the hour of execution!

b. The death warrant of every sinner on earth has been signed long ago.

1. -- Notice how the Bible reads -- "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4)

c. The clock is slowly ticking, ticking, ticking the sinner on to a Christless death bed; a sinner's grave; a heart-searching judgment day, and a bottomless lake of fire and brimstone.

III. Peter was asleep, even in that perilous condition, and under those dire circumstances.

a. So it is with the sinner, he is asleep to his dangerous condition; asleep to the shortness of time; asleep to his opportunity; asleep to the deception of sin; asleep to the value of his soul, and asleep to the nearness of death and hell.

IV. Peter was bound with two chains.

a. The sinner is bound with the two chains of unbelief and habit.

B. -- Let the reader observe the change that took place as the church prayed.

a. Peter was supernaturally awakened, and so is the sinner when the church prays. (Acts 12:7)

b. At the touch of the angel, Peter's chains fell off.

1. -- Just one touch from the Savior causes the chains of habit and unbelief to fall from the long bound sinner.

c. A change came, so marvelous that it surprised both Peter and his friends. (verse 14-16)

1. -- So it is when a sinner gets "sure enough" saved, -- he is made into a new creature. (II. Cor. 5:17)

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43 -- WHY OUR IMPERFECTIONS WILL BE OVERLOOKED

"His lord said unto him" Well done, thou good and faithful servant." (Matt. 25:21-23).

The words of the text were the commendation which the faithful servants received from their lord. Through the fact that both servants received the same commendation, we can see plainly that our rewards will not hinge upon the amount of talents which we possess, but the way in which we have employed them. When we reflect upon our short-comings and imperfections, we are made to wonder how God can say to us, "Well done!" However, the only reasonable ground upon which He can give this commendation will be upon the ground that we have done our best.

Now from our hazy view-point let us notice some reasons why, God may overlook our imperfections and say, "Well done."

It will be for the following reasons:

I. As far as we knew and understood we have rendered the best obedience that our frail nature was able to perform.

We also received instruction from God-provided sources, and cheerfully obeyed. The sources -- the word of God, the checks and promptings of the Holy Ghost, conscience and Christian counsel.

II. Because we were just as zealous in uprooting the evils in our heart as we were in expunging the ills that prevented physical health.

III. Because we received light and reproof in the same spirit that we received instruction and information on how to become wealthy and wise.

IV. Because as far as we understood, we took up every cross, and welcomed every chain of providence which God sent our way.

V. Because our motives were always on God's side of the fence: even when our bodies were tired, our spirit laggard and our judgment confused.

VI. Because we were as punctual and diligent in serving God as men are in their vocations of life, where ethers are waiting to take their places if they do not come up to the mark at every point.

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44 -- WHERE IS THY BROTHER? -- (Missionary Message)

"And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother?" (Gen. 4:9.)

Since all scripture is profitable for doctrine, and all men our brothers by creation, the text is a fitting one for a missionary meeting. So let us this afternoon, hear the voice of God thundering down through the ages, speaking to us individually, saying, "Where are (the heathen) thy brethren?"

In viewing the question from different angles, it becomes four-fold.

I. Where is thy brother?

- a. In the paws of the dragon superstition.
- b. In sin's horrible pit, lying helpless, bruised, bleeding and dying.
- c. Sitting behind sin's giant prison walls, beneath the pall of ever-increasing darkness.

II. Where should our brother be?

- a. With us in the "Gospel Sheep-fold."
- b. On the "Highway of Holiness," en route to heaven and an eternity of bliss.
- c. He should be in the service of the Master, helping to reap the golden grain. Native workers are the most successful workers.

III. On whom does the responsibility rest, of getting our brother where he belongs?

- a. On the church as a whole. (Mark 16:15)
- b. On the heart of every believer, for to every saved person comes the divine commission, "Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you." (Matt. 20:4)

IV. What are the necessary requirements for bringing our brother into the Shepherd's fold?

- a. A passion for souls. b. Intercessory prayer. c. A sacrificial spirit. "God so loved the world that he gave."

