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CASTING THE NET

By Clarence Ellsworth Cornell

Alternate Title:

Stringing the Fish With Pertinent and Practical
Suggestions on Evangelistic Methods and Fruitfulness

Other Books By C. E. Cornell:

Sifted Wheat

Hints to Fishermen

Joy for Mourning

Heaven or Hell, Which?

"He that winneth souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30).

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INTRODUCTION

The Master's words, "Ye shall catch men," is sure to come to the careful, devoted follower of the invitation, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." But the work is so difficult, and the task so complicated, that words of direction and teaching from experienced and efficient workers are always greatly to be desired. The clear, terse, direct words of this book from one who has been eminently successful in "Casting the Net," will be of special value to every worker seeking for the greatest efficiency in this vital part of his work.

It is here properly assumed that the passion must be the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the soul, but that this being inwrought, many things as to method may be learned, and that by earnest effort, skill may be acquired.

The intent here is to make suggestions, direct effort, and give such experiences as have been of value. It is an earnest effort to help earliest workers to more effectually deal with men in that most difficult of all places -- the valley of decision.

The author recognizes that in this work, the ministry of the Spirit is supreme, and that He often secures the end even where there is neither method or skill, and that without Him all else is vain.

He also recognizes that as the Spirit works through agencies, they who are best prepared for the work can be most largely used. That He gives to men the tongue of the learners, that they may rescue the weary with their message. So, learners are the proper agencies. Such, this book is calculated to inspire and help. We commend it to a wide reading.

P. F. Bresee
Los Angeles, Cal.

* * * * *

PREFACE

This little book is designed to be a companion of "Hints to Fishermen," so widely used by Christian workers. It is hoped that it may inspire to a larger and more practical efficiency in "catching men."

Many of the suggestions given have been worked out in practical use by the writer, and he knows that they are workable.

The successful fisher of men, must be as keen in every particular as the successful fisher of fish. To throw the gospel net and catch men for God is no mean occupation. Ah! it is an exalted privilege. To do this skillfully requires patience, study and prayer. The art of soul-winning, is largely a neglected art. There are men and women skilled in the sciences, in literature, in metaphysics, in electricity, business, and the number seems to be multiplying every day, but there are not so many who are experts in the business of soulwinning.

This should be the uppermost thought of every Christian; especially of every Christian minister. The preacher who fails to "string the fish," whose ministry is practically barren, who preaches year in and year out without any tangible results, who never experiences the inexpressible joy of seeing men and women "born from above," who depends largely upon the indirect results of his ministry, is to say the least, deplorably unfortunate, and we doubt not, has missed his calling.

This book is to help to stir up latent energies, to inspire confidence, to light the way, to make possible the glorious fact of soul-winning, especially in the life of each preacher who wilt try. It is rod, line, good bait, and tells how to catch 'em.

May the Lord Jesus, whom I serve and whose I am, use it to further His adorable kingdom among men, is my humble prayer.

C. E. Cornell

* * * * *

PART I

01 -- THROWING THE NET

To throw the gospel net, and bring it safe to land full of fish, require attention, practice and skill. Dr. W. M. Thompson says:

"The successful use of the hand-net requires in the fishermen, a keen eye, an active frame, and great skill in throwing. He must, too, be: patient, watchful, wide awake, and prompt to seize the exact moment to throw."

These admirable qualities cannot be acquired except by practice and perseverance. But the man who sets out to know how to throw the net, and will not be satisfied with meager ability, but will strive and strive until he can master the situation, will be rewarded for his arduous toil and patience. He will catch the fish; he will get results.

* * *

02 -- THE OLD RUT

Not a few preachers are in the same old rut they were in twenty years ago. Their dryness, their lack of alertness, their stupidity, their inflated egotism, have caused them to slowly kill and bury many a church. They think they know it all, when they know nothing. It is not easy to teach such, because many of them are past the teaching point. We do not hope to reach many fossilized brethren, but we may be able to prevent some of the younger from following in their footsteps.

We are not living in the antediluvian age. The present age is one of mighty strides. The preacher must be quick to appreciate this. Antiquated methods and ways will not win. Modern life and modern activity are too rapid for antiquity. The preacher who is wide awake will not suffer himself to ever become sluggish, slow, obtuse, or negligent. He must move; he must move rapidly; his heart must be open to the sky, and his ear to the ground. He must do more than blow chimerical soap bubbles, or dream of great sermons and great results. Many a preacher can preach a great sermon in his mind, stretched out in bed. But it is another thing to preach it on his feet, facing a congregation. Not a few can imagine results from certain untried methods, who are too lazy to work out the methods.

We want men who think; we must have them. But we must have preachers who think wisely and practicably; who not only think, but who are willing to pay the price of excruciating toil to put thoughts into practical use.

* * *

03 -- TACT

What is tact?

Tact is the quick application of common sense.

Tact is mastering the situation against great odds.

Tact is making the best of every opportunity.

Tact is pulling victory out of seeming defeat.

Tact is ready discernment.

Tact is mental poise that quickly comprehends what is fit, proper or right. Tact is God-given wisdom in use.

Tact is skill in dealing with men and emergencies.

Tact is alertness, adroitness, keenness.

* * *

04 -- TACT IN PRACTICAL APPLICATION

A certain skilled worker belonging to the Y. M. C. A., a number of years ago, was in the city of St. Louis one delightful Sabbath afternoon. He was stopping at a certain hotel, when he looked out upon the street and saw thousands of pedestrians walking here and there without any seeming purpose. His heart yearned that this multitude of thoughtless men and women might hear a gospel message. But how to get their attention, was a big question. Finally, after much prayer, he went to the hotel office and asked for an old umbrella. One was given him, and he tore off the cover and left nothing but the frame over his head, and started down the middle of the street, on a bright sunshiny afternoon. The crowds on the sidewalk soon noted him, and supposing him to be crazy, followed, expecting to see the police arrest him. Finally, he stopped on a corner, took down the umbrella frame, when a great crowd gathered around him. He could hear them saying, "Who is he?" "Where did he come from?" "What asylum is he out of?" and like expressions. After several hundred had gathered, he took from his pocket a New Testament, read a verse, and proceeded to preach a red-hot fifteen-minute gospel sermon, that had pith and point in it. He immediately moved out of the crowd, leaving them in utter amazement, went to his hotel room, fell on his knees, and prayed that God might fasten the truth on some soul.

Let the reader note: he used his good sense, his courage, his tact. He got the crowd, and delivered his message, and thus fulfilled the desire of his heart.

A number of years after, while speaking on the street in San Antonio, Texas, at the close of a meeting, a gentleman pushed through the crowd, spoke to our friend, and asked if he was the same man who had carried the umbrella frame through the streets of St. Louis. He said he was. The stranger then related how, on that Sabbath afternoon, he was despondent and discouraged, when he saw the crowd following the supposedly crazy man. He fell into line and heard the gospel message. It gripped his heart, led him to Christ, he was converted and was then living a victorious, Christian life.

Tact backed up by courage.

Tact in active operation.

Tact that brought results.

* * *

05 -- A LACK OF TACT ILLUSTRATED

In Green's Shorter History of England, is this pertinent illustration of the lack of tact:

On a low island of barren gneiss-rock off the west coast of Scotland, an Irish refugee, Columba, had raised the famous monastery of Iona. Oswald in youth found refuge within its walls, and on his accession to the throne of Northumbria he called for missionaries from among its monks. The first dispatched in answer to his call obtained little success. He declared on his return that among a people so stubborn and barbarous success was impossible. "Was it their stubbornness or your severity?" asked Aidan, a brother sitting by; "did you forget God's word to give them milk first and then the meat?"

Tact, wisdom, and fineness of perception are needed by those who would teach men successfully the way of salvation. It is he that is wise that winneth souls (Prov. 11:30). "But if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him," Jas. 1:5.

* * *

06 -- THE PREACHER AND PRAYER

1. Importance Of The Theme -- There is nothing that enters into the minister's activities that is of so much importance as his prayer-life. There is absolutely nothing that will take its place. The absence of prayer means a half-hearted, despondent, discouraged, fruitless ministry. But the man who prays -- who prays until God answers, can and will succeed against all opposition. To be a man of prayer is infinitely greater than to be a man of oratory, polished rhetoric, a popular lecturer, or sensational pulpiteer. The latter accomplishments usually attract the attention of men and their commendation, but to be a man of prayer, gets the attention of God, and His commendation. Let us have the keenest intelligence, but every intellectual fiber of our being sanctified by prayer.

2. The Habit Of Prayer -- The habits of life are formed by the repetition of an activity until it becomes spontaneous. By giving attention to prayer, night and day, the habit is thus formed, which becomes delightfully entrancing and beneficial. Prayer gets into the very warp and woof of our being; a prayer-life becomes spontaneous, and one is conscious of measuring up to the apostle's exhortation, to "pray without ceasing." Unceasing prayer will cure doubt, skepticism and unbelief; no preacher can pray as he ought and then proceed to be a Bible "tinker." Neither can he pray as he ought, and doubt the inspiration of the Scriptures. He will accept the Bible as "the" Word of God, with all of its supernatural manifestations. The prayer habit is a sure cure for ministerial skepticism, and barrenness. It anchors the preacher, enriches his soul, makes him mellow, humble and kind-hearted, and gives him access to God and men.

3. A Place To Pray -- The preacher is very unfortunate, and badly handicapped, who does not have a quiet place where he can go and pray. This is just as true of any Christian. To have a place to pray, and then to assiduously go there and pray, is decidedly advantageous. To make oneself pray, to take the time, to set aside all other duties, to determine to pray, is not an easy task.

It requires method, system, and unswerving determination. But all this is possible, if the minister or Christian worker is "set" upon being a man of God. One hour alone with God, say between nine and ten in the morning, or earlier if possible, will enrich the life until it will bloom like a watered garden.

A place to pray,
A time to pray,
A determination to pray,
And then to PRAY.

4. Hindrances -- The duties of the average minister are exceedingly numerous; his toil is arduous. His hours are long and full. If he is without some system in his work, he is usually submerged. The church meetings, the numerous organizations, visiting in the homes of the people, personal calls, some part in Christian citizenship, moral reform, and the like; committees, social functions, weddings, funerals, and a thousand and one other duties, take heart, and brain, and physical strength. He must study, he must read, he must think and meditate, or else he soon becomes a back number. The age is fast, very fast. Most everything seems to be moving, pushing, rushing. There is hardly time to think. But with all this, every hindrance to prayer must be overcome, if the preacher is to know God and have divine unction in the messages he may deliver.

The devil is the virile enemy of the praying preacher. He will put everything in his way possible. Satan dislikes very much to see a saint upon his knees. But by insistent, uncompromising devotion to God and His truth, one can pray, and then persist in praying, until the kingdom of Satan trembles. By mighty prayer, "One shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight." Amen!

* * *

07 -- THE PREACHER IN HIS LIBRARY

This is usually the preacher's study. Here the shelves are lined with books ready for reading or reference. A careful examination of the kind of books the preacher reads -- the books that line the shelves -- will usually reveal the character of the man, his orthodoxy or heterodoxy, his faith or his skepticism. One can judge by the books a man reads whether he is a deeply spiritual man or not. This latter assertion is just as applicable to laymen.

The writer as an evangelist for many years, used to make inquiry of the pastors who called for his help, as to the effectiveness of their ministry, the tangible results; whether persons were converted, reclaimed or sanctified wholly in response to preaching and appeal; also as to the doctrine preached, and books read. I was always anxious to get a look into the preacher's library, for then I could almost positively tell what kind of doctrine and sermons were being preached, and that has almost everything to do with immediate results.

If his library contained numerous books on the doctrine and experience of Holiness or Entire Sanctification, books on prayer and spiritual life, I could, with some degree of accuracy, judge of his own personal experience, and the effectiveness of his ministry. If, on the other hand, I

found Huntington's Sin and Holiness, or Mudge's Growth In Holiness, or Bishop Merrill's Sanctification, books that are outrageously erroneous in their teaching of the John Wesley doctrine and experience of entire sanctification, I was almost sure the preacher's mind had been warped and poisoned, and his preaching on this subject, if he preached at all, would have hesitancy and doubt in it. But if I found Wood's Perfect Love, John Wesley's Christian Perfection, Daniel Steel's Half Hours With St. Paul, Peck's Central Idea of Christianity, Lowry's Possibilities of Grace, Foster's Christian Purity, Keen's Faith Papers, Steel's Love Enthroned, Upham's Interior Life, Mallalieu's The Fullness of the Blessing, or Fowler's Christian Unity, I felt assured that the preacher knew about holiness of heart and life, and no doubt preached the doctrine so lovingly and straight to his congregation that persons were finding the joy of both pardon and purity continually.

* * *

08 -- THE PREACHER PREPARING TO PREACH

There are a lot of lazy preachers. That may sound and read like a bald, drastic uncharitable statement; but, it is true, nevertheless. Not a few preachers have run out of texts long ago. We knew one to preach more than a dozen sermons without taking a text from the Bible. These men do not read the Bible, except as they have to; they do not read helpful books. They are lethargic, indolent, carnal. The appetite for the rich, luscious, inspiring glories of the Word is not theirs. Inactivity, the failure to use our God-given faculties, simply means, sooner or later, paralysis. One must use muscle to have more muscle. The same philosophy is applicable to the mind and spiritual faculties as well. To not use, is abuse, but to use vigorously, means increased strength. Dr. Jowett tells of a minister who, as he walked home from his church on Sunday nights, would almost invariably say to a deacon, who accompanied him, and say it with shaking head and melancholy tones, "Two more wanted! Two more!" "He would send the eyes of his imagination," says Dr. Jowett, "roving over the thin little patch which he had gleaned so constantly, and he was filled with doleful wonder as to where he should gather a few more ears of corn for next week's bread! 'Two more wanted! Two more!' Too lazy to hunt for anything fresh from the great farms of God's eternal truth!"

The preacher must read, study, meditate. The modern study is not conducive to these. The telephone, the calls, the variety of matters that are now thrust upon the preacher, make it almost impossible to have or take time for preparation to preach. Yet, if the preacher is to move men toward God, if he is to see results in the direct salvation of souls, he must systematically and persistently take time to read, study, meditate. The Bible must be his chief text book; other books are to be read to throw light on the greatest Book of all. "Preaching that costs nothing, accomplishes nothing. If the study is a lounge, the pulpit will be an impertinence."

The preparation of the sermon must have some directness in it. The gospel gun must be loaded to kill, to bring down game. What you put in the charge effects the discharge. If you load for pewees, you'll get a few, maybe. If you load for "big" game, you will be apt to bring some down. Shooting into the tops of the trees is never wise, nor is it effective. You might knock off a few dead leaves, by accident. Load your gospel gun, take careful and prayerful aim -- expect results. Most of the preaching of the present day has but little directness in it. It is aimed at nothing, and hits it. There is no expectancy of immediate results, and of course there are none. Many a preacher is

between the choir and the clock, his little dry, spiritless, philosophic (dry-as-sawdust) sermonette must stop on time, or old Money-bags, or Sister Gad-about will be displeased. But the preacher whose soul is on fire, who gets a vision of dying men and women dropping into hell, will prepare his sermon, preach it with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, expect results, and go after them both morning and evening.

Many a preacher fails to have faith in his own efforts. He may preach well and with unction, but at the close of his sermon to press immediate decision upon the people, call sinners to the altar or the inquiry room, his heart fails him. It is either too late, or the audience may seem restless, one or two going out, or he fears failure; something gets in his way, and the altar call is not made. I ask you, my brother, why preach without seeing immediate results?

Dr. Ives came to a certain church once to help dedicate. He called the official board together on Saturday evening, and gave us his plans. After all were consummated, he made this significant remark: "At the other end of my sermon tomorrow, I am expecting to raise the money, and will dedicate the church." He meant to say that at the close of his sermon there would be such a spiritual atmosphere, such enthusiasm, that it would be comparatively easy to raise the money to dedicate the church.

My preacher friend, why not prepare, pray, preach your sermons, so that at the "other end" you will confidently expect to see sinners converted and believers wholly sanctified? The writer has carefully followed Dr. Ives' idea for twenty years, without having a single break in revival results in what is known as the "regular" church services. God has given, and is now giving a constant revival.