V. Will the heathen charge you with their blood Judgment day?

- a. Will they charge you with wasting money, which you might have used to send them the gospel?
- b. Notice the amount of money spent annually for useless things in America.

V. -- Soft drinks -- \$750,000,000. 2. -- Candies -- \$1,000,000,000. 3. -- Chewing Gum -- \$58,000,000. 4. -- Jewelry -- \$4,000,000. 5. -- Amusements -- \$750,000,000. 6. -- Cigarettes -- \$810,000,000. 7. -- And besides all of this, think of the money spent for tea, coffee, ribbon laces, and cosmetics.

Reader, where is thy brother?

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45 -- SIX EAR-MARKS OF GOD'S PEOPLE -- (Sunday Afternoon Message at Camp Meeting)

"Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? Who eat up my people as they eat bread." (Psalm 14:4).

"I am the good shepherd and know my sheep." (John 10:14.)

The two expressions, namely "My people" and "My sheep" will be the foundation of my remarks.

A. -- Since this is a mixed multitude, here this afternoon, like the farmer, I wish to do two things: First, see if all the sheep are present. Secondly, ascertain if there are any goats among the sheep.

I. Farmers usually put a certain ear-mark or brand upon their cattle, so as to distinguish them from the neighbor's cattle.

a. God too has done a similar thing.

b. So this afternoon, I want to mention six ear-marks by which God's people may be known.

1. -- They are saved from committing sin. (a) "And she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21)
(b) "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (I John 3:8-9)

2. -- God's people are clean, separated people. (a) "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." (Isa. 1:16, 17)
(b) "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (II. Cor. 6:17-18)

(1) People who smoke, chew get intoxicated, play cards, dance and attend theaters, the circus and the "movies," are by no means God's people.

3. -- The people whom God deigns to call His own, are a victorious people, having victory over all sin and temptation.

(a) "For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (I. John 5:4-5)

(b) "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us." (Rom. 8:37)

4. -- Furthermore, God's people are a reliable, truthful people.

(a) They do not lie and what they say can be relied upon.

(b) As far as it lies within their power, their word is as good as a bank note.

(c) A child of God does not have to be reigned up by the law to keep his promises.

(1) If he is saved he will keep them. (2) If a man's word is no good, his religion is also no good.

a. He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not, etc." (Psalms 15:4) 1. That is, if a man promises to do this or that; but later on finds that it is not to his advantage to do so, he nevertheless abides by his promise.

(d) "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another." (Eph. 4:25)

(e) "Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all."

(f) "He who tells a lie is not sensible how great a task he undertakes; for he must be forced to invent twenty more to maintain that one."

(g) "Nothing is beautiful but truth, and truth alone is lovely."

(h) "Above all things, always speak the truth; your word must be your bond through life."

5. -- God's people, everywhere and all the time, are a peaceful, loving people.

(a) They are not quarrelsome, fussy and difficult to get along with.

(b) "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." (Matt. 5:9)

(c) "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without penalty, and without hypocrisy." (Jas. 3:17)

6. -- The people that belong to God are also a happy, blessed people. (a) People who are destitute of love, joy and peace, are not to be caned God's people, no matter how often they have been baptized or to how many churches they belong.

(b) "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. 35:10)

(c) "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." (John 15.11)

(d) "The joy of the Lord is your strength." (Neh. 8:10)

B. Notice some ear-marks of a goat.

I. A resentful fighting spirit.

II. A stubborn, balky, hard-to-lead disposition. a. He must be drafted or petted and coaxed. (Reader, does this apply to you?)

III. A sensual, governed by passion spirit, i. e. one in bondage to his baser nature, is characteristic of the goat.

IV. A tendency to pollute the surrounding atmosphere, i. e., the goat has an unpleasant odor emitting from his body, which is quite repulsive to the people in the community.

a. In other words, his influence is harmful. b. As one has said when speaking of an unreliable person, "What you are, speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say."