- (a) Study the Bible.
- (b) Read other books to throw light on the ONE book.
- (c) Prepare sermons for results.
- (d) Pray, prepare, preach for results, and you will have them.
- (e) Have faith in your own efforts. (f) Call sinners to repentance, or believers to be wholly sanctified at the close of your sermons.
- (g) Expect immediate results; go after them, get them.
- (h) It is up to you. There is no excuse for a barren ministry.

* * *

09 -- THE PREACHER AND UNCTION

That strange, mysterious word "unction." It ought to attract your attention, for it expresses that which attaches itself to human words and wisdom, that which hurls language with the velocity

of a rifle bullet, through the very hearts of those who hear. It is the supernatural winging words on steeds of lightning into the consciences of men. It is defined as that which in a religious discourse, awakens sympathetic feeling. It is more; it penetrates, it makes the truth "stick," it awakens the keenest interest, it causes men to fairly reel under their weight of sin. Many of the fathers had it, in a greater or less degree, but few modern pulpiteers exhibit any signs of having it. The lack of this peculiar, divine bestowment is a reason for the fruitlessness of so many ministers and Christian workers.

* * *

10 -- HOW TO BE UNCTUOUS

It is not found in books or literature.

It does not attend doubt, skepticism, or unbelief.

The preacher or Christian worker who is a Bible "tinker," or a Bible "patcher," will show no signs of unction.

It is the product of earnest, and continuous prayer.

It springs up in the heart and forth from the lips of those who are "filled with the Holy Spirit."

It is God in the man, making the heart fervent, hot, so that the words burn.

It springs from holiness of heart and life, and is never found in those who tamper with sin, or compromise the truth.

It rides on words of eloquence, and often burnishes the simpler forms of speech.

It ought to be searched for and cultivated by every preacher and gospel worker in the land.

It would transform many a pulpit into a blazing center of fire, and arouse many a congregation into the most intense religious activity.

Those who will search for it on their knees, who will fearlessly thrust home the truth, and who plan and pray for immediate results, will enjoy this peculiar, inestimable characteristic so essential to the effectiveness of the Christian ministry.

* * *

11 -- STRINGING THE FISH

There is nothing so exhilarating to any one as to be able to lead souls to Christ. The inexpressible joy that arises in the heart as a result of winning some one for Jesus, is far beyond any earthly pleasure. But sad to relate, how few know about

There are perhaps thousands of churches, and thousands of ministers who seldom, if ever, see any one genuinely converted. The preaching is ineffective; it may be scholarly and eloquent, tickling those who have "itching ears," and who want "smooth things" preached to them. But it does not produce conviction, nor action. Men set under a torrent of words; they are hard-hearted, and they remain hard-hearted.

But there is a way to move men, there is a way to string the fish. And this should be the constant and earnest aim of every minister who stands between the living and the dead.

* * *

12 -- THE ALTAR

The old-fashioned altar, or mourners' bench, was peculiar to early Methodism, and is now the heritage of all who practice effective soul-saving methods. Modern Methodists are fast discarding it, and but few of the other churches have ever used it. But it is a very essential and effective piece of church furniture, and the churches that do not use it are sadly lacking. The man who has the courage to come to a church altar and "pray through" to salvation, usually gets a good case of religion. His very action separates him from the world, and identifies him with Christians. If he is permitted to "mourn" until he is heartily sorry for his sins, he will not want to go that way again. The mourners' bench is helpful to a substantial Christian experience. There the soul meets God, and God meets the man, and the two strike up an agreement to last forever. Oh, that the mourners' bench were again in vogue in ten thousand of our churches!

* * *

13 -- THE ALTAR CALL; OR, CASTING THE NET

First, preach as Baxter did, as "a dying man to dying men."

Preach for results, expect them, go after them, get them.

Do not fall into the halt of using antiquated or stale methods. Keep the devil off your back and from defeating you by lack of originality. Many evangelists and preachers who try for souls have overworked this time-worn call: "All who are saved and sanctified, stand up." Of course, nearly everyone stands. Then those who are not saved and sanctified" are asked to stand. Occasionally some do. but more often, if they stand, it is to keep from being embarrassed, rather than because they are convicted. Then, many who stand "on the first call, do so to avoid becoming conspicuous, or being the targets of an evangelistic exhortation. This call usually blocks the way for anything else, and that is never wise for a fisher of men. If you cannot catch 'em with one kind of hook and bait, try another. Do not use your last hook first, or pave the way for your own defeat.

Never show discouragement. Hold on; be patient, pray for direction, and then try again, and again, and again. The writer has won many a hard-fought battle at the critical time of the meeting -- the altar call-by everlastingly persevering. This is where many "fall down." They fear failure; they fear ridicule; they fear it will become distasteful to some influential member. The audience is dismissed, and the preacher goes home crestfallen and defeated, while if he had held on, and squirmed through, some one would have yielded.

The altar call, in the judgment of the writer, should not be made in a hurry. When you have finished the sermon, which ought to finish on time (long sermons hinder the altar call), take a few minutes to reason with your audience. Show them that you are their friend, that you have only their eternal good at heart; that if you ask them to do anything, it is not to embarrass them, but to help them. Make your audience believe that whatever you ask them to do, you desire to make it easy for every one who needs to do so, to get to God and salvation. Then amidst quiet, not confusion, make the hardest proposition, or, perhaps the most definite proposition you can think of. For example, if the spirit of the meeting is such, and your faith measures up, ask those who want to seek for pardon, reclamation or entire sanctification to deliberately arise, climb over a seat full of folks, and come to the altar and kneel for prayer. If one starts, usually others will follow, and this action produces conviction on the whole audience. If this should fail of results, you have left ample opportunity for another brief exhortation and then ask for hands for prayer while all heads are bowed. If time permits, if any should raise their hands, you can usually send some one or go yourself to persuade one or more of these to come to the altar. Never show impatience, never pout, never scold. If you do, you knock your sermon on perfect love, "that endureth all things," squarely in the head, and you display the fact with emphatic prominence that you are not up to tone in your own experience. A preacher or evangelist must be a splendid sample of what he preaches, at the test places of his life.

I will now give you a number of altar calls which can be used with more or less effectiveness.

* * *

14 -- THE OLD FASHIONED CALL

Where conviction is deep, and the sermon seems to have taken hold, have the audience stand and sing one of the old invitation hymns like, "I Will Arise and Go to Jesus." or, "Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy," or, "Just As I Am, Without One Plea." If there is hesitancy, stop the singing and pour in a red-hot exhortation, and then sing again. Do not let up too soon.

* * *

15 -- THE SILENT CALL

Ask all to bow their heads, and then amidst profound silence ask for hands for prayer. Make it clear that you want to help sinners, backsliders and believers. Repeat these "classes" two or three times. When some have raised their hands, with it perfectly silent, ask them to make their way to the altar. Hold the people to silence and prayer.

* * *

16 -- THE STANDING CALL

At the close of the sermon ask the whole congregation to stand. Then when all are on their feet, and there is perfect silence, ask those who need salvation to come to the altar. Persist, but never scold.

* * *

17 -- THE DECISIVE CALL

If the sermon has gripped the people, and there seems to be general and deep conviction, ask those who want to be converted, reclaimed or sanctified wholly to leave their seats, push their way past a seat full of people, and make their way to the altar. When persons begin to do this from all sections of the auditorium, it produces deep conviction, and God's presence is usually felt. Then after all have come who will, on this hard, definite call, have the congregation to arise, send your workers out into the congregation, and pull in the net, and you will usually string more fish. Hold the congregation, if you can, while two or three verses are being sung.

* * *

18 -- THE CALL TO MEN

If you have preached on some topic that appeals especially to men, make your call this way: Ask how many Inert have been converted, and are now converted to stand, thus recommending Christ to other men. Then ask those men who desire to be saved to stand with these men. The same test can be applied to the women.

* * *

19 -- THE INQUIRY ROOM

In some places the inquiry room can be used to advantage. Have this room manned by a corps of intelligent, spiritual Christians, who will get seekers on their knees for prayer. Occasionally both the altar and the inquiry room can be used. In churches where holiness is not stressed as a definite work of grace, the inquiry room can be used to good advantage to help those to God who are timid and easily affected by the noise at the altar. Use any legitimate method that will bring results, but never use a trick or anything apparently deceptive. If you do, you will suffer in the long run. Be manly, be open, be above board, be sincere, be persistent, be patient. Never break your word to your congregation; always keep it. If you ask persons to hold their hands for prayer, or stand to be prayed for, always pray before making the final call. Above all things avoid harshness, severity and unwarranted goadings. Jesus was gentle; you cannot afford to be otherwise.

* * *

20 -- THOROUGH WORK

Many of the great modern revivals are frightfully superficial. Card-signing and hand-shaking do not go deep enough to reach the cancer in many a sinner's breast. The average preacher, as well as his congregation, is afraid of, and mortified over, the tears and sobs and moans of a thoroughly repentant sinner. But the man or woman heart-sick of sin will usually "groan" to get rid of it. Making it too easy for those who want salvation is a mistake. Let a seeker soak, then he will not soon, if ever, need to soak again.

Avoid passing judgment on a seeker. Let the Lord tell him when, He is through. "The witness of the Spirit" is not stressed very much these days, yet the Bible plainly says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Rom. 8:16. "He that believeth on the Son, hath the witness in himself." John 5:10. When one has the "witness of the Spirit," or heaven's certificate to his salvation, he will be thoroughly sure, thoroughly satisfied, and the devil will have a hard job cheating him out of his experience. This is more than signing a card, raising the hand, accepting a church creed, or acquiescing to some portion of Scripture, or even "hitting the trail." These all may be used as a means to an end, but anything less than God certifying to the heart of the individual is superficial. Urge a seeker to pray and seek until he is thoroughly satisfied.

The above certainly is just as applicable to those who seek for entire sanctification. John Wesley said: "None, therefore, ought to believe that the work is done till there is the added testimony of the Spirit witnessing his entire sanctification as clearly as his justification." Then he gives this beautiful illustration: "Since my last account, many have been sanctified, and several justified. One of the former is William Moore. He was a long time struggling for the blessing; and one night he was resolved not to go to bed without it. He continued wrestling with God for two hours, when he felt a glorious change, and the Spirit of God witnessing that the work was done."

Let it be noted, that a number of modern and popular evangelists rail out against sin, until men and women are deeply stirred, but ignominiously fail to tell these poor, struggling men and women the remedy.

There is but one cure; sinners can have their sins forgiven, and believers can have their hearts cleansed from inbred sin. Forgiveness for the sinner, entire sanctification for the believer. This is the cure for sin. Why not say so?

* * *

21 -- AVOID CONFUSING CALLS

We have heard an evangelist put a test so confusing that very few, if any, in the entire congregation knew what he wanted. Do not use too many words, and too much explanation. Be simple, be plain, be explicit. Word your call two or three times, but each time be short and plain.

* * *

22 -- RADICAL CALLS

After a scathing sermon on sin or holy living, be careful not to make a call that will unsettle the faith of those who are conscientious and not quick and clear in making distinctions. It is not your business to destroy faith, but to fan and build up the faith one may have. We have known holy people to become unsettled under an extravagant sermon and an extravagant call, till they found themselves in dense darkness, and it was weeks before they found their way and became settled. Those evangelists who make such calls, with few exceptions, are seriously deficient themselves. There is no scriptural warrant for any such "tests," and a wise leader will avoid them.

* * *

23 -- MIXED CALLS

Do not get your calls mixed. If you have preached the most of your sermon on holiness as a second definite work of grace, make your call to those who ought to seek this grace. If you have preached the sermon to sinners, make your call to sinners. Do not preach to sinners, and then make your call first to believers, but follow the order of your preaching. This is logical and reasonable. Yet many are not careful to follow in the order of their sermon, and there is confusion, and more often defeat.

* * *

24 -- FISHERS OF MEN, WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT THE ALTAR CALL

"I think the most successful appeals I make, are the ones in which I ask the people to listen to the wooings of the Holy Spirit, as He calls them to pardon or purity. I usually vary the 'calls' with the different services, for I find persons ready to resist last night's appeal. Sometimes when every other 'try' has failed, I have asked for, and encouraged, a time of silence -- all seated -- then ask for that person to whom God was especially calling to come. This has broken the way for others, for almost invariably, some one, whom pastor and workers least expected, came." -- Miss Millie Lawhead

* *

"I hardly ever pull my net just the same way. It depends upon the place, the time in the meeting, and what the spiritual tide is like. I am learning to depend more and more on the Holy Spirit to send people to the altar, and to tell them when they have what they are seeking." -- L. Milton Williams

* *

"Sometimes the Lord leads me to sing a solo at the close of the sermon to clinch the truth, and melt the hearers to the yielding point. I have broken through several hard places in this way." -- Arthur Ingler

* *

"I find to preach the truth faithfully, and simply put it on its merits, expecting the Holy Spirit to apply and look after results, has proven most successful with me. I sometimes vary the call; it depends on place, people, leading of the Spirit, etc., but in the main make a direct appeal, and when the Holy Spirit is on preacher, the Word, and the church, results follow. Have as little as possible of the human and as much as possible of the divine." -- Isaac F. Hodge

* *

"The altar call is the crucial test of every evangelistic meeting. It matters not how well a man has preached, if he cannot bring the people to an immediate decision to accept Christ, his preaching is vain so far as that service is concerned. I am free to confess that I find this one of the most difficult parts of my work. I often ask people to come to the altar as soon as I am through preaching, and then again I have the congregation stand and press home the invitation." -- J. L. Glasscock

* *

"After many years in both evangelistic and pastoral work, where I have seen many hundreds of seekers for justification and entire sanctification, God has been pleased to bless various methods in getting people forward to an altar of prayer.

"1. I have found a few times, that red-hot vocal praying by all the saints to bless the sermon has cleared the air, and made it easy to call people to the altar.

"2. Quiet prayer, and ask for hands of those who request prayer, then follow with a kind, loving invitation to the altar.

"3. Then again, when deep, pungent conviction was apparent, and all methods failed to get a 'break' among those who were under conviction, I have found it wise to dismiss the people, and have an after-meeting for Christians and all who felt their need of salvation. This brought us nearer of one accord, and broke the 'spell' of the devil, and God gave great victory.

"4. Many times the altar call has fallen flat because the preacher did not hold on long enough. Change your method, and try, try again.

"5. The preacher or evangelist is usually effective in going down into the audience, and doing wise, personal work. Many fish are lost because the preacher stops with his 'general altar call.'

"6. The last and best method is, when the Holy Spirit falls on the preacher and people, and sweeps over the entire audience. The people rush to the altar of their own accord." -- John Norberry

* *

"Our most successful method has been, that while the people are seated, we ask all who desire to be converted or sanctified to arise; when we get all on their feet, we think will stand, we ask them to come to the altar; it hardly ever fails to bring the best results. This method requires more real conviction, and a little longer time for the 'break' to come." -- J. M. Harris

* *

"I have never been successful in getting people to the altar, if I know myself; that is one of my weak points. I do not always follow the same rule. I have had the best results by preaching right up to the point, then make the call when the thing is at white heat. I sometimes ask the saints to get right down on their knees and pray while I ask for hands for prayer. Then follow this with a reasonable appeal, and those who raised their hands will usually come to the altar." -- Bud Robinson

* *

"I know of nothing in my method of altar calls that is purely original with myself; and would hesitate to cite any as a pattern. Especially as monotony and stereotypes are to be avoided. Here as elsewhere imitation is to be shunned. And as in preaching, so in inviting, personality tells far more than rule." -- Joseph H. Storm

* *

"I have been in the evangelistic field for more than thirty years, and I find that getting people to the altar is a much easier job than getting them 'through' when they get there. I prefer preaching about two weeks before offering the altar. Just preach and pray until the people get anxious about their souls, and then when the call is made they will come, and usually get through. I have found out that soul-saving is a great study, and that there are many ways to bait the hook to catch the fish." -- John T. Hatfield

* *

"When conviction has sufficiently settled down on the congregation, I ask all who desire an interest in the prayers of the Christians to raise their hands; later on, I ask them to take one more step, by coming forward and giving me their hand, then kneel at the altar or return to their seats. I find that more than half who come forward will kneel; then I never let them stop until they pray through into the kingdom. One point I hold before them in each service-their free moral agency, and choice that can accept or reject God; this I make them feel." -- E. A. Fergerson

[Brother Fergerson, since writing the above, has passed to his reward. -- Author.]