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46 -- THIS PRESENT WORLD

"In this present world." (Titus 2:12.)

"If in this life only." (I Cor. 15:19.)

Generally, in attempting to arouse the unsaved to action, we speak on the subject of Eternity, heaven or hell, but on looking about us we see enough of God's handiwork on this side of the Jordan of death, to bestir men to immediate action. It is so because of the fact that men are more familiar with this life and can more easily learn the simple lessons from Time's Primer.

Let us quietly turn its age worn pages and learn some helpful lesson concerning "this present world."

I. It was here that we first heard the sweet story of Jesus and His love; here we first heard of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; here we first heard of the beautiful city with its jasper wall, gold paved streets and many mansions. O, Glory be to God!

II. This life is most important in our destiny, because it gives direction and character to all the rest. Think of it, reader!

III. Here the issue of Eternity for all the human race is fixed, and decision made.

a. All is won or lost in this present world. It was on this same great battle field that Judas fought and lost an eternity of bliss.

b. Reader, you are now in the conflict with sin and holiness; for life or death. It will be here, that you will win all, or lose all.

IV. This present world is also the nursery for heaven or hell.

a. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7)

b. It is here God's children are cleansed, polished and educated for heaven; here too, that the sinner is decoyed, polluted and trained for hell.

c. Within the heart of every person we meet, this work of tremendous importance is under construction. Heaven is bidding high for every human soul, while at the same time, Satan is forging temptation, setting snares and following after every child of Adam.

V. This present world is serving as a dark back-ground for God's blessings and benefits.

A back-ground:

a. For the beauty and keeping power of salvation.

b. The goodness of God and the undying friendship of Jesus.

c. The disastrous work of sin and the cruelty and malignity of Satan.

VI. This present world is the place of registration. We register either for heaven or hell. It is here that the final choice is made and the preferred course pursued.

"The soul is now left in your trust,
To save or lose, the one you must,
Will you sell out to death and sin
Or serve the Lord a crown to win?

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"Yea, I will help thee." (Isa. 41:10).

The little verb, "help" appears more than fifty times in the Bible. It also forms a part of the shortest prayer in the Bible -- (Matt. 15:16) "Lord help me."

"To help" means, to aid, relieve and succor. It is the keynote to success in the Christian's life. It would make our living for God so much easier if, on beginning the day, we would reflect and call to the mind the thought that "God is our helper."

My object in this chapter is to stimulate the faith of the reader by calling his attention to some of the many ways God has promised to help His children.

I. He has promised to go with us every inch of the way, and remain with us all the while.

a. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:20)

b. "For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Heb. 13:5)

II. He has freely consented to carry our every burden; every day, all the way.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee." (Psalm 55:22)

III. A third way in which God has promised to help us is to furnish more grace when needed. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need." (Heb. 4:16)

IV. Our Heavenly Father has also promised to "guide" us continually.

a. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way." (Psalm 37:23)

b. "And the Lord shall guide thee continually." (Isa. 58:11)

V. God has also promised to make a way of escape when we are hedged in by the tempter and temptation.

"There shall no temptation take you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (I. Cor. 10:13)

VI. When deceived and snared by the wicked one, God has promised to forgive and deliver us.

"He shall call upon me; and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him." (Psalms 91:15)

VII. Notwithstanding our many infirmities, He has promised to help us in them, also. "Likewise the Spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: But the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered." (Rom. 8:26)

VIII. When cast down and depressed, He does not forget us, but promises to encourage us.

a. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." (Isa. 40:1)

b. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." (John 14:1)

IX. Lastly, He has promised to defend us when condemned by others, and clear us when we are judged.

a. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper and every tongue that shall rise up against thee, thou shalt condemn." (Isa. 54:17)

b. "The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged." (Psalm 37:32-33)

Reader, with all of this promised assistance on the part of God, we will surely be able to make it safely through to the glory land if we will. Praise the Lord!