* *

"From experience I have found that to 'forecast' your audience is a good plan. An experienced fisherman can usually mark those in the congregation who have been somewhat awakened; if women, they will be fearful and afraid to come to an altar of prayer, if far back in the church. Hence, to get these near is an advantage. A little private and personal work will get them within reach of the gospel net. I have used the 'forecasting' method with good success. Sometimes a brief testimony meeting will encourage others to seek the Lord." -- T. H. Agnew

* *

"I make a direct call along the line of my preaching. I ask those who will seek the Lord to get up and come direct to the altar. When there is a general response, it puts conviction on others. I often dismiss the audience, and ask those who want to be prayed for, and those only who will pray to remain. I vary my method to suit the occasion and the local condition." -- R. H. Craig

* *

"Let both minister and audience recognize and feel that this is the most important part of all services relative to immediate success and fruitage of the meeting. Hence, all the wisdom, power, and intensity available should be focused upon this feature of the revival. It is the supreme, psychic moment upon whose issues hang the decisions of the hour.

"Where people and communities have been taught to disbelieve in the altar of prayer, and the necessity of earnest and public seeking; and scorn and ridicule such methods, it is well to give reasons for the use of the altar, at different times during the meeting. The following are some reasons, if used in an argumentative way, may serve to help the opposers to see the benefit of the altar:

"1. It is mentioned in the Bible about 400 times. 2. There is an altar in heaven (Rev. 8:3), and we are taught to pray, 'Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven.' We are copying after the heavenly world when we kneel at the altar. 3. Coming to the altar is a confession, and there is much virtue in honest confession. 4. It exerts a powerful influence on others. If one person goes to the altar, others are almost certain to follow. This is why the enemy of souls is so bitterly opposed to it. 5. It creates sympathy and inspires activity among Christians to see the manifestation of interest on behalf of those who encompass the altar. 6. It puts the seeker not only in a place of convenience for prayer, but where he may receive helpful and proper instruction from those who have traveled the way before him. 7. It breaks down pride, subdues the will, humbles the heart, aids decision, and helps the faith." -- Andrew Johnson

* *

"I do not follow any order in the 'calls.' But I find that people will be caught with different kinds of bait. In the last meeting I held, everybody in the house, sinners and all, would come down and shake hands with the new converts, and congratulate them; in this way a number of the unsaved broke down and knelt at the altar and were saved.

"I find it necessary to get the church to move first. I sometimes ask all who are burdened for loved ones to come and pray. Or, those who will make a prayer-list. Or, to reach older men and women, those who were converted after fifty years, forty, etc. Sometimes I ask those who were converted in Illinois, Ohio, Iowa, and always the state in which I am holding the meeting, to come and pray. I urge new converts and those who have been recently sanctified to give public testimony; this helps to persuade others, and livens the meeting." -- R. N. McKaig

* *

"I often invite all of the congregation who will do so, to come to the altar of prayer, and then ask for those who are conscious of their need of salvation to manifest it. In this way I locate a number of seekers. I seek to adapt my call to the spiritual condition of those before me, always relying upon the Holy Spirit for aid." -- H. F. Reynolds

* *

"My greatest success in getting people to the altar and to God is through the personal effort method. Usually, I find but little difficulty in filling the altar, if I can get the church to work and speak to the unsaved personally. I sometimes invite the people to the altar for 'one' prayer. Many will thus come, and some will get under conviction and remain? -- Joseph N. Speakes

* *

"I always avoid being too general in my altar calls, but insist upon definite seeking. I vary my call as time, occasion and leading of the Spirit may suggest. Sometimes I come to the altar with a red-hot exhortation; have the entire congregation stand, sing a familiar hymn, and then make my 'pull' for those who desire to be converted, reclaimed or sanctified wholly. I have gotten good results in this way.' -- Will H. Huff

* *

"I vary the call with the interest of the meeting. When the tide is on it is easier to get persons to an altar of prayer. I make my calls explicit; I work in the audience myself and bring many to the altar. I preach, and expect results, and God gives them.' -- C. W. Ruth

* *

"The 'net' should be knitted with a warp of truth and a woof of love, having meshes small enough to catch those of budding accountability, as well as those of flowering, fruiting, and well-matured conscience. It should be gently and intelligently lowered around them, and then draw them toward the mercy-seat. 'Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.' 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.'

"First, last, and all the time, the worker needs to have the 'leading of the Spirit.' This insures variety to suit the occasion. He will not find the 'right side of the ship' simply by rote; he must have the Master's directions.

"The 'call' is where the real substance, or import of the message is woven into a net that impels souls to move according to their convictions, toward the focusing point of the conflict -- the altar. It is the connecting link between the sermon and actual victory; and if this is weak, the results will be thus limited. It may be weakened by letting down of faith and effort -- when faith should soar in steady flight and effort be the strongest. Often it is weakened by a lack of wisdom: Trying to compel action by brusque declarations; or, inviting in such a blunt, cold manner that it seems more of a rebuke than a loving solicitation.

"Surely, this is a time to be wise, not weak; to plead, not pound; to draw, not drive; to solicit, not scold; to lead, not lambaste; to be patient, not petulant; to be keen, yet kind; to be true, yet tender; to be strong, yet sweet; to be cool headed, yet warm hearted; letting your own light shine out to the souls in darkness; exhibiting a sample of what God can do, and will do for the 'Whosoever will.'

"Adherence to principles, rather than methods, I believe to be wise." -- J. A. Harris

* * *

25 -- THE SIEGE REVIVAL

In recent years it has been the custom of not a few good evangelists to hold ten-day meetings. In the judgment of the writer, this is too short a time for either large or permanent results. For just about the time the meeting is well under way, the evangelist must close his engagement, and push on for another field. The siege plan is better. Plan for a month or six weeks' campaign. This is especially possible in a large church, and is not impossible in the smaller churches. Here are some of the advantages: 1. The length of time makes it possible to interest the entire church. 2. The protracted meeting will the nearer stir and reach the community. 3. As the revival increases, the crowds will increase; thus making it possible to move multitudes toward God. 4. The converts need the enthusiasm, and ample opportunity for personal work and testimony. 5. It gives the evangelist time to indoctrinate those who need it. 6. The pastor has time to gather large numbers into the church. 7. A great revival is much better for a community than a revival symptom, or just a little spurt.

* * *

26 -- PLANNING FOR THE SIEGE

Take ample time. Lay a solid foundation. Enthuse the church. Spend considerable money advertising. Do not plan as though you expected to fizzle out at the little end of the born. If you do, you will fizzle. Get as many persons interested as possible. Talk it, pray it, sing it. Have church prayer meetings, cottage prayer meetings, special prayer meetings, Church Board prayer meetings. Work up, and pray down. Use the local newspapers. Impress the community that something unusual will happen, and it will. Have faith in God, and plan for "big" results. God is especially pleased with "faith that laughs at impossibilities." He likes monopoly when it comes to religion. Too many

preachers and people expect nothing and get it. Shame! when God only wants a willing and obedient human agency or agencies to save a lost world.

* * *

27 -- USING THE INDIVIDUAL

When the siege is well on, it is a capital plan to select as many capable workers as you can secure for personal work in the congregation. Make a diagram of your church auditorium, and place these workers in various parts of the room, assigning each to a certain section. These can then watch for any indication on the part of those who may be influenced by the meeting. When one has held a hand for prayer, the special worker, right on the spot, can usually get such an one to an altar of prayer. The wise pastor or evangelist can also instruct these workers, telling them how to do, and how not to do, as the case may be. Personal work in the congregation must be done wisely and carefully, and not a few who aspire to this kind of work need instruction, that blunders may be reduced to the minimum.

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28 -- THE POWER HOUSE

Where conditions are at all favorable, appoint a meeting specifically for prayer, at an hour when a number can get there; say, from nine to ten a. m., just for one hour, and no longer. Make this a red-hot prayer meeting where mighty prayer will arise for the services, and especially the meeting that day and night. Call this meeting the "Power House" of the revival, and urge as many to come as possible, even if at a sacrifice. This will require strength on the part of the evangelist or pastor, but it will pay large dividends in the salvation of souls.

* * *

29 -- A DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING

Set apart one day each week and call it the Mid-week Sabbath or Day of Prayer and Fasting. Begin at 10:30 a. m. and close at 3 o'clock p. In. Make this one of the great days of the feast. Get word to all the members and friends, and make a strenuous effort to secure a very large attendance. The attendance, usually, will not be as large as you anticipate but it will be good, and the hours spent very profitable. If all persons cannot remain all of the time, ask them to come for a part of the time. Business men and women can run in for an hour at noon. Others, maybe, can remain longer. Many will remain throughout the entire time.

Spend several hours of this time in prayer, even though the same person must pray several times. Spend some little time in testimony, and then let the pastor or evangelist give a short Bible reading, and close this service with a call for mourners.

A day of this kind during each week of the revival siege, will grow in interest and intensity, and can be made to bring heaven down. It is hard work to pray, but God hears and

answers. A revival without groanings that cannot be uttered, is superficial, and the results will not be permanent.

* * *

30 -- A SATURDAY NIGHT MEETING

The writer has held a Saturday night meeting with marked success. Only those were asked to come who wanted to pray for themselves, or pray for others. Hold the meeting strictly to these two classes. Ofttimes the timid unsaved will come to this meeting, and the chronic seekers, and the slow-pokes, and with little unbelief on hand, it is possible to sweep the altar, and make glorious progress.

* * *

31 -- COTTAGE PRAYER MEETINGS

A dozen or more such meetings can be planned for an hour; say, between ten and eleven a.m. Furnish invitation cards to those where the meeting is to be held, to be used to invite neighbors and friends in that vicinity. Here is a form of invitation card:

Big Revival Now Going On
At _____ Church

In the interest of this revival a morning Cottage Prayer Meeting will be held at my home, 0000, _____, Street, from ten till eleven. I cordially invite you to be present.

(Signed).

* * *

32 -- HOOKS AND LINE FOR FISHERS OF MEN

A short sermon and a long altar call is better than a long sermon and a short altar call.

Preach your best, pray your best, and God will do His" best for you.

Never acknowledge failure or defeat. Try for something out of the service that smacks of victory.

Do not thrash the absent people over the shoulders of the faithful who have come. Commend the faithful, pray for the absent.

Half of the battle is won by being cheerful. Show yourself a man of heart and courage. Don't look gloomy, don't talk gloomy, or others will catch your trouble.

If you find yourself a little cold and formal, warm up. Cultivate the warm side of your nature. Go down in the audience and shake hands. It will do you and others good. Do not be a featherweight; be a heavyweight. Master the situation. Too many evangelists are content to follow, rather than lead. If you profess to be a general in God's army, have some qualities that belong to that dignified office.

Is it money you are after? You would better quit the field at once. Of course you must live and support your family, if you have one. But your chief business is to win men to Christ. Add a little business sense, and your liberal support is assured. If you lay too much stress on money, the people will soon "catch on" that you are mercenary, and that will hurt your influence.

Be careful in your attitude toward the opposite sex. Be gentle, be courteous and all that a Christian ought to be; but avoid softness, and palaver, and caresses under the guise of brotherly love. You will need to watch and pray at this point, to "avoid the appearance of evil."

* * *

33 -- LETTER WRITING DAY

When the revival tide is well on, set apart a day for writing letters to the unsaved or unsanctified. Get a hundred persons, if possible, to agree to write a letter to an unsaved friend, inviting that one to the meeting. If the church and revival are largo enough, ask five hundred; each letter to be signed by the writer. But act in concert, and make this a day of invitation.

* * *

34 -- A PRELIMINARY PRAYER MEETING

Plan for a short prayer meeting in one of the rooms of the church other than the main auditorium, for a half hour before the regular revival service begins. This meeting can be made intense, and very helpful to the regular revival service that follows.

* * *

35 -- A VISITING BRIGADE

Have a Visiting Day, and secure just as many as possible who will take advertising matter and tracts, and go from house to house, inviting persons to the revival services. In a considerably sized church 5,000 can be made in a forenoon. If the town is small, plan to get into every house. Give as many persons something to do as possible. Activity brings strength as well as blessing.

* * *

36 -- POSTAL CARD INVITATION

Print 500 or 1,000 postal cards with a well-worded invitation on. Leave a place at the bottom for the sender to sign a name. Give these out to the people, not more than ten to a person, and ask them to mail to friends and those who might be influenced to come to the meetings.

* * *

37 -- A SHOP MEETING

If there are manufacturing establishments in the place where the revival is held, try for a shop meeting with the men and women at noon, say from 12:15 to 12:55. Have good singing and a brief, straight, clear address. Ask for hands for prayer, and give an invitation to the meetings. Leave no stone unturned to have men come under the sound of the gospel.

* * *

38 -- DAY MEETINGS

We once heard of an evangelist who said, "he would not hold any meetings during the day for a lot of old women and a few old men." But the writer would suggest from practical experience, that day meetings are a decided advantage. A few faithful men and women can prevail with God in prayer, and bring victory to the meetings. The day meetings furnish ample opportunity for the unfolding of the Word, making plain the doctrine, and establishing the saints. It also affords opportunity for testimony and praise, all very helpful to swell the tide of revival.

In some sections a very enthusiastic and well-attended day meeting can be held in the forenoon. In other places the largest attendance can be secured in the afternoon. Have the people bring their Bibles, and take advantage of the day meetings to unfold the truth. The average person who attends church needs teaching more than preaching. Evangelists and pastors ought to study to be teachers as well as preachers. Ordinarily, do not prolong the day meetings too late, or else they will interfere with the night services.

* * *

39 -- A REVIVAL IN THE SABBATH SCHOOL

Some time during the "siege" plan for a revival service in the Sabbath school. Have officers and teachers interested, and lay your plans in advance. Have this a "Revival Day" and urge all teachers to write or personally invite each scholar. By a concerted and enthusiastic action, a very large school can be secured. Speak briefly, but pointedly; hold an altar service, and use teachers as personal workers to bring their scholars to the altar. Run a red-hot altar service, short enough not to infringe on the preaching service, if it immediately follows the Sabbath school. If rightly planned with sense and prayer, this can be made a very profitable and fruitful service. Lay stress upon the conversion of children; it costs less to save a child than to convict a criminal.

* * *

40 -- SOME PERTINENT DON'TS FOR EVANGELISTS

Don't be mawkish.

Don't try to be some other man.

Don't be a circus clown in the pulpit.

Don't tell so many funny stories that all seriousness is lost.

Don't keep everlastingly bragging on yourself. There are others.

Don't be peculiar about your dress and your hair. Get your hair cut occasionally, and look decent like other people. Avoid being a freak.

Don't be finicky around your boarding place, always wanting to be waited on, and wanting something that causes inconvenience to procure. Eat what others eat (unless you are a dyspeptic), and make the best of fairly comfortable surroundings.

Don't spend your time visiting, or loafing at the corner store. Spend your time largely in prayer, study and meditation. You will be very dry and juiceless unless you do. Perspiration is not inspiration, and well-known truth is dry unless unctionized by the Holy Spirit. He will not aid a lazy or careless man or woman. There must be toll and sacrifice, if there is to be unction and power.

Don't let your over-sensitive or nervous condition make you snappish. You should not be annoyed at little things. If a baby cries, speak gently if you speak at all. Perhaps a tired, shut-in mother wants to hear the gospel, and she is paying you a compliment by bringing her baby to church. Invite all such mothers to come and bring their babies. Tell them you can preach against ten crying babies; if you cannot, you ought to try.

Don't preach on the Thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, until most of your congregation feel like going forward for prayers, and then because a few persons leave the room, you blurt out with a snap and a harshness and a very short-suffering, "that some people think more of their bellies than they do of salvation." You have just been advising that others should have a thirteenth of First Corinthians experience, why not yourself? It always looks well for a preacher to exemplify what he preaches.

Oh, for 10,000 professors and possessors of perfect love who measure up to the Bible standard!

* * *

41 -- FOUR PERILS TO MINISTERS AND EVANGELISTS

A great evangelist once said, "I believe if there is any body of men who are hated by the world, and marked by men and devils for criticism, attack, abuse and destruction, it is the ministry of Jesus Christ, whether in the pastorate or evangelistic work. Among the agencies used to strike them out of their heaven-appointed and God-anointed work, are man-fear, popularity, money, and the influence of women."