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48 -- ENVY

"A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bone." (Prov. 14:30)

Among the many diseases to which our bodies are liable, none is so repulsive as those causing rottenness of the bone. The very thought makes one shiver.

What a striking description of an envious heart! What artist could paint a more vivid picture of carnality? When we are sanctified wholly, "perfect love" casteth out fear in relation to God, and envy in respect to man. (I. Cor. 13:4)

This dreadful rottenness of heart is not only found in the marketplace, among sinners, but it is often found in the pew and pulpit. Nowadays more meetings are being conducted through envy and jealousy than we have any idea of.

A. -- Now in order to awaken those who are victims of this frightful malady, I shall mention some of its symptoms.

I. Envy is referred to as a "passion," and "passion" is derived from the Latin, being the past participle of "patior," meaning to suffer.

a. An envious person actually suffers over the success of a rival or neighbor, or in fact of any except himself. b. So true are the words of the poet:

"With that malignant envy which turns pale
And sickens, even if a friend prevail,
Which merit and success pursues with hate,
And damns the worth it cannot imitate."

II. A person who is affected with this rottenness of heart is, censorious and full of faultfinding and criticism.

a. As one has said, "Emulation looks for merits, that she may exalt herself by victory; Envy spies out blemishes. that she may lower another by defeat."

III. One, who is infected with this dreadful distemper, never praises or sincerely prays for the success of those who excel him.

a. "They praise only that which they can surpass, but that which surpasses them -- they censure."

IV. An envious person secretly rejoices when a person, much admired, makes a slip.

a. "O, envy! hide thy bosom, hide it deep; a thousand smiles with black envenomed mouths nest there, and hiss and feed through all thy heart!"

B. The remedy for envy.

I. Daylight exposure; that is, to confess it out to God. (John 1:9)

II. An apostolic siege of prayer and fasting. (Acts 1:4)

III. Seek and obtain that entire sanctification. (I. Cor. 13:4)

C. -- Some indications of a perfect cure.

I. Being in a place where we esteem others better than ourselves. (Phil. 2:3)

II. Possessing that degree of love that causes us to feel pained and deeply grieved over the fall or misfortune of our rival. (II. Sam. 1:12, 13)

III. Being able to rejoice when others make a success of the thing or enterprise that failed in our hands and under our administration. (Rom. 12:15-21)

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49 -- THE GRAVE -- (Message To Sinners)

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." (Ecc 9:10.)

In this chapter, I shall not attempt to write about wealth, culture, politics or commerce, but the grave; nothing is so terrible as death, and no place so lonely as the grave.

I. I now invite the reader in his imagination, to go with me, out to the cemetery, out to the old churchyard burying ground, back in the homeland; and take your seat beside that familiar grave of your loved one, which was placed there days, months or years ago.

II. You are now in the largest city in the world. It has the largest population and area of any city ever built or conceived of, it is The City of The Dead. Behold this melancholy spot! the bleak, white slab, the mournful cedars, and weeping willows; the grassy sod, the blushing flowers and narrow walks! Feel the balmy air upon your cheek, note the solemn silence, which is only broken by the melancholy song of the turtle dove.

III. Observe this tiny hillock more carefully yet; it is the unavoidable "rest room" for the sons and daughters of Adam; yes, for those who have no time to pray or attend religious services; yes, for those who are engaged in the breathless chase after the phantoms of gold, fame, and notoriety. They all must stop-over here.

IV. Reader, behold this tiny cell! It is far too small and narrow to admit your houses, barns, automobiles, clothing, and other earthly effects. When the time arrives for you to withdraw to your cheerless bed here, you must leave all else behind. Think of festering corruption and riot of worms! Think of the chilling, freezing cold, from which no protection is had; the cold rain drip, drip, dripping from the loosened earth above you, making your dismal bed foul and musty.