Ministers and evangelists should note these four dangers, and avoid them as you would a rattlesnake. Let us specify a little.

* *

Man-fear -- If, for any reason, there is fear of man in the heart of a preacher or evangelist, the influence of such a man is sadly weakened. Old "Money Bags," or Mrs. "Blue-blood," nor Professor "Know-it-all," must mean no more to you, when it comes to proclaiming the truth, than the humblest hod-carrier. One must have the courage and boldness of the Apostles, who said, "We ought to obey God rather than men." "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Though it meant stripes and imprisonment, they were not afraid.

* *

Popularity -- This has turned many a useful man's head and heart. God has been pleased to give success either as a pastor or an evangelist, when lo! the individual became proud, haughty, stuck-up. He was admired by many, and they told him so. "What a great sermon!" "What mighty sweeps of revival he is having!" "He has more 'calls' than any other man in the field!" "He has the largest church in the denomination!" His humble heart was caught in the deluge and swirl of approbation, and he tumbled to his doom. The greater the achievement, the larger the responsibility, the more general the commendation, the humbler one must be, to be safe. My brother, do not yield to popularity.

* *

Money -- Here is a tremendous temptation. The demands upon the general ministry to part with their money is a serious peril. Evangelists are always at heavy expense, because constantly away from home. To humbly avoid "money-grabbing" with such pressure on, is commendable of a good degree of grace. Many churches are inconsistently stingy, and not a few preachers who employ an evangelist, are woefully afraid that he will carry too much money out of town. For many of these hard-working men and women, it is like the Irishman's pig, "a streak of lean and a streak of fat." Usually more lean than fat. But despite the present environments or present circumstances, the preacher or evangelist who sets his heart on money, may get it, but he loses in spiritual force and power. A rich pocketbook and a lean soul is a ministerial combination to be shunned.

* *

The Influence Of Women -- How many have stranded upon this rock, only God knows! But they are legion. The sex intended to be a blessing and which can be and often are, yet are used as a snare. "It is quite remarkable that the Bible does not warn women against men, but men against

women." The man in public life, like the preacher or evangelist, is in constant danger, and must be on his guard. There is no need of any godly man letting down the bars, or being afraid. If women run after a man, there is a reason. There is, or has been, some unwise solicitation on his part. Making a practice of meeting women, presumably "your cousins" in the hotel parlor, or having them knock at your hotel door; listening to confessions and domestic difficulties, is sooner or later bound to become dangerous. Do not encourage it. Speaking soothingly and endearingly, holding a woman's hand and patting it with your other, or holding on to the hand an unusual length of time, with that gentle pressure that often speaks louder than words, is unwise, and may lead to sin. Too much familiarity, and a light vein of talking, lowers your dignity as a man of God, and opens the way for criticism.

The line of demarcation between "inordinate affection" and legitimate, holy love between brothers and sisters in the Lord, is not clearly distinguished by many, and is easily passed. The approach to the danger point must be carefully and prayerfully watched. Let there be no familiarity that might arouse the passions; no unholy word, thought, or deed, that could be fairly interpreted compromising. There need not be stiffness and coldness to the freezing point, but there must be a ministerial dignity that prompts no offense. A holy reserve that spontaneously resents any undue familiarity. A clean, holy, man or woman of God, with a stainless record; this one ought to be; this, by the help of God, we can be.

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PART II

42 -- VALUE OF PERSONAL WORK

This is not an overwritten subject, nor an overworked practice. It is therefore, of value. There ought to be more skilled personal workers. Preparation to do this particular kind of work is absolutely necessary. No one can become an expert except by toil, prayer and practice. If you never begin, you will never accomplish anything. Too many self-appointed Christian workers lack tact and wisdom. Their egregious blunders drive away from the kingdom of God as many as they are successful in winning. This ought not to be. A soul is too valuable, yes of such infinite value, that blunders in dealing with one should be reduced to the minimum. From a long experience in dealing with individuals the writer offers some suggestions that he trusts will be of helpfulness to those now in this important field, and to encourage others to enter.

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43 -- ADAPTABILITY

Not all Christian workers have adaptability; but many more might have. First make up your mind that you will enter this particular field, and then make the very best preparation possible to succeed. There must be a deep, clean, religious life; there must be increasing and importunate prayer, both for yourself and for others; you ought to learn to read character; the Word must be on your tongue's end; if you lack a passion for souls, you will hardly have patience to keep at it; you will not succeed by spurts, but by a faithful stick-to-it-ive-ness.

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44 -- THE FIELD

One does not lack for opportunity. The field is everywhere. Only open your eyes, and you will see the ripened harvest fields. Multitudes are awaiting an individual effort or appeal. Many of these will not go where the gospel is proclaimed; they must be reached in some other way.

You will find an opportunity, perhaps, in your own family. Or among your neighbors, or some personal friend. The street car, the railway train, the steamboat or steamship. Your place of employment or place of business, the shop, the mill, the school room, the office, the boarding place. Look where you will, and there will be, and is now, almost limitless opportunities to thrust in the sickle of personal effort, and harvest some of the ripened grain.

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45 -- WHEN AND HOW TO BEGIN

Begin now. Give serious thought and prayer to this call to prepare yourself for this unworked field. Get hold of some good books on this particular subject. Absorb these, and get yourself full of desire. Learn from others and apply in practical effort. Don't rush, but take time enough to pray and study. A secure foundation will hold the substantial superstructure of your after life. You will always be glad for getting a good start. Write to the publishers of this book for a copy of H. Clay Trumbull's "Individual Work for Individuals." This book will instruct and inspire you. Work into everyday life some little effort in behalf of some soul. You will soon meet with excuses, hardness of heart, indifference, vituperation, "attend to your own business" and the like. Study to answer, but avoid much argument. "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin." Your personal testimony to the saving power of Jesus Christ is one of your best weapons. A fresh, hearty, personal experience is incontrovertible. The man who simply puts up theory against your delightful personal experience will not be able to stand. You have the best of the matter, and the unbeliever will not be long in seeing it.

Your own judgment must be exercised in the selection of some one whom you think you can win to Christ. When this has been done, the tug of war is upon you. You have now entered the field, let there be no turning back. If the case is hard, stubborn, resisting, as many are, you will need the patience of Job, the wisdom of Solomon, and the love of John. These all are yours for the asking. Paul, in writing to young Timothy, said, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit. in faith, in purity." This is not ideal and unobtainable, but possible. Any grace or wisdom that you may need is within your reach; only reach.

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46 -- OBSTACLES

They will multiply like weeds in an uncultivated garden. They will appear to be mountain high. But you must have wings as well as feet. "Run and not be weary, walk and not faint." Every obstacle can be and must be successfully overcome. Your contact with obstacles will serve two purposes. First, contact will sharpen your sword, and you will be the richer for it; and second, the inexpressible joy of overcoming is worth infinitely more than the cost of hardship or effort. God is a faithful and liberal paymaster. To the faithful Christian wages are always due, and are always being paid. "My God shall supply all your need."

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47 -- THE HAND TO HAND FIGHT

Getting close to a man, the looking into his life, piercing him through and through, mastering and knowing his peculiar and natural characteristics, requires patience and study. But you can do it. This all may be accomplished in a comparatively short time. But if it requires patience, then you must wait. You cannot drive men to Christ, but you can draw them to Him. Love, kindness and persistency will win.

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48 -- DISCOURAGEMENT

This word must never be reckoned in your vocabulary. There is no such thing as fail, and although the one you are after, and for whom you have worked so long, might die in his sins, you shall not lose your reward. The great Bookkeeper of the skies is keeping books, and the every effort put forth from a sincere and honest motive is noted. The satisfaction of knowing that you have labored with an unselfish zeal is "pay" enough to smash all discouragement into smithereens. If you cannot get complete victory over discouragement, you will hardly make a successful personal worker.

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49 -- FISHING FOR MEN

Life insurance men especially work "prospects." This may require months and maybe years. But a "prospect" is always worth looking after, and keeping after. I have known a life insurance agent to carefully, but persistently keep after a man for five years, and finally write him for a large insurance policy. Why can't we be as wise in winning men to Christ? If it requires careful planning down the months or years, let us lay our plans, and work to them. We have God to help us, and that is much more favorable and advantageous than any merely secular effort. But let us not try to fish with the same old pin hook -- the same method -- but using the good, common sense, and "the wisdom that cometh from above," we must adapt sane methods suitable to the individual; use anything legitimate, only win your man. "He that winneth souls is wise."

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50 -- METHODS

There is no end to methods, and one must study them out for himself. What is applicable and successful in one case, cannot be used at all in another. You might call upon a man in his office, and by personal conversation lead him to Christ then and there, but you might call upon a dozen other men in their offices, and meet with refusal and maybe rebuff. So, that, some other method must be tried. Here are some suggestions. only, as to methods.

You ought to know your man, and he ought to have confidence in you.

A kind invitation to church may open the way, (providing you invite him to a church where he will hear the gospel).

An invitation to lunch together after you are sufficiently acquainted will furnish you an opportunity to study your man. Other invitations will furnish your further opportunity. Use these wisely.

An invitation to your home or room will bring you into closer fellowship.

When there, you might interest him in music. Put in one good, old fashioned hymn. Or, you might loan him a "good" book to read.

There are a thousand forms of showing kindness. Individuals can be won by a timely kindness. A quarter or a half dollar slipped into the hand of a man in need, has its favorable effect. A basket of groceries sent to some one in unfortunate circumstances will open the way for conversation about Christ.

Your neighbors may be won by little acts of kindness. Divide your strawberry shortcake, or your big bunch of vegetables, or those nice apples that Uncle George brought you from the farm; or when the baby is sick run over with a little medicine or homemade cough syrup. See?

You could keep the children while Mrs. _____ went down town shopping. She has been at home so long and wants a few hours of change.

A nice bunch of flowers helps to cheer the sick room.

Do you ever think of giving your magazines to the firemen? Stick in a religious paper or two.

Have you ever given a policeman a big red apple? Did you ever wave your hand at him, smile and say "good morning?" Most people act as if a policeman has no soul. The saloonkeeper knows how to win Mr. Policeman. I do not need to suggest how he does it. Who ever tries to offset the saloonkeeper's methods?

Did you ever visit a hospital and take a few flowers, or papers, or tracts for the patients? A little word of cheer is very effective with many who Suffer.

Did you ever try writing a letter for that old man whose hand is too trembly to write any more? Did you ever try reading to that blind man?

You might win that Japanese young man if you would take the time to teach him English.

That young man who is alone in the city; he needs a friend. Have you asked him out for a meal or to spend a social evening?

Did you ever think of having a nice room in your house where you could care for some one for a week or month at a time, using this opportunity to bring some one to Christ?

Why not try to get that friend or stranger employment? It will be an opening wedge to his heart.

If a man likes books, use books. If he likes music, use music.

If he likes to go hunting, go hunting.

If he is scientific, and you can do so, interest him on scientific subjects.

If he admires horses, talk horses.

If he is an inventor, admire his inventions.

If he likes electricity, interest him somehow on this line.

Study his likes and dislikes, and catch him on his likes. Never lower the standard of Christian experience, or compromise your honor or allegiance to Christ. Keep a high standard and he will admire you for it.

Pages could be written of the "hows" of personal effort. When you are once in the work, practical methods will come to you. Some you use may have to be entirely discarded; and others you can use over and over again with good success.

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51 -- WIN ONE AT A TIME

Does it look a little slow? Are you inclined to be discouraged before you begin? But souls are not brought to Christ in crowds, nearly every one who becomes a Christian is the result, either directly or indirectly of personal effort somewhere. To just win one soul for Jesus Christ is of such inestimable worth, that if it required a lifetime of effort, it is worth much more than the cost. We must put the value on a soul that God does. In a commercial aspect He says that one, soul is worth more than the whole world. Think of the entire world with its vast and almost limitless wealth and resources, and you have a faint idea of the worth of a soul. To win one soul to Christ, to make one

Christian, whose influence and effort thereafter is for righteousness, to have one star in your crown of rejoicing, will furnish eternal riches inconceivable. But after you have won just one, then your appetite will be whetted for another, and another. And your continued experience will furnish you with equipage that will make you an approved and skilled workman.

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52 -- RESULTS

They accrue. They are often much larger than our highest expectations. In this Win One battle, you have the privilege of fishing for either big or little fish. However, our human estimate is often faulty, and we must not despise the day of small things. You may get a diamond in the rough. But despite the real value of a soul -- and one is worth just as much to God as another -- some, who, if won for Christ because of their intelligence, their influence, their business or something, have larger possibilities in the kingdom of God, to assist and to reach others. This is apparent, and the results springing from this one man or woman, down the years of effort, may result in the salvation of thousands. So, that when one soul is won to Christ, who can measure the results? Think of John Wesley, or Charles G. Finney, or William Booth and his wife, or Bishop Asbury, or Moody or Gipsy Smith, and scores of others whom God has favored with thousands of precious souls. Think of William Carey, John G. Paton, Bishop Thoburn, and dozens of others who have, under God, influenced a whole nation. No one can measure or conceive the mighty results that may accrue in winning one soul for God.

That faithful effort of yours, requiring many months of toil, planning, praying, is at last rewarded, and your man won to God. In after years he becomes an evangelist, or a fire-baptized preacher of righteousness, or a missionary, or a philanthropist, or an influential, Christian business man. His life influences thousands of others to come to Christ. You will have a part in all this. Is this personal contact not worth the supremest effort?

The writer has not attempted an exhaustive study of this subject, with its varied phases, and countless illustrations, but hopes that what has been written may inspire many who read this book to launch out into this vast unexplored sea, where there is the best of fishing for men.

"Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins." James 5:20.

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53 -- MORE DON'TS FOR EVANGELISTS

Some time after the foregoing was written by the author of this book, one of the editors of The Christian Witness wrote some "Don'ts" that cover a little more ground. He said that as editors they were in position to know what is said for and against evangelists and evangelism. "We rejoice in their success, and when we hear of faults which hinder their usefulness we feel hurt ourselves. The don'ts published are not imaginary, but prompted by actual experience. We have suffered ourselves:"

"The cause of God in all ages has never really prospered except where the ministry have been practical examples of self-sacrifice. When the ministry have had an easy time the cause has languished. Like Jesus, His most skilled workmen have given themselves for men -- putting their life blood and tears into the great work of reconciling men to God. Let us avoid whatever will hinder our usefulness. Let us keep the reflector of our lives clean so that the light will shine brighter. Suffer therefore a word of exhortation from a lover and friend. Surely the humble will do so. We have no message to others. It would do no good.

Don't grumble at your accommodations, food, bed, etc. It may be that those who entertain you are having as hard a time and as much self-denial to keep you, as you are having to be kept.

Don't expect to be waited on more than is absolutely necessary. Think of an evangelist asking to have her breakfast brought to her while in bed! Fact.

Don't bring your "wife and dear family" into every sermon. People might get too well acquainted if they are introduced at every service.

Don't be constantly telling of the great victories you had at A and B and C and other towns. People may think you are going to do it all and cease from their efforts in order to see you do it.

Don't think you cannot go to a hard place and that you want to go to the easy places of labor. There are no easy places for the real gospel. It is a battle.

Don't rely on the success of your last meeting and let up on much prayer and travail of spirit for this present meeting.

Don't suppose all other kinds of preparation are a substitute for much and mighty intercessory prayer. Your soul needs to be saturated with much prayer. There is no substitute for it, if you would preach effectively.

Don't let even a suspicion arise that you are more anxious for shekels than for souls. This world is trying to make itself believe that the ministry is only a profession and that the ministry is after the loaves and fishes. It is our business to show them that our great passion is to save lost men.

Don't whine if you have few calls to labor. If God has really called you into the vineyard He will open the doors. If you do not have as many "calls" as formerly, let it be the occasion of fasting and prayer until God shows you the cause. He will, if you seek earnestly to know. Perhaps you are getting quite dry and need to be set afire.

Don't pound the people and lay the blame of your failure upon them until you have with tears and anguish of soul inquired of the Lord if the fault is in you.

Don't try to drive people. A man that can be driven is worth nothing after you get him. Could anyone have driven you into seeking holiness?

Don't get discouraged if you do not see "a landslide" in every place. Jesus and the apostles had some very hard and apparently fruitless fields

Don't fail to pray for your brother evangelists. It will help yourself as well as them."

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THE END