V. Oh, see that gloomy spot! It is the boundary-line of human beauty, fashion and culture.

"The bride in her fair beauty
With orange buds in her hair,
And wedding robes around her
Sleeps calm and peaceful there."

No gaudy colors, ornaments, plumes or glittering gems are needed here, for it is man's last resting place.

VI. Shall we glance again at this rueful spot? This is the dark, bottomless, shoreless ocean into which Opportunity sets forever.

a. No revivals or camp-meetings are held here.

- b. No Bible promises are available here.
- c. No prayers are offered by those who reside here.
- d. The blessed, entreating Holy Spirit has long since ceased to strive with those who reside here.

VII. See again this grassy hillock! 'Tis the hot-bed, the virgin-soil, from which, shall arise some day, immortal bodies to glory or contempt, to hope or despair, to endless bliss or endless woe. (John 5:28) (I. Cor. 15:53)

"Our lives are rivers gliding free
 To that unfathomed, boundless sea,
 The silent grave!
 Thither all earthly pomp and boast
 Roll, to be swallowed up and lost
 In one dark wave.

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50 -- WHY THE CHURCH IS POWERLESS

"What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the house-top?" (Isa. 22:1).

It is true, that the prophet in the text laments the invasion of Jewry by the Persians, but the last phrase of (verse 4) indicate that it is a prophetic vision of the church in decline. The interrogative clause "What aileth thee" reveals the fact that there was an invisible, unknown cause for this decline.

Today it is readily realized by saint and sinner, young and old, that there is something wrong with the church. The majority of people do not seem to know what it is and those who do, are afraid to say.

My object, therefore, in this little discourse shall be, to give some reasons why the church is going so rapidly into decline. I shall do so as briefly, and with as few words as possible, -- for "a word to the wise is sufficient."

I. As a whole, the church no longer has the ancient type of preachers.

a. Men through whose faces flashed divine lightning, through whose eyes beamed eternity, and whose voice and message struck more terror to the sinner than the tread of an earth quake.

b. Yes, clean ministers, unselfish ministers, sanctified, empowered ministers; ministers who are not afraid of the cross; not afraid to preach against sin in high and low places; not afraid to speak of an everlasting, burning hell; not afraid to cry out against false religion; not afraid to preach death to carnality; and not afraid of the poor-house.

c. Today, mentality has taken the place of spirituality. They do not preach the Christ of the Bible; neither do they preach with the power and unction of the Holy Ghost; it is all dry, dead words. It is no marvel that people can sit and sleep on the front seats, or joke and chew gum all during the sermon.

II. The next thing that ails the church is that she has no longer (as a whole) men and women who are true to their convictions, regardless of what people think or say. They are not ready, like Paul, to die for what they believe.

III. Her members have settled down and lost the three essentials, namely: the spirit of self-denial, the spirit of prayer and the passion for souls.

Hundreds of God-called and God-anointed workers have settled down and taken up with mercenary occupations -- store-keeping, farming, selling automobiles, etc. The ancient cry -- "Give me souls or I will die" -- has almost left the earth.

IV. The church has lost the apostolic brand of faith.

a. We do not half believe God's word. b. We do not look for results. c. We do not insist that they come. d. We do not urge our claim for all God has promised in His word.

V. The church is no longer radical in dealing with sin and hypocrisy. She does not make war with the Achaians, she no longer throws overboard the Jonahs, neither does she take her stand against Agaz [sic], the carnal mind, the Old Man.

VI. Her members become irreverent and worldly minded.

a. They can laugh and joke in the house of worship, buy and sell, also open her sacred doors for political meetings and worldly enterprise.

b. Instead of the prayer meeting, concerts are held; instead of the class meeting, literary contests; and instead of old fashioned, Holy Ghost singing, operational performances are given by a lot of unsaved, half-nude young ladies, whose faces are painted like clowns, and who squeal like pigs. How in the name of common sense can we ever expect to have a revival over such performances?

Reader, are you in any way responsible for these existing conditions? Will God find you guiltless on the Judgment Day?

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THE END